

# Preparatory work

Welcome to A Level Music! The Music Y11-Y12 Summer Work aims to develop some of the key skills required by students during the A Level course:

- A Level overview: Read through the A Level Music Introductory Booklet linked in [here](#) and purchase any required resources. You may wish to undertake the 'chronological timeline task' at the back of the booklet.
- Musical Performance: Prepare a solo performance on your main instrument. Free choice of piece/grade, although it should reflect your current ability level. Please be ready to perform this in class in September.
- Musical Theory: Please undertake one of the online courses described in the document below (option 1 or 2). There is also a free course on songwriting if you wish to undertake this as further extension work.

## Y11-Y12 Transition: Musical Theory

In preparation for September, please undertake **either option 1 or 2** in music theory.

1. If you know that you are less experienced in basic music theory (staff notation, rhythm, time signatures, key signatures etc) please undertake the course below. This would also be a good refresher.

### Refresher-approx Grade 3 Music Theory: 8 hours of study (The Open University)

- Gain an understanding of the basic building blocks of musical theory and notation.
  - This free course, An introduction to music theory, will introduce you to music staves, clefs, rhythmic and pitch values, rhythmic metre and time signatures.
  - Introduction to music theory pitched at a level equivalent to Grades 1–3 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music theory exams.
  - You can test your understanding as you proceed by completing simple multiple-choice questions.
2. If you are more confident in your understanding of music theory and are not undertaking option 1 above, please undertake the course below:

### Score reading, listening, and performance skills: 3 hours per week for 4 weeks (The Open University)

- This course develops your score reading skills, as well as exploring some great repertoire from the 18th and 19th Centuries. It also examines the fascinating and sometimes controversial relationship between the score and performance.
- This online course will help you understand a musical score, what musicians do with the notation they contain, and how the notation you see is connected with the music you hear – from a short melody to a full orchestral score.

- Focussing on Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven and Mahler, we'll introduce you to a pianist, small chamber group and conductor who will explain how they create memorable performances from the notes on the page.
3. As a further activity over the summer, if you are interested in developing your songwriting/composition before the A Level course, do get involved on the free course below.

**Song writing: 3 hours per week for 6 weeks (Future Learn - University of Sheffield)**

- Set words to rhythm using the concepts of metre and scansion.
- Identify the ingredients of an effective melody.
- Describe the different chord types and progressions used in popular songs.
- Explain the most commonly used song forms and structures.
- Explore how songs can develop when different lines and instruments are added to the accompaniment.
- Combine these fundamental musical elements to come up with a song of your own.