

Heckmondwike Grammar School



A Level Music



For September 2026 entry

LEAD SCHOOL

WYMH
WEST YORKSHIRE MUSIC HUB



Welcome

...to the Music Department

At Heckmondwike Grammar School every pupil from year 7 to 13 is given the opportunity to express themselves through the pleasures of making music.

We are an extremely busy, popular and successful department, whether it's making music in class in year 7, GCSE or at A level, or taking up instrumental lessons from our highly experienced peripatetic staff or joining the vast array of extra-curricular performance opportunities available to all students.

This document will provide you with further information about **A level music** as well as general musical life at Heckmondwike.

At HGS we have had a 100% pass rate in A level Music for many years, including several high achieving students gaining the top grades.

As exams have restarted properly post-pandemic, over the last 3 years our results have been

A* to B = 70%

A* to A = 46%

A* to C = 100%

Could you be an HGS A Level Music Student?

We are looking for creative students with a passion for all things music.

If you enjoy performing, composing, arranging, studying and interpreting music, then you're the students we want.

You need to be diligent, enthusiastic and driven - along with being committed to our wider HGS music scene.

We are keen for our A Level students to take on leadership and mentoring roles to enhance and develop their HGS experience.

If this sounds like you come and speak to us in the Music department to discuss the course - or email us for further information.

Watch our Promo here -

www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5pJm4U4AFI

Benefits of A Level Music at Heckmondwike Grammar School

Two dedicated full time and one part time music staff, plus access to support from 8 peripatetic staff, all with various and contrasting musical support skills.

Traditionally small groups with personalised support

Support with auditions for University &/or Conservatoire entry

Dedicated A level music study room, practice rooms & recording studio

Familiar staff, environment and ensembles

Easy to take a lead in or develop music groups

The Edexcel course flows directly from all GCSE courses into A level

The Edexcel course allows you to perform as many times as you wish and pick the best one (rather than a one chance final performance with other exam boards)



A Level Music Course Overview

This is a 2-year linear course.

The Edexcel A level music qualification aims to inspire the next generation of students in forming personal and meaningful relationships with music through the development of musical knowledge, understanding and skills. Students will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music and musical contexts, develop an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts, and reflect on how music is used in the expression of personal and collective identities.



Component 1 - Performing (30%)

Total performance time of 8 minutes. Performances can be solo and/or ensemble and can include a range of pieces and styles, including using music technology. They can be on any instrument or voice and there are numerous opportunities to complete these during the course.

Component 2 - Composing (30%)

Two compositions lasting a total of 6 minutes, including:

- 1 free choice coursework (4 to 5+ minutes)
- 1 brief assessing techniques (minimum 1 to 2+ minutes) - 1 from a choice of either a traditional Bach Chorale harmony, a creative arrangement or a music technology club dance remix.

Component 3 - Appraising Exam (40%)

The exam time is 2 hours 10 minutes

There will be 6 areas of study, with set works in each.

- Vocal Music
- Instrumental Music
- Film Music
- Popular Music and Jazz
- Fusions
- New Directions



Set Works

Area of Study	Set Works
Vocal Music	J. S. Bach - Cantata, Ein feste Burg: Movements 1,2, 8 Vaughn Williams - On Wenlock Edge: Nos. 1, 3 and 5 ('On Wenlock Edge', 'Is my team ploughing?' and 'Bredon Hill')
Instrumental Music	Berlioz - Symphonie Fantastique: Movement 1 Clara Schumann - Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17: movement 1
Music for Film	Bernard Herrmann, Psycho: Prelude, The City, Marion, The Toys, The Cellar, The Murder (Shower Scene), Discovery, Finale Danny Elfman - Batman Returns: Main theme, Birth of a Penguin Part I, Rise and fall from grace, Batman vs the Circus
Popular Music and Jazz	The Beatles - Revolver: Eleanor Rigby, Here, there and everywhere, I want to tell you and Tomorrow never knows Kate Bush - Hounds of love: 'Cloudbusting', 'And dream of sheep', 'Under Ice' Courtney Pine - Back in the Day: Inner state (of mind), Lady Day and (John Coltrane), Love and affection
Fusions	Debussy - 'Estampes': Nos. 1 and 2 ('Pagodes' and 'La soirée dans Grenade') Anoushka Shankar - Breathing Under Water: 'Burn', 'Breathing Under Water', and 'Easy'
New Directions	Stravinsky, The Rite of Spring: Introduction, The Augurs of Spring, and Ritual of Abduction Kaija Saariaho - Petals for Violoncello and Live Electronics

Facilities and Resources

A Level Music Study Room

This dedicated A level music room is perfect for students to study, work on coursework or complete further listening and discussion. It has 4 A level music specific PCs and a range of musical study scores.

A Level Practical Room for Music and Drama

Shared with A level drama students, this room is ideal for all small rehearsals and musical experimentation. The room has a baby grand piano, a large area for rehearsing and 6 more general PCs.

Recording Studio

This is built around a Steinberg professional digital multi-track recording system and a wide range of professional microphones. The area includes a control room, a separate live room, a full drum kit, digital piano, guitars and amps. There is another practice room next door with 2 digital pianos.

The Curwen Music Room

Includes 1 large classroom with a high-spec Yamaha Clavinova digital piano, keyboards, PA with radio mics, drum kit, a store area and 3 practice rooms each with full size digital pianos and a range of amps and guitars.

Computer Lab

A 32 PC music lab with Sibelius Ultimate & Cubase installed. Each PC has a MIDI keyboard and a Focusrite Scarlett audio interface.



Swann Hall

Many of our concerts, recitals and some rehearsals take place in our main hall just next door. It has a beautiful acoustic, a Steinway grand piano and a brand-new digital sound and light installation for 2025!

Further Equipment

In addition to a full range of general classroom keyboards and percussion we have a variety of guitars and amplifiers, a full set of Samba drums and African drums. There is also a professional xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells and 6 timpani.

Reference

There are a wide range of reference resources available from textbooks, scores & audio libraries - to online resources linked to Teams and Spotify. Along with a traditional text book we also subscribe to both online resources of *Focus on Sound* and *Mastering A Level music* for students to access.

<https://www.focusonsound.com>

<https://masteringalevelmusic.co.uk>

Extra-Curricular Activities

We have a full and envious range of extra-curricular music activities at HGS. Ensembles include a 50+ strong Concert Orchestra, a 40+ strong Senior Choir, a Senior Girls Chamber Choir, a String Group, a Percussion Group, a Brass Group, a Woodwind Group and a gigging Soul Band (plus various junior ensembles).

Rehearsals are usually in the music area, although for large ensembles such as the Concert Orchestra we use the main Swann Hall.



Concerts take place both in and out of school and we have recently performed at Music for Youth and the Marsden Jazz Festival, as well as other local venues such as Wakefield Cathedral and Dewsbury Town Hall. We have previously taken music tours and trips including tours abroad and our London Musical Theatre trip. Each year we take our A level music students to a variety of professional concerts, workshops and productions.

Our regular themed concerts have featured ideas such as *A Big Night of Musicals*, *Music from the Movies*, *Disney*, *The Sound of Musicals* and *Music through the Decades*. At the end of each term we have our traditional Carol Service, Spring Showcase Concert and Summer Showcase Concert; the latter of which features items from our annual inter-house music competition.

The music and drama departments have put on many large productions over the years. Our recent shows have included full musicals such as '*The Addams Family Musical*', *Grease*', '*We Will Rock You*', '*Grease*', '*Little Shop of Horrors*' and '*Return to the Forbidden Planet*'. Last year's show was '*Shrek: The Musical*'. Every show also has its own pit band made up of HGS music students.



Music Department Staff

Studying A level music at HGS enables you to have access to a wide range of musicianship from our dedicated specialist music team. We traditionally have low numbers in a class which enables a high degree of personalised support from our two full time and one part time music staff

Mr G. Cole BMus, MMus, PGCE

Head of Department

Mr Cole studied for his Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Huddersfield completing modules in performance and analysis before majoring in composition, electro-acoustic music technology and 20th Century 'contemporary' music. He also undertook a Masters Degree in Music at the University of Leeds specialising in composition, orchestration and film music. As a brass player he has performed with several Championship Section Brass Bands in some of the most prestigious concert venues in the UK. His compositions and arrangements are published by Faber Music, Kirklees Music and JustBrass and have been performed both nationally and internationally. Mr Cole has taught A level music at HGS for over 25 years and has special interests in film music, popular music history, jazz and 20th Century 'contemporary' music.



Mrs L. Broadbent BA, MA, PGCE

Teacher of Music, Head of Year 8, House Co-ordinator

Mrs Broadbent is in her eighth year at HGS having previously taught at Crossley Heath Grammar School. In 2015, she completed her music degree at the University of Leeds studying performance, composition and analysis. Following her PGCE, Mrs Broadbent has also completed her Masters Degree at the University of Huddersfield specialising in Music Education. A keen fan of musicals, Mrs Broadbent enjoys playing and composing in the musical theatre genre. She has previously worked as a piano peripatetic and dance teacher, and outside of work competes regionally and nationally in dance. She is looking forward to continuing to work with the talented, hardworking music students of HGS, both in lessons and in the extra-curricular groups.



Mrs N Fisher BMus, PGCE

Teacher of Music

Mrs Fisher is in her 4th year at HGS having previously taught at Beckfoot School in Bingley for 8 years. She has a wide range of experience teaching Music in a variety of educational settings including; middle, comprehensive and grammar schools. More recently she taught Music at Calderdale Post-16 College in Halifax.

In 2008 Mrs Fisher completed her Music degree at the University of Huddersfield studying modules in performance, composition and musicology. She is a keen woodwind player, the clarinet and saxophone in particular and also plays in Calderdale Big Band. The group play regular concerts and jazz festivals around the local area.



Our eight visiting peripatetic teachers are regular performers and have a huge specialised skill set between them. They are always on hand to assist you in your studies.

Mr D. Hall, MA (Oxon), MA, Dip ABRSM - Singing and Piano tutor

David brings over twenty years' experience as a professional singer and choir trainer. He possesses an MA in performance (singing) from Huddersfield University, and holds a diploma in singing from the Associated Board of the Royal Colleges of Music. He performs professionally around the region, specialising in musical theatre, oratorio, opera and English song, and has taught singing at Heckmondwike since 2014. He is also in demand as an accompanist, organist and choir trainer, and directs the HGS senior choir.

Miss L Rosborough, BMus - Drums & Tuned Percussion tutor

Lauren graduated from The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in 2017 where she studied Percussion and Drum kit. Lauren regularly writes her own compositions and arrangements for Percussion ensemble using both tuned and untuned writing. Alongside her teaching work Lauren plays professionally within orchestral and pit band settings.

Mr J. Russell, BA - Woodwind tutor

James plays saxophone touring and recording with Jamiroquai. He is also a well-respected composer and producer, who has contributed horn arrangements to the latest Jamiroquai album. Along with many respected big bands he has also appeared with Rat Pack Live In Las Vegas, the Roy Wood Band, Jason Donovan and as part of the live band on TVs 'The Voice'. James was responsible for writing " The Romeo And Juliet Jazz Suite " for Octet and Voice in fourteen parts that toured nationally.

Mr O. Dunster-Sigtermans, BA - Guitar tutor

Ollie graduated from Leeds Conservatoire of Music, studying Popular Music. He teaches all aspects of guitar, from classical to electric to bass and is also an examiner for RSL RockSchool. Studio experience includes electric, rhythm and lead guitar, acoustic guitar, drums, bass guitar and backing vocals. His main musical interest is rock music and has released and EP and single with his band. However, as a multi-instrumentalist, his versatility has allowed him to play in a wide variety of bands, including folk, indie and blues. He also regularly performs with a function band at various events, covering popular songs from the 60s to the present.

Musica Kirklees Staff

We also welcome in four of the Musica Kirklees staff each week, including Mr Dolling the director of Musica. They are all experts in their fields, and all have vast experience in performing and teaching.

Mr N. Dolling - Brass

Mrs J. Dolling - Piano

Miss A. Berry - Upper Strings

Mrs J Worboys-Hodgson - Lower Strings

Lead Music School - West Yorkshire Music Hub

This year we are delighted to have been chosen as a 'Lead Music' school in West Yorkshire, a new network of schools from all 5 local authority areas in West Yorkshire. The lead schools champion music education, developing and nurturing local school relationships and networks. We are representing the West Yorkshire Music Hub as the lead school in Kirklees for secondary and sixth form music provision.



Career Opportunities

Q: What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Music can lead to further study in music in higher education at degree level and may lead on to a career in the music industry or a related field.

Some examples of associated careers include -

Performer or Composer (pop, classical, jazz, theatre, etc.), TV/Radio Industry, Military Bandsman (RAF, Marines etc.), Teaching & Education, Music Therapist, TV/Film Composer, Internet & Media Publishing, Recording Engineer, Audio Engineering, Audio editing & Production, Music Software Development, Video Games industry, Music Librarian, Publishing & Editing, Music Journalist, Music Arranging, Event Management, Arts Administration, Instrument Manufacture



Scott Barnett (Alumni 2009) enrolled in the prestigious 'Tonmeister' Music Degree at the University of Surrey. After working at Real World Studios he is now a freelance Sound Engineer and Audio Programmer. He has worked with artists such as Peter Gabriel, Jeff Beck, Kasabian, Birdy, Beyoncé, London Grammar, Paloma Faith, George Ezra, Callum Scott and the film composer Harry Gregson-Williams.

Q: I don't want to do a degree in music, so should I still do it then?

Some students just wish to take music only as a 3rd (or sometimes 4th) A level, or simply because they are interested in it and/or enjoy it. Having an extra arts-based qualification on a UCAS application form provides a balanced mix of A levels. Remember any full A level counts towards your entry requirements to whichever degree course you may take and Music is highly regarded as an A level. If you are unsure, please speak to a member of the senior leadership or careers team for further advice.



Destinations

Here are examples of where our recent A level music students are currently studying. As you can see, music can lead to a range of degrees!

Student	Degree	Institution
Kyran	Music	Leeds Conservatoire
Eleanor	Politics & Economics	Durham University
Noah	Computer Game Audio	Futureworks School of Media
Lola	Music	Newcastle University
Hannah	Law	University of York
Tilly	Zoology	Bangor University
Zoe	Primary Education	Leeds Beckett University
Rowan	Law	University of Cambridge
Eleanor	Acting for stage and screen	The Northern School of Art
Molly	Theatre Performance	University of York
Beth	Biomedical Science	University of Sheffield
Eleanor	Music	University of Liverpool

Other recent A level music students have recently graduated with the following directly related degrees -

Degree in Music	- University of Huddersfield.
Degree in Music	- Durham University
Degree in Popular Music & Recording	- Salford University
Degree in Music production	- Leeds Conservatoire
Degree in Conducting	- Helsinki University, Sibelius Academy
Degree in Dance & Musical Theatre	- Bird College Conservatoire
Degree in Performing Arts	- Wilkes Academy of Performing Arts

Feedback from a Recent Student

"I really enjoyed studying music at A level. I found it changed the way I listen as you spend time analysing so many different kinds of music. The coursework elements were very enjoyable too as performing and composition are things I choose to do in my free time, so getting an A level from doing the things you love is fantastic! I studied Music and Sound for Image at the University of Huddersfield. I am now producing Library music for TV shows, as well as working with a digital sampling company."



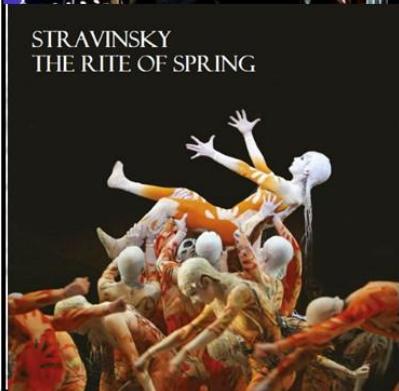
"I chose music A-level to challenge the way I approached music, and I can safely say it did! I gained a new appreciation for so many different styles, and how much contributed to the overall effect of a piece. I've found the skills I developed in the two years at A-level invaluable in my study at Bird College. I am able to pick music apart with a much higher depth of understanding, and so make more informed and intelligent choices in my performances. I am now pursuing the career of my dreams on stage as a musical theatre performer!"



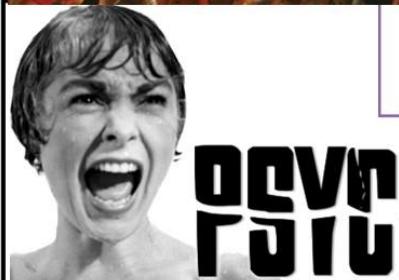
BATMAN
RETURNS



ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK
MUSIC BY DANNY ELFMAN



Hounds Of Love



PSYCHO
PSYCHO

ON WENLOCK EDGE

A.E. HOUSMAN

(1870-1956)

1. On Wenlock Edge

R. VAUGHN WILLIAMS

(1872-1958)

Allegro moderato



A Level Music

Contacts for further information

Email

Instagram

X (Twitter)

gcole@heckgrammar.co.uk

instagram.com/hgs_musicdept

x.com/HGSMusicDrama

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWMV3YtrG6g>