

# MUSIC TRANSITION WORK



SUMMER TASK FOR STUDENTS STARTING SEPTEMBER 2024

We look forward to seeing you in our Performing Arts Department this year!

## **PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING TASK:**

As you are probably aware the A level Music course is split into 3 components:

**30% is assessed in Performance.** By the end of year 2 you will be required to perform on your instrument or voice to approximately a grade 7 standard, a minimum of grade 6. Your continued personal practice therefore is incredibly important.

If you do not already practise on a regular basis with an understanding of what you need to do to improve, now is the time to get into this routine! Aim to practise with a focus on either a technical issue or a particular piece, or ideally both, at least 4 times a week. If you need some help with this and don't know where to start, or you have an issue with access to an instrument, email me as soon as possible so that I can offer support.

Remember that we offer subsidised instrumental and voice lessons here at college so that you can continue to develop your playing once you're here. If you would like to know more about the lessons please email me before you arrive so that I can provide you with the details and book the specialist teachers.

**30% is assessed in Composition.** By the end of year 2 you will be required to submit 2 pieces of work that total at least 6 minutes of music. We will be looking at different genres, instrumentation and influences in these lessons and you will develop your composition skills to be able to complete the set briefs given.

If you currently own a laptop or computer but don't have much experience of using music software, download 'Musescore 3' which is free composing software. It is not as sophisticated as 'Sibelius' which is what you will use at college, but it's a good way to get started and find out how to put your musical ideas into notation. If your reading of notation is not too secure now is also the time to practise reading both treble and bass clef music. The ABRSM theory workbooks are a good way to do this.

**40% is Appraisal and written paper assessed.** In this section we have 6 areas of study to cover with 3 set works to look at in depth. This includes orchestral music, vocal music, film music, fusion music, popular and jazz music and new directions. You will develop your analysis skills and discover how composers construct their music, what techniques they have used and why it is characteristic of a particular genre or tradition.

If you are not too sure about the periods in musical history and how to tell them apart, now is the time to start listening to music and reading up about certain styles and important developments.

The following tasks will help you to build up your basic knowledge so that you are ready to look at these in more depth in the lessons.

### **What equipment will I need?**

Although you do not need to buy any textbooks to take the A level Music course, the appraisal lessons will all be based around the collection of 13 setworks I have mentioned above. These are produced by Edexcel in a very large book called The Anthology. It is rather expensive so there is no obligation to buy it to complete the course, however, it will be very useful for you to have your own copy of the book. Details are below; remember, you may be able to buy it cheaper from an ex-student, or buy it second hand off a site such as Ebay or similar (especially before the beginning of the new term and before other students are told to buy it)

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**We are really looking forward to you starting your JLC journey with us in September. To prepare you for starting your course, please complete the following tasks:**

#### **Task 1:**

Research the 4 main periods in Music that we cover at A level:

- Baroque
- Classical
- Romantic
- Modern

For each one write a short summary to include: the dates that it covers, the main characteristics of the period, any developments of note and well known composers of the time. This can be in any format that you choose and should be illustrated as appropriate.

**Task 2:**

Research the 4 orchestral families of instruments:

- Strings
- Woodwind
- Brass
- Percussion

Complete a list of the usual instruments found in each family. How has the Orchestra developed from Baroque through to Modern times? You should illustrate your answer and give examples.

**Task 3:** The language that we use to describe the elements of music will become very familiar to you over the next 2 years. If you have taken GCSE these should already be known to you. Give a definition for each of the following words that we use as a means of analysing pieces of music from any period or genre:

- Melody
- Harmony
- Tonality
- Structure
- Texture
- Sonority
- Rhythm/Meter/Tempo

**Task 4:**

Within the first 3 weeks of the course, you will be asked to perform a short piece on your instrument or voice that you have prepared to demonstrate your current ability. Don't worry about this, but obviously it makes sense to continue practising over the summer holidays so that you are ready to do this in September. You may use an accompanist and you should ideally be playing at least a grade 4 exam piece.