

KS5 Curriculum: A Level Music Technology (Edexcel)

In Music Technology we aim to nurture and inspire enquiring and creative minds. In the KS5 curriculum, alongside the A Level specification requirements, we teach how Music Production works in a modern studio setting as well as the ability to analyse and evaluate existing productions from previous recording eras. Students develop a range of recording, mixing and composition skills using contemporary music technology. We place no restrictions on who can access the A Level course.

Audio engineering beyond the classroom is one way in which students can become part of our school community. Live sound engineering in public performances provides invaluable experience in real-world situations, adding to curriculum knowledge and inspiring post-18 paths. Alongside A Level musicians, Music Technology students become part of a thriving, open and encouraging Music family and form mature working relationships and lifelong friendships.

We take university and career aspirations seriously, making sure that every student is aware of the ever-increasing number of Music Technology roles and pathways in the UK Music, Theatre, Film & TV industries.

How Can Parents Help

A huge part of learning modern production skills is to look back through previous recording eras. The ability to listen through the music in an existing recording and analyse the recording methods and production techniques used is key to succeeding in the Year 13 examinations. It's also the best way to experiment with unfamiliar skills and methods when creating and recording new projects.

The most obvious way that parents can help students with this is to share their favourite music and ask their child to explain what recording era a song is from and what production techniques are being used. Studying this subject enables students to listen to music (even well-trodden ground) in a completely different way, hearing elements that regular listeners are unaware of. Share your music collection with your child, plus the music your parents used to listen to when you were a child. You'll be giving them important analytical practice and in return you should learn some very interesting facts about how the songs that you love were recorded.

We hope that you might consider encouraging your child to get involved with as many extra-curricular events as possible at school and to attend professional concerts to experience 'real-deal' musicians and engineers at work.

Follow Huntington Music Department on Twitter [@HuntSchoolMusic](https://twitter.com/HuntSchoolMusic) and use our website <https://huntschoolmusic.com/> for our latest news and resources.

Homework

3-4 hours of homework tasks are set on a weekly basis and provide an opportunity to:

1. Complete recording and composition coursework under controlled conditions.
2. Develop technology-based production skills.
3. Develop the subject knowledge and language required for the Component 3 and 4 exam papers.

Students are expected to develop their production skills in the studio during study periods, lunchtimes and after school. This experience is required to enable completion of high-quality coursework and high-level performance in exams.

It is also highly recommended that A Level Music Technology students take part in extra-curricular concerts and events to broaden their engineering skills in a live sound setting.

Feedback & Assessment

Assessments are designed to support students to make progress towards exam board requirements.

Components 1 & 2 – ‘Recording’ & ‘Composition’ (40% of the course): Students will be assessed on mini-recording and composition tasks as well as the two pieces they develop for their final submission.

Component 3 & 4 – ‘Listening and Analysing’ & ‘Production and Analysing’ (60% of the course): Students will undertake mock exams in June (Year 12) and Feb/March (Year 13). There will be other opportunities throughout the course to undertake partial-papers to assess student understanding of the production techniques, areas of study and listening skills that comprise these papers.

Students receive feedback throughout the course in the following ways:

Verbal feedback based on skills and outcomes is delivered during production activities. Clear targets for development and improvement are communicated in lesson time. Students will typically receive verbal feedback on some aspect of the course every lesson.

Written feedback is indicated throughout students’ folders on key written pieces, such as practice exam responses. Students also receive a pro-forma at the end of Year 12 with a summary of detailed feedback given for each recording/composition project completed that year. Written feedback will be provided as required during the Year 13 recording and composition processes for Components 1 and 2.

Peer feedback is used to discuss work in progress; it is structured, modelled and connected to assessment criteria and the mark scheme.

Music Tech – Year 12 Course Overview

	Component 1 – Recording (2ppc)	Component – Composing (2ppc)	Component 3 – Listening & Analysing (2ppc)	Component 4 – Producing & Analysing (2ppc)
Autumn 1	Recording Project 1 Introduction to software/hardware; capture of sound; audio editing; pitch correction; basic dynamic processing; reverb; mix down.	Introduction to Synthesis How synthesis is used to create sounds; how timbre is affected by a wide range of parameter	Capture of Sound Gain structure; how mics work; characteristics / suitability of mic types; placement techniques; polarity/freq response; advance mic techniques.	Sequencing Project Sequencing skills; Real time input; Step time input; Quantize; Editing
Autumn 2	Recording Project 2 Capture of sound (new instruments); audio editing; Pitch/rhythm correction; Dynamic Processing; Reverb; Stereo; EQ; Balance & Blend	Introduction to Sampling How sampling is used creatively in composition; pitch mapping; editing; looping; advanced parameters.	History of Recording Direct to tape mono recording; early mt recording; large scale analogue mt recording; digital recording & sequencing; DAW; emerging technologies	Music Styles Develop understanding of the following styles: Jazz & Blues; Rock; Soul, Disco, Funk; Reggae; Pop; Dance; Folk
Spring 1	Recording Project 2 continued	Creative Use of Effects Exploration of how effects can be utilised to create new sounds / effects / techniques.	The World of Analogue Analogue hardware attributes; Tape machines; Analogue consumer formats; Analogue effects; Analogue synths; Electronic instruments	Effects parameters Core and advanced parameters; Reverb; Delay; Modulated delay; Wah wah; Distortion; Tremolo; Vocal effects; Lo-fi
Spring 2	Recording Project 3 Capture of sound (new instruments); Effects; Mastering	Exploration of Composition to a Brief Exploration of “three brief” structure; skills for composing for film; song writing; sampling based compositions.	The World of Digital Digital hardware / software attributes; Digital sequencing / DAWs; Digital consumer formats; Digital recording and sampling hardware	Technical Numeracy Introduction to all numeracy elements; interpreting and labelling graphs; binary; MIDI data; bit depth; sample rate; units; calculations.
Summer 1	Recording Project 3 continued	Composition to a Brief practice Students select a brief and work on development of ideas into composition. Assessment Grids 7-11 explored and addressed as required.		Question 5 skills Practice of applied elements of the Comp 4 exam. Mixing qs; application of knowledge; problem solving
Summer 2	Final Recording Preparation Brief released in early June.	Composition to a Brief practice Students select a brief and work on development of ideas into composition. Assessment Grids 7-11 explored and addressed as required.	End of year exam preparation Revision; Practice papers; Exam technique; Post exam analysis of strengths/weaknesses	End of year exam preparation Revision; practice papers; exam technique; post exam analysis of strengths/weaknesses

Music Tech – Year 13 Course Overview

	Component 1 – Recording (3ppc)	Component 2 – Composing (3ppc)	Component 3 – Listening & Analysing (2ppc)	Component 4 – Producing & Analysing (2ppc)
Autumn 1	<p>Coursework: Capture & Editing Focus on Assessment grids 1-3; initial capture; EQ; Dynamic Processing</p>	<p>Coursework: Composition to a Brief Researching and selecting briefs; revisiting synthesis; sampling; creative use of FX; style & coherence</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: Capture of Sound Gain structure; how mics work; characteristics / suitability of mic types; placement techniques; polarity/freq response; advance mic techniques.</p>	<p>Area of Study 2 skills Acoustics; Monitor speakers; Leads and signals; Levels etc</p>
Autumn 2	<p>Coursework: Mixing & Mastering Effects; Balance & Blend; Stereo; Production</p>	<p>Coursework: Composition to a Brief Continue to work on chosen brief; emphasis on musical integrity/development alongside sound design.</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: History of Recording Direct to tape mono recording; early mt recording; large scale analogue mt recording; digital recording & sequencing; DAW; emerging technologies</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: Effects parameters Core and advanced parameters; Reverb; Delay; Modulated delay; Wah wah; Distortion; Tremolo; Vocal effects; Lo-fi</p>
Spring 1	<p>Revision: Capture of Sound All areas pertaining to capture of sound</p>	<p>Coursework: Composition to a Brief Completion of composition; editing of mix; completion of logbook.</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: The World of Analogue Analogue hardware attributes; Tape machines; Analogue consumer formats; Analogue effects; Analogue synths; Electronic instruments</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: Technical Numeracy & AOS2 Interpreting and labelling graphs; binary; MIDI data; bit depth; sample rate; units; calculations; acoustics; monitor speakers; leads and signals; levels etc</p>
Spring 2	<p>Revision: Editing & Mixing All areas pertaining to EQ, Dynamic Processing, Audio Editing, Automation, practice 18 markers</p>	<p>Revision: Synthesis, Sequencing, Sampling All areas pertaining to synthesis, sequencing and sampling</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: The World of Digital Digital hardware / software attributes; Digital sequencing / DAWs; Digital consumer formats; Digital recording and sampling hardware</p>	<p>Revision/Deepening: Question 5 skills Practice of applied elements of the Comp 4 exam. Mixing qs; application of knowledge; problem solving</p>
Summer 1	<p>Final exams preparation Submission of coursework; completion of logbooks; revision; practice papers & feedback; exam technique</p>			

KS5 Curriculum: Component 1 Recording – Progression Map

	Capture of Sound	Mixing Techniques	Recording Projects	Mastering
AO1 Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	Gain structure/pre-amps, microphones (types, placement, polarity, frequency response, accessories). Learn how to use the studio & Cubase to capture high quality recordings.	Audio editing, gating, compression, EQ, pitch-correction, stereo-field, reverb, delay, de-esser, amp simulators, automation, layering/group channels, side-chaining, parallel mixing, gated reverb/synth. Series of standalone tasks using existing audio plus 3 x recording projects to apply skills to.	Three Y12 recording projects to explore capture/mixing skills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wonderwall – bass, acoustic guitar, vox 2. In My Place – same plus amps 3. Creep – same plus drums These prep for real Comp 1 recording NEA in Y13.	Task: master an existing final mix. Task: remaster a historic recording to give it a more modern feel. Basic mastering of Comp 1 Recording NEA.
AO2 Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition	Learn how to use the studio & Cubase to capture high quality recordings.	All mixing skills applied to comp-based tasks and projects.	Capture and mixing aspects of Y12 recording projects develop skills and experience, which can be applied to Y12 and Y13 composition tasks and Comp 2 NEA.	Basic mastering of Comp 2 Composition NEA.
AO3 Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	Knowledge of capture, mics, positioning etc. applied in Comp 3 listening exam and Comp 4 production exam.	Identify and describe production techniques in exam audio stimuli.	Show knowledge of recording and editing techniques through analysis of exam audio stimuli.	What is mastering? Basic mastering skills in our studio, remastering historical recordings. Experience & knowledge demonstrated in Comp 3 and Comp 4 exams.
AO4 Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology.	Knowledge of capture used to analyse and evaluate in Section B 'high-tariff' questions in both Comp 3 and Comp 4 exams.	Analyse and evaluate production techniques in exam audio stimuli.	Analyse and evaluate recording and editing techniques through analysis of exam audio stimuli.	Knowledge of practices and development over time can be applied in Section B answers.
Homework	TEAMS based Forms quizzes, knowledge organiser notes/revision/quizzes.	Standalone mixing tasks set as EL on L Drive to be completed in studio and handed in on Teams.	Students expected to record and mix audio for projects/NEA outside of lesson time.	

KS5 Curriculum: Component 2 Composition – Progression Map

	Creative use of Effects	Synthesis	Sampling	Sequencing	Comp Projects
AO1 Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	Develop Comp 1 effects skills and explore new techniques in composition work.	Use of hardware and software synths.	Record audio to be used as samples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sequencing skills - Real time input - Step time input - Quantize - Editing 	Composing for Film Brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Composition skills: Harmony & Texture - Creating original synth timbres - Matching synth timbres - Automation of parameters Songwriting Brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Composition skills: Melody & Structure - Adapting words from stimulus - Creative use of FX Sampling / Sampling Brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pitch mapping - Editing - Looping - Advanced parameters - Composition skills: Rhythm Final Year 12 Composition Revisit the 3 briefs, choose one to focus on.
AO2 Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core and advanced parameters - Reverb - Delay - Modulated delay - Wah wah - Distortion - Tremolo - Vocal effects - Lo-fi 	How synthesis is used to create sounds How timbre is affected by a wide range of parameters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pitch mapping - Editing - Looping - Advanced parameters 		
AO3 Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	Knowledge and evaluation demonstrated in both Comp 4 production & analysing and Comp 3 listening & analysing exams.				
AO4 Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology.					
Homework	TEAMS based revision/testing and composition project development.				Development and completion of composition projects.

KS5 Curriculum: Component 3 Listening & Analysing – Progression Map

	History of Recording	Popular Music Styles	World of Analogue	World of Digital	Development of Tech
AO1 Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	Knowledge of historic production techniques and characteristics to aid creativity.	Knowledge of style technology and characteristics to aid creativity.	Knowledge of desired analogue characteristics and software emulations inspire creative and experimental mixing and production.	Knowledge of modern DAW benefits/production techniques to aid creativity.	Understand what modern digital equivalents are based on/trying to emulate to aid creativity.
AO2 Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition	Knowledge of historic production techniques and characteristics to aid creativity.	Knowledge of style technology and characteristics to aid creativity.	Knowledge of desired analogue characteristics and software emulations inspire creative and experimental mixing and production.	Knowledge of modern DAW benefits/production techniques to aid creativity.	Understand what modern digital equivalents are based on/trying to emulate to aid creativity.
AO3 Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	<p>Direct to tape mono, early multi-track, large-scale multi-track, digital recording and sequencing, DAW, emerging technologies.</p> <p>Knowledge of the history of recording technology demonstrated and applied in both exams, especially Comp 3 where this knowledge is essential.</p>	<p>Understanding technology and sounds associated with jazz, blues, rock & roll, rock, metal, punk, soul, disco, funk, reggae, commercial pop, hip hop, electronic & dance, media/gaming/film.</p> <p>Taught in parallel to history eras so chronological production knowledge can feed into styles knowledge.</p>	<p>Tape machines, analogue 'warmth', mixing consoles, consumer formats, effects, guitars & amps, electronic keyboard instruments, samplers & drum machines.</p> <p>Knowledge of historical technology and instruments applied to all sections of both Comp 3 and 4 exams.</p>	<p>Digital recording and sequencing and DAW production, consumer formats, effects, synthesisers, samplers, drum machines, benefits of MIDI/DAW.</p> <p>Knowledge of early to modern digital technology and benefits of DAW production applied to all sections of both Comp 3 and 4 exams.</p>	<p>Development of technology over time, linked to Comp 3 Section B Q6 'focus technology':</p> <p>Dynamic processing, reverb, distortion, sampling, sequencing.</p>
AO4 Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology.	Knowledge of development of technology and production techniques of different eras contribute to Section B responses in Comp 3.	Knowledge of styles and associated technology/production techniques can be applied in Section B responses in both Comp 3 and 4 exams.	'High tariff' questions in both Comp 3 and 4 exams require knowledge of analogue technology and instruments, linked to eras and styles.	'High tariff' questions in both Comp 3 and 4 exams require knowledge of digital technology and DAW production, linked to later eras and styles. Comparison with analogue methods (and benefits of digital practice) essential.	<p>Development of technology over time, linked to Comp 3 Section B Q6 'focus technology':</p> <p>Dynamic processing, reverb, distortion, sampling, sequencing.</p>
Homework	TEAMS revision and testing. Exam practice questions. Album of the week.	Album of the week	TEAMS revision and testing. Exam practice questions. Album of the week	TEAMS revision and testing. Exam practice questions. Album of the week	Revision (lesson slides) and practice Q6 exam responses.

KS5 Curriculum: Component 4 Producing & Analysing – Progression Map

	Principles of Audio and Sound Tech	Effects & Parameters	Technical Numeracy
AO1 Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	Knowledge of and use of content and equipment to aid capture and production of audio.		
AO2 Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition			
AO3 Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	Acoustics, monitor speakers, leads and signals, levels, audio file formats. Knowledge and understanding applied in Section A of both exams but especially Comp 4.	Core and advanced parameters, effects parameters, vocal effects, lo-fi. Knowledge and understanding applied in Section A of both exams but especially Comp 4.	Units, MIDI data, binary, graphical info, wave properties and calculations, sample rate and bit depth. Knowledge and understanding applied in Section A of both exams but especially Comp 4.
AO4 Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology.	Evaluation and analyses in exam extended answer questions in both papers but especially Comp 4 Section B.		
Homework	TEAMS revision and testing. Exam practice questions.		