



# A Level Music

## Heckmondwike Grammar Sixth Form



### Welcome to the Music Department

At Heckmondwike Grammar School every student 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 is studying music at GCSE and 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.

### Benefits of A Level Music at Heckmondwike Grammar School

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

- 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 will have great success at HGS.
- Traditionally we have small groups with very personalised support.
- There is a dedicated A level music study room & recording studio.
- The Edexcel course allows you to perform as many times as you wish and pick the best one to send off, rather than one final performance.
- We give wide support with auditions for University/Conservatoire entry
- What we need from you is to be diligent, enthusiastic and driven - along with being committed to our wider HGS music scene.

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

**In the previous 3 years our grades have been  
100% A\*-B in A level music.**

This detailed document will provide you with further information about **A level music** as well as general musical life at Heckmondwike. For further information about the sixth form and school in general, or if you wish to find out more about A level music, follow the links below.

Our Main School website is  
Our Sixth form website is here  
Our Twitter feed is

For more information about A level Music contact

<https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk>  
<https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/sixth-form/>  
<https://twitter.com/HGSMusicDrama>  
[gcole@heckgrammar.co.uk](mailto:gcole@heckgrammar.co.uk)



## A Level Music Course Overview

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 wide range of pieces and styles, including music technology. There are numerous opportunities to complete these during the course.

### Component 2 - Composing (30%) (NEA coursework)

Two compositions lasting a total of 6 minutes, including:

- 1 free choice (minimum 4 minutes)
- 1 brief assessing techniques (minimum 1 minute)

### Component 3 - Appraising Exam (40%)

The exam time is 2 hours 10 minutes. There are 6 areas of study, with set works in each area of study. Each student controls their own audio files with headphones and can answer the paper in any order, from short questions to extended responses.



Area of Study	Set Works
<b>Instrumental Music</b>	<b>Berlioz - Symphonie Fantastique: Movement 1</b> <b>Clara Schumann - Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17: movement 1</b>
<b>Music for Film</b>	<b>Bernard Herrmann, Psycho: 8 short cues, including the famous murder scene</b> <b>Danny Elfman - Batman Returns: 4 short cues</b>
<b>Popular Music and Jazz</b>	<b>The Beatles - Revolver: 4 songs including Eleanor Rigby</b> <b>Kate Bush - Hounds of Love: 3 songs</b> <b>Courtney Pine - Back in the Day: 3 songs</b>
<b>Fusions</b>	<b>Debussy - 'Estampes': Nos. 1 and 2 ('Pagodes' and 'La soirée dans Grenade')</b> <b>Anoushka Shankar - Breathing Under Water: 3 songs</b>
<b>Vocal Music</b>	<b>J. S. Bach - Cantata, Ein feste Burg: Movements 1, 2, 8</b> <b>Vaughan Williams - On Wenlock Edge: Nos. 1, 3 and 5</b>
<b>New Directions</b>	<b>Stravinsky, The Rite of Spring: 3 sections</b> <b>Kaija Saariaho - Petals for Violoncello and Live Electronics</b>



## Music Department Staff

Studying A level music at HGS enables you to have access to a wide range of musicianship from our dedicated music team. We traditionally have small groups which enables a high degree of personalised support from our music staff.

### Mr Graham 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 'modern' music. He 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 25 years and has special interests in film music, popular music history, jazz and 20th Century 'modern' music.



### Miss Lucy Sutcliffe BA, MA, PGCE - Teacher of Music + Head of Year 10, House Co-ordinator

Miss Sutcliffe is in her fifth 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 across the 3-year course. Following her PGCE, Miss Sutcliffe has also recently completed her Masters Degree at the University of Huddersfield specialising in Music Education. A keen fan of musicals, Miss Sutcliffe 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.



### Mrs Natalie Fisher BMus, PGCE - Teacher of Music

Mrs Fisher is new to the school this year having previously taught at Beckfoot School in Bingley and Calderdale college. 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 six 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 David Hall, MA (Oxon), MA, Dip ABRSM - Singing and Piano tutor

David brings twenty years' experience as a professional singer, choir trainer and piano accompanist. 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.

### Mr James Russell, BA - Woodwind tutor

James plays saxophone, touring and recording with artists such as Jamiroquai. He is also a well-respected composer and producer, who has contributed horn arrangements to the latest Jamiroquai album. He has 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'.

### Mrs Amy Preece, BMus, LRSM, DipABRSM - Strings, Piano and Theory tutor

Amy has a 1st class honours degree in music along with performance diplomas in violin (LRSM) and piano (DipABRSM). She is particularly interested in Baroque and Classical compositions along with contemporary composition. She recently reached the final of a composition competition taking part in a workshop with Master of the Queens Music, Judith Weir.





**Mr Nick Dolling, BMus - Brass tutor**

Nick is a graduate from the University of Huddersfield and has performed with many orchestras and Championship Brass Bands on both Trombone and Tuba. He is assistant director of 'Musica', the former Kirklees Music School, running and organising a wide range of music ensembles and events in the local area and nationally such as Music for Youth.

**Miss Lauren 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. Alongside her teaching work Lauren plays professionally within orchestral and pit band settings.

**Mr Oliver 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 a tutor for Rock School UK. Studio experience includes electric, rhythm and lead guitar and acoustic guitar, drums, bass guitar and backing vocals. Hi main love is rock music and has released an EP and single with his band.

## Facilities

**Main Music Area**

Includes 1 large classroom with a new Yamaha Clavinova digital piano, drum kit, 16 keyboards, PA with 4 radio mics, a large store area and 4 practice rooms each with full size digital pianos and 2 with drum kits.

**Computer Lab**

A 31 PC music lab with Sibelius Ultimate & Cubase installed. Each PC has a MIDI keyboard and a Focusrite Scarlett audio interface.



**A Level Music Study Room and Recording Studio**

This is built around a Focusrite professional digital multi-track recording system and a wide range of professional microphones. The area includes a control room and live room, a pro drum kit, digital piano, guitars and amps. There are an additional 4 purpose-built very hi-spec music technology computers running Sibelius and Cubase with Focusrite audio interfaces. This is a perfect room for A level music students to study, work on coursework, practice or experiment in all kinds of music making!

**Further Equipment**

In addition to a full range of general classroom keyboards and percussion we have a full set of Samba drums and African drums, a professional xylophone and glockenspiel, 4 timpani and a variety of guitars, mics and amplifiers.

**Hutton Studio and Swann Hall**

Many of our concerts, recitals and some rehearsals take place in our main school hall or drama studio. These are both fitted with PA audio systems and lighting displays. There are two acoustic pianos available - one Steinway Grand & one new upright piano.



## Extra-Curricular Activities

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



Rehearsals are usually in the music area, although for large ensembles such as the Concert Band we use the Main Hall or Drama studio - both with lighting and sound systems.

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 regular London Musical Theatre trip. Each year we take our A level students to a variety of professional concerts, shows and productions.

The department has many concerts and productions over the year as well as our full school musical which are of a high standard. Working with the drama department, our previous shows have included musicals such as 'We Will Rock You', 'Little Shop of Horrors', 'Return to the Forbidden Planet', 'West Side Story' and 'The Wiz'. Last year was 'Grease' and this year will be 'The Addams Family'! Each show has its own pit band made up of HGS music students.



Our regular themed concerts have featured ideas such as *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.





## Career Opportunities

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*



## Recent Destinations

Destinations of our recent A level Music Students

Degrees in Music at the Universities of Leeds, Huddersfield, Durham, Sheffield

Degree in Popular Music & Recording at Salford University / Media City

Degree in Music production at Leeds Conservatoire

Degree in Conducting at the Helsinki University, Sibelius Academy

Degree in Professional Dance & Musical Theatre at Bird College of Performing Arts

Degree in Performing Arts at LiPA

Degree in Musical Theatre at Arts Ed London

Other music students have gone on to study degrees in medicine, law, sports science etc..

## Alumni

*Scott Barnett (HGS 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, Birdy, Beyoncé, London Grammar, Paloma Faith, George Ezra and the film composer Harry Gregson-Williams.*



*Meg Darcy (HGS 2018) completed A levels in Music, Drama and Maths at Heckmondwike. She graduated from the famous Bird Conservatoire of Dance and Musical Theatre in 2021. After an initial role of Rhoda in 'White Christmas the Musical' UK tour, she then secured the part of Asher's Wife and Understudy to the lead role of Narrator in the UK tour of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat in 2022, working with Jason Donovan and Alexandra Burke. She is currently on tour with the production in Canada*