



## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR A-LEVEL MUSIC**

### **Performance:**

For A Level Music you need to be able to play a wide selection of music on your instrument to a high standard. To prepare you need to practise every day to develop your instrumental/vocal skills and to build your stamina so you can play/sing for longer periods of time. Develop your repertoire by learning new pieces in a variety of styles.

### **Composing:**

To develop your composing skills, start with composing for your instrument. Try the following activities:

- Create chord patterns within different keys on keyboard or guitar.
- Improvise over these chord patterns on a melody instrument or use your voice.
- Create melodies in different styles or for different purposes (e.g. a fanfare, a romantic theme, a melody for a funeral etc.)
- Use different stimuli to give you ideas for creating a melody or song: a piece of art or sculpture, a story or film, a poem or even another piece of music.

For A Level you will need to compose in a style of your choosing so experiment, and find out what style you enjoy composing in the most.

### **Listening:**

You need to be able to analyse music at A Level and the more you listen to music the more you will be able to recognise what is happening. Any listening helps to develop your listening skills but specifically listen to the following:

- **Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven:**

This could be symphonies, concerto's and chamber music (small groups)

- **Popular Song - Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band:**

Try listening to some of the following artists: Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Robert Johnson, Blind Lemon Jefferson, T-Bone Walker, Ella Fitzgerald, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Nina Simone

Also listen to songs by these composers: Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin

(There are lots of recordings on YouTube and Spotify).

***As you listen try analysing the music using the musical elements: Instruments, dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre, melody, rhythm, articulation, structure, harmony.***