

RHS MUSIC DEPARTMENT

GCSE → A LEVEL TRANSITION



TASK 1: THEORY

It is important you have the basics of Music Theory before starting the A Level course. This Open University course will introduce you to Grade 1-3 Music Theory and you can print a certificate on completion.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/music/an-introduction-music-theory/content-section-0?active-tab=content-tab>

Using the website below, complete:

- All Basic lessons
- All Rhythm and Metre
- All Scale and Key signatures
- All Intervals
- Chords (Introduction to chords and Triad inversions)
- Diatonic chords (Diatonic triads and Roman Numeral Analysis: Triads)
- Chord progressions (non-harmonic tones)

<https://www.musictheory.net/lessons>

TASK 2: MUSIC HISTORY

Read through the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th Century pages, listen to the examples and fill in the boxes below.

<https://alevelmusic.com/4-short-history-of-music/>

What is your favourite piece and why?

What is your least favourite track?

Describe two aspects of this track that you think contribute to your opinion:

If you had to compose a piece that took inspiration from one of these tracks, which one would you choose and why?

Listen to and read about the Baroque and Classical eras on the Short History of Music on www.alevelmusic.com. Identify THREE features of music that are different at the beginning of the Classical era compared to the Baroque.

Listen to and read about the Romantic period on the Short History of Music on www.alevelmusic.com. Then do some of your own research on a Romantic composer, chose either Grieg, Brahms or Chopin. Write a short biographical paragraph about the composer, explaining how they are typically Romantic.

TASK 3: WIDER LISTENING

Make a playlist that includes music by the following artists and listen to it. I have put in brackets the ones we study but getting a good feel for the artists music throughout their musical career is advised as they could come up in your listening exam:

- Joni Mitchell (A case of you, Big yellow taxi and River are good starting points)
- Stevie Wonder (Supersition, Don't you worry 'bout a thing and Sir Duke)
- Daft Punk (Harder Better Faster Stronger, Get lucky, Around the World)

- Beyonce
- Muse
- Labrinth

TASK 4: PERFORMANCE

- Polish up a piece you are already working on and video it. You could then share it with your friends and family. In due course, I will ask you to email me a video of you playing a short extract. If you want to get ahead of the game send it to me at r.d'souza@rugbyhighschool.co.uk . You might find a recorded accompaniment on Youtube for pieces that are very regularly played for grades etc.
- Resurrect an older piece that you really enjoyed. You will be able to play it better now you are a bit more advanced. Listen to some performances of the piece on Apple Music/Spotify/Youtube. What do you like about these performances? Is there anything you can incorporate. Again, you could video your performance.
- Look at the graded lists for the level at which you are currently playing. Listen to the pieces and choose one to learn from scratch. You can use recorded performances to help you learn the piece and decide how to play it.

TASK 5: CHORD IDENTIFICATION

Identify the chords using roman numerals in the examples below. Stave one are major keys, and stave 2 is minor. Numerals will be capitalised for major triads, lowercase for minor triads, a cross added for augmented triads and a circle added for diminished triads (see examples in the table below).

<i>Chord type</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Major chords	Upper case	I, IV
Minor chords	Lower case	ii, vi
Diminished chords	Lower case with small circle	vii ^o , ii ^o
Augmented chords	Upper case with small plus sign	III+

a) Major keys

Musical notation for major keys. The first staff shows Eb major (one flat) with chords I, IV, vi^o, and vi. The second staff shows C major (no sharps or flats) with chords I, IV, V, and vi. The third staff shows G major (two sharps) with chords I, IV, V, and vi. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature, and chord symbols below the notes.

b) Minor keys

Musical notation for minor keys. The first staff shows Eb minor (one flat and one sharp) with chords i, iv, V, and vi. The second staff shows C minor (no sharps or flats and one sharp) with chords i, iv, V, and vi. The third staff shows G minor (two sharps and one flat) with chords i, iv, V, and vi. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature, and chord symbols below the notes.