



## **A level Music Technology**

### **Who is this course for?**

It is designed for students of music to study music and technology through the practical components of sequencing, recording, arranging and composing. Students should have a broad minded view of a wide range of musical styles, and an interest in the science and electronic aspects of musical equipment. The course includes some physics, maths, electronics and IT as well as musical aspects.

### **What are the entry criteria**

As well as the standard GCSE requirements, the course requires that you are fluent in reading traditional sheet music (this does not include guitar tablature).

You should have attained grade 5 on your instrument and grade 5 theory of music examinations. If you believe you have reached this standard but have not taken the exams, entry is still possible via audition and a theory test. Please speak to staff in the department who can advise you.

GCSE Music is not required (it is possible to gain GCSE Music without being able to play an instrument or read music!)

## **The music department at Wyke Sixth Form College**

The Music Department wishes to imbue students with a love of music and to educate and touch the soul through the study of music as a practical and academic discipline; to cultivate an ethos of hard work, high standards and high expectations from both staff and students; to enable students to fulfil their musical potential in concert performances, academic study and public examinations through the thorough preparation and delivery of all lessons and rehearsals; for students to experience an excellent rapport with music staff and to enjoy their musical studies; for students to experience a pleasant, disciplined and happy learning environment; for students to consider themselves improved musicians as a result of their learning at Wyke.

- **Gareth Reaks: Director of Music**

Teacher of A level Music

Director of all music making including rehearsals and concerts  
Co-ordinator of instrumental teaching  
Co-ordinator of all musical activities and departmental administration

- **Adam Hembrough: Teacher of Music Technology**

Teacher of AS/A2 Music Technology  
Co-ordinator of and supervisor for Extended Project Qualification  
Music Department Technician

- The Music Department is supported by the **Hull Music Service** which provides instrumental tuition to Wyke students and prepares them for ABRSM, Trinity and Guildhall examinations as appropriate.

## **Exam Board**

Edexcel

## **Course Details**

The course consists of four units, 2 in each year. The units are:

### **YEAR 1**

#### **Unit 1**

A portfolio of practical work including sequencing, recording and arranging.

Task 1: Sequencing. Students will recreate a commercial track set by the board. The board provide sheet music for this, which the students use in conjunction with a recording of the original, to recreate the work in a computer environment.

Task 2: Recording. Students will create a studio recording of a commercially available piece of music, consisting only of live musicians. The piece chosen must fall within guidelines set by the board.

Task 3: Arranging. Students arrange a stimulus piece of music set by the board in an alternative style, also set by the board.

The first term will be mostly devoted to learning the software, studio equipment and the electronics and physics required. From after Christmas, most of the lesson time will be devoted to completing the tasks.

#### **Unit 2**

A written exam on the development of music technology, popular music styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, aural discrimination and dictation.

### **YEAR 2**

### Unit 3

A further portfolio including more advanced recording work and composition.

Task 1: Sequencing. Students will recreate a commercial track set by the board. The board does not provide sheet music for this, the students work out their own score from a recording of the original, to recreate the work in a computer environment. Live vocals are then added in the studio.

Task 2: Recording. Students will create a studio recording of a more complex commercially available piece of music, consisting only of live musicians. The piece chosen must fall within guidelines set by the board.

Task 3: Composing. Students compose a piece of music to a stimulus set by the board in a computer environment, making use of synthesis and sampling as an integral part of the work.

### Unit 4

A written exam and a practical mixing exam.

## **How the course is delivered**

4 lessons per week with the music technology teacher, Adam Hembrough. The lessons are split between the theory and principles of music technology (including the scientific and electronic aspects), and practical studio and computer-based work. Much like other practical art-based subjects, a good deal of time is spent working under your own initiative, as you will be undertaking your own coursework.

## **Departmental Enrichment**

In addition to academic courses the department thrives on its practical work. Music ensembles also exist as enrichment for both examination and non-examination students. There is a busy schedule of weekly rehearsals and a diverse range of groups including College Choir, wind, string and brass ensembles, chamber groups and big band. There is also the opportunity for students to perform as soloists. Rehearsals culminate in the Christmas and Spring Concerts. In addition there is the annual lunchtime concert at Wesley Chapel, Harrogate in the Spring and the end of year Summer Recital for first year musicians to encourage students towards solo performance. The department also supports students continuing to learn music theory.

## **Student success**

Fiona l'Anson: worked in Vietnam as a radio and TV anchor

Liam Waugh: Musician in West End theatres

Matthew McCloud: Drummer, recently played in a band supporting Ellie Goulding

## **What does this course lead to**

There are a number of different courses that universities offer. Some are more creative, whilst others are aimed more at the technical, electronic or scientific aspects. Many traditional music courses also offer technology-based modules.

Many musicians run their own businesses, allowing them to work in many fields such as performing, composing, teaching, recording, mixing, audio restoration and so on. Careers can include broadcast, technical engineer, production, audio forensics, studio design and the like.

## **What can I do now that would help prepare me for this course?**

The most important thing is to ensure that your musical skills are good; fluency of reading music in both treble and bass clefs, a thorough working knowledge of key signatures, scales and chords is needed from the outset of the course. You should revise the grade 5 theory syllabus, and work on your instrumental skills. It is not required to have any prior knowledge or experience of recording or music software.