Key Stage 3 Curriculum Intent

The aim of the KS3 Music curriculum is for students 'to make more music, think more musically and consequently become more musical' (Ofsted, 2021).

The curriculum has inclusivity at its heart with all children given opportunities to play an instrument, perform, compose and listen to music. The curriculum is designed as a spiral, where students constantly revisit musical concepts to build their tacit, procedural and declarative knowledge of music. The curriculum is built of individual units where students listen, perform and compose different styles of music with an emphasis on high musical quality. The units are sequenced in a way to encourage progression within 3 areas: Technical, Constructive and Expressive.

Technical

Students develop their performance skills on several instruments. Throughout the key stage, students use their voices to sing expressively and develop their aural understanding and awareness. In year 7, they learn an orchestral instrument for most of the year. In years 8 and 9, they learn to play several band instruments with a particular focus on keyboard skills.

Throughout the key stage, students develop the technical skill and knowledge to use music technology software to perform and compose. Students develop their understanding of Western notation and aural awareness through Kodaly method. Students develop their performance skills by performing regularly in the classroom. Students develop their ensemble skills through performing in a whole class and in small groups.

Constructive

Students will develop aural and conceptual understanding of the Musical Elements: rhythm, metre, tempo, melody, harmony, tonality, structure, sonority, dynamics, and texture. All engagement with music will develop students' conscious and unconscious understanding of the musical elements. In year 7 there is initially focus on metre, rhythm and tempo before moving on to melody and tonality. In year 8 and beyond, students develop their understanding of these elements while also focusing on harmony. Sonority, dynamics, structure and texture are discussed throughout.

Expressive

Students will experience a range of musical styles from different times and places. Through experiencing these musics, students will develop an understanding of different musical meanings and purposes.

In year 7, students learn about folk styles, Kpanlogo music and Western Classical music. In year 8, students study a range of styles influenced by the Atlantic slave trade - Spirituals, Blues, Funk, Reggae and Samba – as well as Film Music. In year 9, students study Popular Music, Music from the Western Classical Tradition, Jazz, Bhangra and fusions.

Sequence

The music curriculum at Pimlico Academy develops Year 7 to Year 9 students' musical knowledge progressively, starting with basic concepts and advancing to more complex ones.

Year 7:

Students begin by learning the fundamental elements of music related to time: rhythm, tempo, and metre. These concepts are introduced first because understanding pulse (metre) is the most basic aspect of music, which leads to the understanding of how notes fit within the pulse (rhythm) and its speed (tempo). Students must grasp these ideas before adding pitches (melody). Next, students explore pitch (melody and tonality) through theory, singing, and instrumental performance. They combine their knowledge of pulse and rhythm while being introduced to music technology, setting the foundation for Year 8.

Year 8:

Year 8 begins by revisiting the basics from Year 7, expanding on rhythm and tonality through the study of Spirituals. Once students have a solid understanding of pitch for creating melodies and tonalities, harmony is introduced through genres such as Blues, Reggae, and Funk. We embed an understanding of chord tones: root, 3rd, 5th, to enable them to understand 7th chords later in the year and later in year 9, the chord functions (I, IV, V). The historical influence of African diaspora musicians is examined during this exploration. Students then develop their music technology skills further through the Funk and Film Music units, setting them up for more advanced work in Year 9. Later in the year, students revisit rhythm in the Samba unit and deepen their understanding of complex rhythmic structures.

Year 9:

The curriculum in Year 9 broadens to focus on musical structures and how composers use elements like harmony, texture, and melody to create contrast and change. This includes an exploration of structures in popular and Jazz music. Students begin to understand the functions of chords within a key by being introduced to the roman numeral system for chord names. Key rhythmic concepts (such as swing and syncopation) and harmonic ideas (extended harmony) are further explored in the Jazz unit. Students revisit theoretical knowledge of pitch while studying Western Classical melodies, all while continuing to develop their music technology skills. In the Bhangra unit, students refine their music technology skills by exploring sampling, effects, sequencing, and composition, preparing

them for the composition component of the GCSE.
The year concludes with students applying their knowledge by recreating their own popular songs.

Curriculum Map

		Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Year 7	Curriculum topics	Kpanlogo Music	Music Tracks: Orchestral Instrument tuition				Introduction to Logic
	Musical Opportunities	Year 7 singing day				Music Tracks Concert	
Year 8	Curriculum topics	Spirituals	Blues	Samba/Funk	Samba/Funk	Reggae/Music for Stage and Screen	Reggae/Music for Stage and Screen
	Musical Opportunities			World Music Enrichment Day		Musical Trip	
Year 9		Popular Music: Practical	Melodies from the Western Classical Tradition	Jazz	Popular Music: Technology	Bhangra	Popular Music

KS4 Music: Eduqas GCSE Music Intent

The KS3 curriculum provides students with opportunities to perform, develop basic keyboard skills (including playing chords), understand the fundamentals of Logic, explore all elements of music, compose and perform their own melodies, and listen to and evaluate music. The KS4 curriculum builds on these skills. The KS3 curriculum is designed to encourage progression in three areas: Technical, Constructive, and Expressive. We continue to plan for progression in these areas throughout the course, which leads to success in the three components of the GCSE course: Component 1 – Performing; Component 2 – Composition; Component 3 – Appraising.

The **technical knowledge** developed throughout KS3 and KS4 supports students in their performances (component 1), composition skills (component 2), and aural discrimination (component 3).

The **constructive knowledge** built in both KS3 and KS4 helps students compose music using a full range of musical elements within the conventions of music (component 2) and enables them to accurately describe the music they hear (component 3).

The **expressive knowledge** cultivated throughout KS3 and KS4 helps students create meaningful and expressive music (components 1 and 2) and understand the significance of music from different times and for different purposes (component 3).

Component 1: Performance
Students will record a minimum of 2 performances by the end of the course; one of which must be an ensemble performance. With their music teacher, students will select the instruments they will play for these performances. They are expected to practice on their instrument/s throughout the course, either individually or in an ensemble, as part of their home learning. Students apply their performance skills throughout the course in practical tasks that help build their constructive knowledge of music.

Component 2: Composition
Students have a dedicated composition lesson once a week. At the start of the course, they receive a grounding in some of the constructive knowledge of harmony and composition. They then begin to develop their technical skills, starting with short pieces of music and progressing towards two compositions by the end of Year 11.

Component 3: Appraising
The GCSE course is structured around constructive knowledge of the musical elements, with examples from various styles and genres used throughout the areas of study. Students learn how each element is applied across the following areas of study: Musical Forms and Devices (within the Western Classical Tradition), Music for Ensemble (specifically Chamber Music, Musicals, Jazz, and Blues), Film Music, and Popular Music.

Sequence

Year 10
The course begins with an exploration of fundamental elements related to time: metre, rhythm, and tempo. These are studied in more depth than at KS3. For example, students revisit simple time signatures and rhythmic divisions, then progress to more complex rhythmic devices and compound time.

Next, students explore elements related to pitch: melody, harmony, and tonality. They receive a thorough grounding in the theory of tonality and harmony through practical theory exercises before they begin composing using these elements. Students learn how to hear and describe melodies in a wide range of musical pieces before composing their own.

The course then moves on to elements that describe the "bigger picture": texture and structure, as well as the sound quality elements of sonority and dynamics. Students study how these elements are combined in various pieces from different areas of study to create meaning and purpose.

By the end of Year 10, students will have completed one of their final compositions, using musical elements to create purposeful pieces.

Year 11
After developing a strong understanding of the musical elements, students in Year 11 study two set works before revisiting all the musical elements and practicing exam techniques as part of their revision.

In Year 11, students are given the set brief for their second composition and complete this alongside refining their first composition. Students will also record all of their Component 1 performances in Year 11, with multiple opportunities to record their performances.

Curriculum Overview – Music

Curriculum Map

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Year 10	Time: Rhythm, Metre & Tempo	Melody	Texture Sonority	Dynamics Structure	Harmonic Devices Elements in context: Amy Winehouse *Back to Black* & Purcell *Rondeau*	Elements in context: Bach *Badinerie* & Toto *Africa*
	Harmony & Tonality through composition					
Year 11	Set works	Set works	Coursework Revision	Revision	Revision	
		Performance 1		Performance 2		

KS5 Music: Eduqas A level Music Curriculum Intent

By the end of KS4, students have developed skill on an instrument to perform a range of pieces of at least a Grade 4 standard; students have composed a number of pieces that have demonstrated good musical ideas, development, competence of adequate use of the musical elements, structure and stylistic coherence; and students can use musical terminology to describe the musical elements heard in a range of pieces.

The A level Music course builds on these skills with a further understanding of music in the components of performing, composing and appraising.

Component 1: Performing

Students will demonstrate a high level of technical ability to perform demanding pieces accurately and expressively. They will participate in several ensembles through extra-curricular opportunities to broaden their understanding of different musical traditions and purposes. Students will perform regularly throughout the course to prepare for their end of course recital in the Spring term of year 13.

Component 2: Composing

Students will study the conventions of harmony and tonality to compose pieces requiring greater technical control within the Western Classical Tradition. Students will study the conventions of composition in other genres including Popular Music and Music for Stage and Screen to compose music with great technical control within these styles. Students will develop their technical skills in music technology software to effectively realise musical ideas.

Component 3: Appraising

Students will study the development of music within the Western Classical Tradition by studying the development of the Symphony (Area of Study A) and then further by studying developments in 20th Century Music (Area of Study E). Alongside this, students develop their aural understanding of other styles including Popular Music, Songs from Musicals and Jazz.

Sequence

Western Classical Tradition (Areas of Study A and E): Students begin the course by studying how the musical elements are used in less complex orchestral formats chosen from the Early-Classical era. They explore how this range of genres evolved over time into the Sonata Form which was popularised by the Mannheim Orchestra. They then move towards more complex symphonies of the Classical Period, pausing to analyse the first of the two-set works (Haydn's Symphony 104).

After consolidating their understanding of the Symphony during the Classical period, students explore the role Beethoven played in the transition from the Classical Symphony into the Romantic period. Students will then pause to analyse the second of the two-set works (Mendelssohn's Symphony no. 4).

then learn about the symphony in the Late Romantic Period. First, students explore the breakdown of the Symphony as a form, learning about the Programmatic Symphony and the idea of 'absolute' music. The course ends with the breakdown of the harmonic system achieved through Expressionism and Serialism. Students will study the two set works (Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano, Mvt. II by Poulenc and Three Nocturnes, Number 1, Nuages by Debussy). At this point students will understand the entire cycle of the Symphonic development, from conception to destruction. Students also learn about the Neo-Classical movement and understand how the genres they have previously studied reappeared in the early 20th Century.

Songs from Musicals (Area of Study C): Students study Area of Study C in parallel to Area of Study A, starting in term 2 of year 12. They explore songs from Rogers and Hammerstein, Bernstein, Sondheim, Schonberg, Lloyd Webber and Schwarz. This will lead on to being able to compose within this style later in year 12.

Popular Music (Area of Study B): Students study Area of Study B from Term 4 of year 12. They take the decades of the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s and analyse the genres that emerged in these years. This will lead on to compositions using the conventions of pop music.

Composition: Students begin the course with a thorough grounding of harmony through practical tasks. Students will build up to longer composition tasks and work towards composing a longer piece in Ternary form by the end of term 3 in year 12. Following this, students will use these compositional devices to compose in another tradition by composing a song from a musical.

In year 13, students will further develop their understanding of the conventions of the Western Classical Tradition in their brief composition.

Curriculum Map

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Term 1</th><th>Term 2</th><th>Term 3</th><th>Term 4</th><th>Term 5</th><th>Term 6</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Year 12</td><td rowspan="2">Pre-classical Orchestral Forms</td><td>Classical Orchestral Forms</td><td>Classical-Romantic Transition</td><td>Romantic Orchestral Music</td><td>Neo-Classicism and Impressionism</td><td>Expressionism and Serialism</td></tr>
<tr><td>Musicals by Rogers and Hammerstein and Bernstein</td><td>Musicals by Sondheim and Schonberg</td><td>Musicals by Lloyd Webber and Schwarz</td><td>Pop in the 50s, 60s and 70s</td><td>Pop in the 80s and 90s</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Classical Techniques & Composition</td><td colspan="3">Composing a Song from a Musical</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Year 13</td><td>Revising Pre-Classical and Classical Symphonies</td><td>Revising Classical and Romantic Symphonies</td><td rowspan="2">Revising Impressionism, Expressionism and Serialism</td><td rowspan="2">Refining Essay Style</td><td rowspan="2">Refining Exam Technique</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Revising Musicals</td><td>Revising Musicals</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Classical Techniques & Composition</td><td>Coursework</td><td>Final recital</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

KS5 Music Technology: Edexcel Music Technology A Level Intent

Curriculum Intent

The Music Technology curriculum develops creative, technically fluent and analytically confident young producers, engineers and composers. Students gain mastery in sound theory, studio practice, DAW-based production, synthesis and sampling, and critical listening. By the end of Year 13, they can produce professional-standard recordings and compositions, and write sophisticated analytical responses.

We aim for students to:

- Build deep disciplinary knowledge of audio, recording history and technology.
- Develop expert technical skills using industry-standard tools and workflows.
- Become independent creators, capable of sound design, recording, composition and evaluation.

Sequence

Our Music Technology curriculum is designed as a clear, progressive journey from foundational knowledge in Year 12 to advanced, industry-level practice in Year 13. Students develop the technical, creative and analytical expertise needed to produce high-quality work and to understand the evolution of music technology across the last century.

Year 12: Building Strong Foundations

Learning begins with the fundamentals of sound: how audio behaves, how it is captured and how it is transformed through analogue and digital systems. This scientific grounding supports everything students go on to do in the studio. Alongside this, students explore the early eras of recorded music, gaining an understanding of how technology has shaped musical style and production practice.

Students develop core DAW skills through structured sequencing projects, learning MIDI programming, drum sequencing, synthesis basics, and automation. Early practical recording tasks introduce microphone types, polar patterns, and session planning, allowing students to gain confidence in the studio.

As the year progresses, the curriculum introduces more complex creative techniques. Students explore synthesis in greater depth, learn sampling and audio manipulation, and study milestone moments in recording history, from early multitrack techniques to the development of the sampler. These historical points are always connected to practical work, with students recreating stylistic sketches to understand how technology informs musical choices.

Throughout Year 12, students also learn the foundations of mixing: organisation, EQ, dynamics, reverb, delay and stereo field control. The year culminates in independent composition and mixing tasks, enabling students to apply their developing skills with independence and creativity.

Year 13: Mastery, Depth and Professional Application

Year 13 revisits earlier concepts with greater technical depth and precision. Students study advanced synthesis, digital audio theory, sampling resolution, and the technical numeracy required for analytical exam responses. Recording skills are taken to a professional level through full multi-track studio sessions, including drum recording, bass re-amping and detailed mic placement techniques.

Students refine their compositional skills, working to set briefs that require sophisticated sound design, hardware integration and advanced automation. They also develop high-level critical listening skills, studying stereo imaging, phase coherence, editing workflow, analogue and digital formats, and the sonic characteristics of different processing techniques.

In the final term, the focus turns to mastering and refinement. Students explore loudness management, final EQ and compression, stereo widening and format-specific mastering requirements. They also study acoustics and monitoring environments to understand how professional studios achieve accurate sound.

Alongside this, structured exam preparation ensures students can respond confidently and analytically to listening and production questions. By the end of Year 13, students produce a portfolio of polished, professional-standard work and demonstrate a deep understanding of the technological, historical and creative forces that shape modern music production.

Curriculum Overview – Music

Curriculum Map

		Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Year 12	**Principles theory and analysis**	Theory of sound Early 1900s-50s	Synthesizers 1960s	Guitars and effects 1970s-90s	Sequencers, LFOs, MIDI 1980s	Exam practice	New era DAWs
	DAW, synths and sampling – leading to C composition	DAW and Synthesis Sequencing project	Sampling Sequencing project	Music Tech composition skills	Coursework: composition	Coursework: composition	Coursework: composition
	Component 1: recording	Group recording project	Mixing	Individual mix	Coursework: recording	Coursework: recording	Coursework: recording
Year 13	**Component 3: Listening**	Synthesis revision	Exam practice	Analogue v digital	Listening revision	Exam practice	
	Component 4: Producing	Numeracy, binary, log scales and MIDI and graph interpretation	Psychoacoustics and the studio	FX literacy / Graphs / parameters / Evaluations	FX literacy / Mastering / Evaluations	Exam practice	
	Component 2: Composition	Synthesis, Sequencing, Sampling Brief composition	Brief composition	Advanced sound moulding Mix and balance	Coursework: Composition		
	Component 1: Recording	Multi-track recording	Recording	Mixing	Coursework: Recording		