

BTEC Level 2 First Award in Music



With a BTEC in Music, students will gain valuable hands-on experience that can take them straight into a career in the industry.

Student Information Booklet 2021

Welcome to the BTEC Level 2 Music Programme

A warm welcome to the KS4 BTEC Music course. The fact that you are here means that you are committed to developing your Musical skills. Over the next two years, the Music department staff will work with you to develop those skills so that when you leave us, you will have maximised your chances of progressing to the next stage of your musical education.

The next two years will be tough and exciting. You will be introduced to lots of new Music styles and there may be elements of the course that challenge your skills as a musician.

Don't worry – you'll soon get used to the workload and learning to adapt to this is an essential part of preparing for a career in the Music industry.

When you complete the course, you will gain a **BTEC First Award in Music, a qualification that is equivalent to one GCSE.**

The grade you achieve is largely dependent on the level of commitment you give to your work, and how much time you spend practising.

The course has been specifically tailored to equip you with the skills and experience necessary to continue your Music studies at Level 3. A lot of the exercises and strategies that we use are designed to help prepare you for working in a studio and I am confident that we offer the highest standard of training and support to enable you to achieve your musical ambitions.

All that you need to do in return is give one hundred percent, in all classes, all the time. That's our expectation because, from this point on, you should start seeing yourself as a professional musician and producer.

So, congratulations... you've taken your first step on our pathway to excellence in Music.

Course Tutors

Your main course tutor will be Mrs R. Atkinson-Brown.

Additional teaching and tuition will be given by Mrs D. Howarth,

Mr C. Wootton, Mr M. McNicholas and Mrs C.Galea.

Course Content

The course is divided into **units**. You will study these units across a two-year period.

Unit 1: The Music Industry. (Mandatory unit) Externally assessed using a paper-based written examination lasting 1 hour marked by the examination board.

Unit 2: Managing a Music Product. (Mandatory unit)

Optional Units:

Unit 3: Introducing Live Sound. *

Unit 4: Introducing Music Composition.

Unit 5: Introducing Music Performance. (Recommended.)

Unit 6: Introducing Music Recording. *

Unit 7: Introducing Music Sequencing

Mandatory units

The mandatory units in this qualification ensure that all learners will develop:

- **Knowledge** that underpins learning in other units in the qualification –

Unit 1: The Music Industry – which provides an overview of the industry, particularly focusing on the shape of the modern industry and covering the emergence of the role of the self-employed producer, performer and promoter.

- **Practical and vocational skills** – **Unit 2: Managing a Music Product** – which covers essential aspects for progression. This unit looks at the development a music product.

As well as providing a vehicle for demonstrating skills and learning, it also introduces the role of planning and promotion in the management of a music product.

Learners can base their work on a live concert, event, a CD or online product, providing opportunities for both music performers and technologists.

Unit 3: Introducing Live Sound. *

Level: **2**

Unit type: **Optional specialist**; Guided learning hours: **30**; Assessment type: **Internal**

***COVID-19 has affected our ability to offer unit 3 at present.**

Unit introduction

Live sound is the heart of the music industry. The sound engineer's role is key to its success and is a rewarding and challenging career path. This unit offers you the opportunity to learn about live sound and carry out the role of a live sound engineer.

As a sound engineer, you must be able to manage the technical requirements for an entire concert, such as festivals, concerts, shows, gigs, school events, charity fundraisers, open air events, theatre and small venue events. You will begin by considering the sound requirements of the venue. You must ensure that there is

sufficient amplification for the audience to enjoy the performance without exceeding safe sound limits. You must organise and direct sound checks and you must know how to use and operate equipment safely without causing injury to yourself or others.

During performances you will mix sound signals together from a variety of sources in real time to give the audience a balanced sound. Many of the tasks in live sound are the same as in a recording studio, but you must be aware that the environment is likely to change and the mix will need constant reviewing and adjustment. The sound engineer must be able to adapt and respond to technical problems in performance and ensure that minimal disruption to the event occurs.

Finally, you will de-rig at the end of the show and ensure that all equipment is checked and stored safely. You will be the first to arrive and the last to leave as the success of a live music event relies heavily on a skilled and attentive sound engineer.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A. Plan for a live music event**
- B. Demonstrate understanding of health and safety**
- C. Set up and use live music systems.**

UNIT 3: INTRODUCING LIVE SOUND

Assessment criteria

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Plan for a live music event			
1A.1 Identify the technical and organisational requirements when planning a live music event.	2A.P1 Describe the technical and organisational requirements when planning a live music event.	2A.M1 Explain the technical and organisational requirements when planning a live music event.	2A.D1 Analyse the technical and organisational requirements when planning a live music event.
Learning aim B: Demonstrate understanding of health and safety			
1B.2 Identify hazards associated with the event.	2B.P2 Describe potential hazards associated with the event and suggest actions to be taken to reduce any risk to personnel, the public and equipment.	2B.M2 Explain potential hazards associated with the event and suggest actions to be taken to reduce any risk to personnel, the public and equipment.	2B.D2 Analyse potential hazards and specify actions to be taken to reduce any risk to personnel, the public and equipment.
Learning aim C: Set up and use live music systems			
1C.3 Set up and use live music systems with guidance.	2C.P3 Set up and use live music systems correctly and safely producing FOH and monitor mixes.	2C.M3 Set up and use live music systems correctly and safely producing balanced FOH and monitor mixes.	2C.D3 Set up and use live music systems correctly and safely producing effective and balanced FOH and monitor mixes.

*Opportunity to assess mathematical skills

#Opportunity to assess English skills

Unit 4: Introducing Music Composition

Level: 2

Unit type: **Optional specialist**; Guided learning hours: **30**; Assessment type: **Internal**

Unit introduction

Have you ever wondered who writes the music that surrounds us? Music is everywhere, written every day to be used in TV, film and advertising, as well as for pleasure and for profit. Being a composer in the 21st century is about being able to respond quickly and appropriately to briefs – and in a market place of intense competition, coming up with an appropriate composition on a short timescale is vital.

This unit will require you to develop a portfolio of ideas, some of which will be developed, and one of which will be completed. You will discover a range of compositional techniques and produce contrasting musical ideas to develop your compositional expertise. An idea might take the form of a short melodic motif, a chord progression or a rhythmic idea.

Ideas can be short or long – you will consider the different ways in which these ideas could form the basis for a complete piece of music.

You will be introduced to ways to extend, develop and shape music that suits different situations. Briefs will be used to present you with real-life compositional challenges that may require the composition of a very short piece, e.g. for a 20 second TV advert, or a more extended composition, e.g. for a film scene.

Above all, this unit is about the creation of music in the here and now. You will be encouraged to find your own creative routes through the compositional process and ultimately begin to develop your own creative voice.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A. Explore creative stimuli to meet a brief**
- B. Develop, extend and shape music for performances**
- C. Present compositions appropriately**

UNIT 4: INTRODUCING MUSIC COMPOSITION

Assessment criteria

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Explore creative stimuli to meet a brief			
1A.1 Create contrasting musical ideas in response to a compositional brief that could form the basis for a composition.	2A.P1 Create four contrasting musical ideas in response to a compositional brief that could form the basis for a composition, showing use of at least two different starting points.	2A.M1 Create four effective and contrasting musical ideas in response to a compositional brief that could form the basis for a composition, showing the appropriate application of at least two different starting points.	2A.D1 Create four detailed and contrasting musical ideas in response to a compositional brief that could form the basis for a composition, showing the imaginative and appropriate application of at least two different starting points.

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim B: Develop, extend and shape music for performances			
1B.2 Use limited melodic and harmonic techniques to develop a musical idea into a more extended compositional draft.	2B.P2 Use melodic and harmonic techniques to develop two contrasting musical ideas into more extended compositional drafts.	2B.M2 Select and use melodic and harmonic techniques to develop two contrasting musical ideas into more extended compositional drafts, showing effective use of skills and techniques.	2B.D2 Demonstrate skilful selection and effective use of melodic and harmonic techniques to develop two contrasting musical ideas into more extended compositional drafts, showing imagination and flair.
1B.3 Develop one compositional draft into a completed composition.	2B.P3 Use musical structures to develop one compositional draft into a completed composition.	2B.M3 Select and use appropriate musical structures effectively to develop one compositional draft into a completed composition to fulfil a given brief.	2B.D3 Demonstrate skilful selection and use of appropriate structures to effectively develop one compositional draft into a completed composition, showing imagination, style and flair as appropriate given the brief.
Learning aim C: Present compositions appropriately			
1C.4 Present musical ideas with support and guidance.	2C.P4 Present musical ideas in an appropriate format with clarity.	2C.M4 Present musical ideas in an appropriate format with clarity and accuracy.	2C.D4 Present musical ideas in an appropriate format with clarity, accuracy and attention to detail.

*Opportunity to assess mathematical skills

#Opportunity to assess English skills

Unit 5: Introducing Music Performance

Level: 2

Unit type: **Optional specialist**; Guided learning hours: **30**; Assessment type: **Internal**

Unit introduction

Have you ever thought about all of the things that need to happen before a concert?

Having a career as a performer requires high levels of technical ability on an instrument or voice.

In order to achieve high levels of technical proficiency, musicians need to be able to develop an appropriate discipline and perseverance.

Musicians need to be able to perform both confidently and accurately to an audience with a level of expression and interpretation in their work.

Over the course of this unit, you will explore skills and make decisions as you prepare for performance. Planning and practising are both vital parts of a successful performance;

you should be aware of when your performances are due to take place so that you are able to plan your preparation time. You should be encouraged to choose your own pieces for performance to an audience.

You should work with a specialist teacher to improve your technique and should keep a practice/production log that details how you have improved over the duration of the unit. If appropriate,

you should organise your own accompaniment, whether this is a single accompanist or a band.

You should practise and rehearse your chosen pieces so that you present polished performances. Some people find performing to an audience daunting. Therefore, you should be given plenty of opportunities to perform to audiences.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A. Develop your music performance skills and review your own practice.**
- B. Use your music performance skills within rehearsal and performance.**

Assessment criteria

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Develop your music performance skills and review your own practice			
1A.1 Demonstrate limited use and control of technical and interpretive music performance skills in practice and development.	2A.P1 Demonstrate competent use and control of technical and interpretive music performance skills in practice and development.	2A.M1 Demonstrate competent use and control of technical and interpretive music performance skills, showing consistency in focus, response and effort in practice and development.	2A.D1 Demonstrate competent use and control of technical and interpretive music performance skills, incorporating stylistic qualities and a high level of focus, response and effort in practice and development.
1A.2 Identify, with guidance, strengths and areas to develop in own technique. #	2A.P2 Present a review of music performance skills, describing strengths and areas to develop. #	2A.M2 Present a review of music performance skills, explaining strengths and areas to develop. #	2A.D2 Present a review of music performance skills, making qualitative judgements about own strengths and areas to develop. #

UNIT 5: INTRODUCING MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim B: Use your music performance skills within rehearsal and performance			
1B.3 Demonstrate limited personal management and music performance skills in rehearsal.	2B.P3 Demonstrate personal management skills and competent application of music performance skills in rehearsal.	2B.M3 Demonstrate consistent personal management skills with competent and confident application of music performance skills in rehearsal.	2B.D3 Demonstrate a high level of personal management skills with competent, confident, fluent and sustained application of music performance skills in rehearsal.
1B.4 Perform music using limited technical and interpretive performance skills.	2B.P4 Perform music using relevant technical and interpretive performance skills competently.	2B.M4 Perform music with confidence and consistency, using relevant technical and interpretive performance skills competently to demonstrate stylistic qualities.	2B.D4 Perform music with confidence, consistency and ease, using relevant technical and interpretive performance skills competently and fluently and fully demonstrating stylistic qualities.

*Opportunity to assess mathematical skills

#Opportunity to assess English skills

Unit 6: Introducing Music Recording*

Level: 2

Unit type: **Optional specialist**; Guided learning hours: **30**; Assessment type: **Internal**

Unit introduction

The ability to create audio recordings is essential for anyone with a desire to work in the music industry in a technical role. In this unit, you will use music technology to create multi-track recordings.

You will record from audio sources such as acoustic instruments, amplified instruments, electronic instruments and vocals. You will learn how to control the input signals from real sound sources using gain and microphone placement. Once the tracks have been recorded successfully, you will mix these sounds together into a finished recording using some basic processing such as reverb, chorus and EQ.

Studio engineers and producers work with a range of technology, so it is important that you learn how to use this technology correctly and safely. Knowledge of health and safety is essential to ensure that equipment is maintained and risks to individuals are minimal.

Recording professionals also need to be very organised and efficient in their use of recording time. You will learn how to make the most of your session time and record effectively and efficiently.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A. Plan a recording session**

- B. Use recording equipment safely to produce multi-track recordings.**

UNIT 6: INTRODUCING MUSIC RECORDING

Assessment criteria

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Plan a recording session			
1A.1 Outline the planning requirements for a recording project.	2A.P1 Describe the planning requirements for a recording project.	2A.M1 Explain the planning requirements for a recording project.	2A.D1 Analyse the planning requirements for a recording project.
Learning aim B: Use recording equipment safely to produce multi-track recordings			
1B.2 Set up equipment and record audio.	2B.P2 Set up and use recording equipment correctly and safely producing a basic multi-track recording.	2B.M2 Select and use recording equipment correctly and safely producing a more detailed multi-track recording.	2B.D2 Select and use recording equipment correctly and safely producing an effective multi-track recording.
1B.3 Apply a limited range of mixing techniques.	2B.P3 Apply mixing techniques creating a competent working mix.	2B.M3 Select and apply mixing techniques creating a competent and effective mix.	2B.D3 Select and apply mixing techniques that enhance the final mix.

*Opportunity to assess mathematical skills

#Opportunity to assess English skills

Unit 7: Introducing Music Sequencing

Level: 2

Unit type: **Optional specialist**; Guided learning hours: **30**; Assessment type: **Internal**

Unit introduction

Digital technology is a huge part of the music that surrounds us in the 21st century.

In this unit, you will be using sequencing software packages to create music in response to a realistic, music-industry-led brief. You will learn how software is now capable of producing high-quality music that even recently was only possible with large and expensive hardware-based systems. For instance, mobile devices contain more powerful music creation software than was commercially available even a decade ago.

You will learn how to create music using a variety of sources, including loops and software instruments. You will edit your music by the application of different processes such as quantisation, looping and note editing, and enhance the sound by the addition of appropriate plug-in effects such as reverb, delay and distortion. You will then learn how to create a final mix that will become a completed audio file. As you learn through experiencing and using the software, you will gain an understanding of the roles of different software tools, leading to the production of music that uses the full functionality of the software available. You will use your knowledge to create either original music or a creative arrangement of music already written by others.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A. Explore music sequencing techniques
- B. Use music sequencing software to create music.

UNIT 7: INTRODUCING MUSIC SEQUENCING

Assessment criteria

Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Explore music sequencing techniques			
1A.1 Identify the features of music sequencing techniques in relation to note input and editing and the use of effects.	2A.P1 Describe the features of music sequencing techniques in relation to note input and editing and the use of effects.	2A.M1 Explain the features of music sequencing techniques in relation to note input and editing and the use of effects.	2A.D1 Explain the features of music sequencing techniques in relation to note input and editing and the use of effects and their potential applications.
Learning aim B: Use music sequencing software to create music			
1B.2 Apply limited sequencing techniques in the production of a piece of music.	2B.P2 Apply sequencing techniques in the production of a piece of music.	2B.M2 Select and apply sequencing techniques in the production of a piece of music, with attention to detail.	2B.D2 Select and apply sequencing techniques in the production of a piece of music, with attention to detail and musicality.
1B.3 Use a limited range of mixing techniques.	2B.P3 Apply mixing techniques, competently.	2B.M3 Select and apply mixing techniques competently and effectively.	2B.D3 Select and apply mixing techniques that enhance the final mix.

*Opportunity to assess mathematical skills

#Opportunity to assess English skills

Grading

The grading system on the BTEC First Award course can seem a little complicated if you aren't used to it. Basically it works like this:

- Each of your units is worth a maximum of 24 points.
- The grades are worth the following points:

Unclassified	Level 1	Level 2 (Pass)	Level 2 (Merit)	Level 2 (Distinction)
0	6	12	18	24

- Once you've completed all your units, you will need to look at your total points score to work out your grade.

Grade	Minimum Points Required
U	0
Level 1	24
Level 2 (Pass)	48
Level 2 (Merit)	66
Level 2 Distinction	84
Level 2 Distinction*	90

You must have a minimum of 24 points from Units 1 and 2 to be eligible for a Level 2 First Award. Your teacher will guide you through the grading process and discuss your grades at regular intervals during the course.

Attendance

We have high expectations for all students on the BTEC Music course. You are expected to attend all classes, workshops, one-to-one sessions and ensemble rehearsals as specified by your teachers, to ensure that you achieve your full potential whilst studying at Balshaw's C of E High School. There are some aspects of the course that could involve group work, repeated absences can have a negative effect on performance and achievement.

Deadlines

You will be set deadlines for completing work. All work, directed study or unit assignments **must** be handed in on time. All performances must take place at the scheduled time and date – after all, that's how it happens in the real world; an audience won't wait around.

If you do find yourself struggling to cope with the workload and deadlines, then please talk to your tutors. Together we can help you organise your time, we want you to enjoy the course and your time in the music department at Balshaw's.

Mrs R Atkinson-Brown

Mrs R Atkinson-Brown | Curriculum Leader - Music
01772 421009 (Ext:166) | r.atkinsonbrown@balshaws.org.uk
Balshaw's C of E High School, Church Road, Leyland PR25 3AH

Updated January 2021