



St Mary Redcliffe  
and Temple School

# Music Technology



# Music Technology

Exam board: EDEXCEL

Specification no.: 8MT0 (AS) / 9MT0 (A2)

**This is a two year linear A level course** - The AS content forms the first half of the A level content and can be assessed separately to gain an AS qualification if the student is dropping the subject, however the practical nature of the assessment would require study to continue into Year 13 to complete this coursework. Otherwise the two years of content are assessed at the end of Year 13 to give the A level grade.

## AS level

Module	Assessment	%
Recording	Coursework	20%
Technology-based composition	Coursework	20%
Listening and analysing	1¼ hrs, written exam	25%
Producing and analysing	1¾ hrs, written/practical exam	35%

## A level

Module	Assessment	%
Recording	Coursework	20%
Technology-based composition	Coursework	20%
Listening and analysing	1½ hrs, written exam	25%
Producing and analysing	2¼ hrs, written/practical exam	35%

## Course Delivery:

You will be taught in the Music department either in one of the teaching rooms, the music technology computer suite or in the recording studio. You will have a combination of listening lessons, composing lessons, audio production lessons and sequencing/sampling lessons over the course of the two year course.

## Course Content:

**Recording:** a 3½ minute recording of a popular song decided upon by the exam board. It will be for a minimum of seven instruments. Use of mic'd tracks and DI is permissible. Once recorded, you have to mix and master your work to industry standard.

**Technology-based composition:** a 3 minute composition that uses synthesis and sampling extensively. This will be based on one of three briefs set by the exam board. The three briefs will be a film, a poem and a brief that explores social/political issues through music. You choose the brief that you think suits you best.

**Listening and analysing:** an exam that tests your ability and understanding of production techniques for both corrective and creative purposes, principles of sound and audio technology and the development of recording and production technology.

**Producing and analysing:** a written/practical examination which will test your ability to use MIDI/audio applications. This paper is a problem solving paper where you will be presented with 'real-life' audio that has been recorded with some problems that you have to fix

### Entry requirements:

You do **not** need to have a GCSE in Music to take this course but an interest or background in using music software. An interest in physics is also very helpful.

### **Skills & personal qualities required / developed by course:**

As a Music Technology student you will need to be open-minded about music from styles and traditions that you are not yet familiar with. You must be prepared to share with and learn from one another. You must be highly organised and be able to stick to deadlines for coursework, this will develop your time management skills. You will develop team working skills and interpersonal skills through working with your fellow students, teachers and A2 students.

### **Resources / facilities / opportunities:**

We have twenty computer music workstations with Cubase 8, Reason 8 and Sibelius 8 on. In our recording studio we have an Apple Mac computer with 64GB of RAM running Cubase and Pro Tools. We have a range of dynamic and condenser microphones and FX units which can be used by all students. For those of you that enjoy performing we have over thirty public performing opportunities (concerts or services) a year as well as daily opportunities within the school, expert staff and extra tuition from visiting top professionals and University staff at “the friendliest Music Department in Bristol”!

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Do I need to play an instrument?

No! There is absolutely zero performance in this A level. If you want to perform or play music then **Music A level** would be a better choice of A level where 30% of the course is playing. It helps a little if you can play guitar, keys, sing etc but you will not be assessed in this area at all.

Do I know need to have an understanding of music theory?

No! There is no music theory in this A level. Again, it helps if you have a basic understanding of music theory but it is not a game-changer at all if you don't.

What's a typical Music Tech lesson like?

We often begin a lesson by looking at a piece of hardware and discussing how it works or what it does. Sometimes we look at a particular technique in our software and then spend the lesson implementing it in our compositions. At the end of the lesson we often share our work and encourage students to feedback on each other's compositions.

How big are the classes?

We range from between 8 and 14 per class at A level. Students enjoy our lessons and we have several students who go on to study Music Technology at university and others who now work in industry ranging from sound designers, to live sound producers and sound for film and TV.

Does it matter that I have previously used different software?

Not at all. All sequencers/recording packages work in broadly the same way. If you have used Logic, Garageband etc you will be very well prepared to use Cubase here at SMRT.

If there isn't any music performing or theory what do we study?!

Good question. We look at the history of recording, how specific hardware works, recording techniques, sampling, synthesis and some fairly detailed physics like how sound moves, how capacitors work, electro-magnetic fields and psychoacoustics.

What hardware will we use?

We have a range of hardware that we use in lessons and for practical demonstrations. Our inventory currently includes; NTK, NT5 and NT2A condenser mics, SM57/58 dynamics mics, Yamaha HS10 monitors, Yamaha DX7 synth, Korg Triton synth, Digidesign OctoPre audio interface, Euphonix Surface controller and range of DI boxes and mixing desks.

For further information:

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SMRT recording studio

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