

# National Extended Certificate in Music Performance

Board and specification: Pearson BTEC Level 3  
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## Subject specific entry requirements:

- Level 2 BTEC Music First (merit or above)
- Grade 5 or above in English Literature and/or English Language
- If a student has not any music-based subject at GCSE level or equivalent, we would want to see evidence of creative musicianship and previous experience discussed at interview
- External students will be asked to prepare and perform musical pieces for the interview

## What skills are required of students?

- Research analysis and evaluation skills
- The ability to work as part of a team and independently when responding to assignment briefs
- A keen interest in the Music Industry
- A genuine passion for music performance, the theory of music and composition

## Course outline:

This course is Equivalent in size to one A Level and consists of four units, of which three are mandatory and two are externally assessed. The course will take 2 years to complete.

### Unit 1: Practical Music Theory and Harmony (internally assessed) – Mandatory unit

Music theory and harmony relates to all forms of music. It is about how the music we make and listen to is constructed and how it works. This unit will develop your knowledge and understanding of fundamental musical theory and how it's applied in practical musical activities. You will develop and apply theoretical knowledge in a relevant, useful and meaningful way.

### Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry (externally assessed) – Mandatory unit

In this unit, you will gain an understanding of what is meant by the term 'professional practice' as well as what it means to be a freelancer working in the music industry. You will understand the professional skills that are important in the industry and learn the importance of financial management, effective interpersonal skills and working with others.

### **Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance (externally assessed) – Mandatory unit**

Live performance in front of an audience is an important part of the music industry that has become a growth area with an increasing use of technology. Musicians rarely work in isolation and the ability to perform as part of an ensemble is an essential skill for any musician, regardless of style. Whether you are part of a pop group or a large symphony orchestra, the skills of teamwork and communication are vital.

#### **You will also study one other optional unit from the list below**

**Unit 4: Composing Music (internally assessed):** This unit gives you a good foundation in composition techniques, giving you the skills you need to be able to study in higher education or to seek employment as a freelance composer in a competitive industry.

**Unit 5: Music Performance Session Styles (internally assessed):** You will explore the styles of music encountered in the role of a modern session musician.

**Unit 6: Solo Performance (internally assessed):** You will explore the preparation and performance of music as a soloist before performing in front of an audience.

**Unit 7: Improvising Music (internally assessed):** You will develop the ability to improvise when performing in a range of musical styles and contexts.

### **What kinds of work will you do at home and in the classroom?**

Class work will be a mixture of practical work, exploring the music industry and studying the theory of music. You will be expected to work musically with others and develop performance pieces for performances. You will also be using various software packages to create and develop your own musical compositions. You will be expected to arrange rehearsals with other members of the course group and manage your time effectively.

### **What other A-Levels does your course connect with?**

Maths, ICT, English, Media studies, Art and Drama

Where will this course take me?

### **For learners who wish to study an aspect of music in higher education, opportunities include:**

- BA (Hons) in Performing Arts, if taken alongside an A Level in English Literature and a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts
- BA (Hons) in Music Industry Management, if taken alongside a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Business
- BA (Hons) in Music Business and Arts Management, if taken alongside a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Business and an A Level in Art.