Learning Aims and Curriculum Intent:

To provide pupils with the knowledge and skills relating to the principles of sound and audio technology, and how they are used in creative and professional practice.

- Component ❶: Recording. Production tools and techniques to capture, edit, process and mix an audio recording. (One recording; 20%)
- Component ❷: Technology-based composition. Creating, editing, manipulating and structuring sounds to produce a technology-based composition. (One composition; 20%)
- Component ❸: Listening and analysing. Knowledge and understanding of recording and production techniques and principles. (Listening exam; 25%)
- Component ❹: Producing and analysing. Knowledge and understanding of editing, mixing and production techniques. (Timed practical exam; 35%)

Term	Content, Key Questions and Knowledge	Skills	Assessment
Michaelmas 1	❶ Introduction to recording and mixing • Introduction to recording task and associated core hardware. • Students will consider the placement of microphones and the influence of the room on the recorded result. ❷ Introduction to technology-based composition • Students will be introduced to the composition task and learn about the core functions of their DAW software. • A focus on sample manipulation techniques will allow students to produce a short piece for submission. ❸ Introduction to the Component 3 exam • Eras of recording and production technology and the styles of question used in the exam. • Exploration of digital technology through a research task. • Sample questions will also consolidate mixing knowledge covered in Component 1. ❹ Handling and mixing audio • Students work on ❹ indirectly through their work on ❶ & ❷	❶ Cables and connectors; basic hardware; core mixing techniques ❷ Core DAW skills; sample manipulation and use of creative effects ❸ Exam technique	❶ Short recording task ❷ Two short compositions ❸ Exam-style questions and short tests
Michaelmas 2	❶ Recording acoustic/bass guitar • Taught workshops will focus on the rhythm section within a small band recording – the acoustic and bass guitar. • A small-scale recording project will be set to allow students to practise capturing and mixing these instruments prior to starting their longer, brief-based recording. ❷ MIDI and synthesis essentials • Students will explore MIDI functions found within their DAW and put these into practice. • Focus on subtractive synthesis ❸ Analogue technology and vocal production • Through research and taught workshops, students will explore analogue technology and its association with music production and subsequent commercial release. • Focus on vocal production techniques and how these have developed through the various eras of recording and production technology. ❹ Theoretical and practical tasks focusing on MIDI, dynamics and distortion	❶ Intermediate mixing skills • Using microphones and DI to capture successful takes and use intermediate mixing skills to edit and blend the tracks. ❷ MIDI and synthesis essentials • MIDI functions, subtractive synthesis ❸ Exam technique	❶ Small-scale recording project will be set to allow students to practise capturing and mixing these instruments. ❷ Short composition task which focuses on the creation of sounds using synthesis techniques. ❸ Exam-style questions and short tests ❹ Further written and practical tasks will focus on more advanced processes not yet covered, e.g. noise gating and distortion.

Term	Content, Key Questions and Knowledge	Skills	Assessment
Lent 1	❶ Exploring the mark scheme, recording percussion/keyboards and advanced mixing • Students will listen to and analyse recordings produced by past students to help them understand the demands of the mark scheme criteria. • Percussion and keyboard recording workshops will complete taught content on tracking instruments. ❷ Exploring mark scheme criteria • Students will listen to and analyse compositions produced by past students (e.g. legacy A-level work) in order to understand the demands of the mark scheme. ❸ Detailed exploration of the question paper and focus on analogue synthesisers/electric instruments • Students will learn about the question types contained within the Component 3 exam paper as well as the command-word taxonomy used. This study will also include a range of musical styles and key attributes in terms of their use of technology. • A research task and specimen essay questions will follow, with a specific focus on longer-response questions and analogue/electric instruments. ❹ Detailed exploration of the question paper and specimen long-response questions • Students will learn about the question types contained within the Component 4 exam paper as well as the command-word taxonomy used.	❶ Recording percussion and keyboards; advanced mixing. ❸ Exam technique	❶ More demanding mixing tasks, including detailed corrective EQ, compression and gating. ❷ Further assessed tasks to increase independence and expressive tools ❸ Exam-style questions and short tests ❹ Specimen questions will assess theoretical knowledge and practical skills learned to date, including the manipulation of pitch, rhythm and frequency response. ❶ Continue practical projects, resulting in feedback related to Edexcel mark scheme
Lent 2	❶ Mock brief sessions, mixing practice and mastering • Mixing workshops will also take place during this time, e.g. students undertaking peer review on peers' practice projects. • The final steps of the production process will be investigated in a series of short workshops on mastering. • Pupils work on a mock brief, to be used in end-of-year assessments. ❷ Mock brief sessions • Starter activities will be used at the start of each lesson to cover each aspect of the mark scheme criteria. • Pupils work on a mock brief, to be used in end-of-year assessments. ❸ Comparing analogue and digital effects • Students will learn about and compare a range of analogue and digital effects as well as comparing production techniques from each of the eras of recording and production technology outlined in the specification. ❹ Specimen questions • Specimen questions for this component will focus on all knowledge and content studied to date, with the addition of effects not already covered by past sample questions.	❶ Mixing and mastering ❸ Exam technique ❹ Exam technique: workflow tips and time management	❸ Exam-style questions and short tests ❹ Exam-style questions and short tests
Trinity 1	❶ & ❷ *Mock briefs for internal marking/feedback.* ❸ & ❹ *Final revision activities ahead of mock exams.*	❸ & ❹ Exam technique	❸ & ❹ Sit mock exams
Trinity 2	❸ & ❹ *Sit mock exams, followed by feedback on all four components* *Following exam period:* ❶ *Drum-recording project and prescribed brief preparation* • Students *will take part in drum-recording workshops and complete an associated recording task. Following publication of the A-level recording brief, students will undertake research into the difficulty and viability of each song/artist prescribed.* ❷ *Prescribed brief preparation* • Students will focus on the A-level briefs prescribed by Pearson and initially produce a short 'sketch' based on each of these to assist with their choice of brief. ❸ *Review of mock exam* ❹ *Review of mock exam* • To include *peer-marking for the practical tasks within the paper.*	❶ Recording drums	

What consolidation looks like in this subject	• Regular work on practical tasks outside lesson time. • Regular revision of technical vocabulary and practical skills. • Regular wider listening using class topics as a starting point.
Examples of Homework	Prepare a 10-minute presentation on one of the three topics below, to be given in class. You should present a clear, concise summary of the key points/developments in your topic, that others can easily understand and use for quick reference. You should use images and audio to illustrate your points. 1. Discuss the development of the guitar, tape and studio outboard technology during this period. How were guitars amplified and recorded? 2. Identify popular microphone placement techniques used to capture the sounds of individual/groupings of instruments. Identify the most popular microphones used 1930 – 1963 and their features. 3. How was music consumed in the era 1930 – 1963? Did it change? How did this affect the way music was produced? You should focus on the most popular styles of the era, including: • Blues • Jazz (specifically Bebop) • Rock n Roll
Key terminology	An idea of the kinds of key terms encountered during the course can be found here: Getting started – A Level Music Technology
Super-curricular enrichment and scholarly extension	Music Technology is best studied in the context of a 'hobby' – something pupils will do in their spare time on top of their schoolwork. The most advanced pupils will be working on their own portfolio of recordings and compositions throughout the course, building on the skills learned in school and stretching the capabilities of recording software and hardware. There are many opportunities to develop 'live' music technology skills through supporting school events.
Useful websites	A Level Music Technology – Resources for students and teachers Music Tech Student YouTube: MusicTechHelpGuy
Who can I contact?	Liam Gray, lead Music Technology teacher ljg@forest.org.uk Sam Jackson, Deputy Director of Music swj@forest.org.uk