



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

Unit code: H1LV 34

Superclass: LF

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to practical issues associated with the professional musician. The Unit is intended to prepare candidates for the non-performance aspects of working as a professional musician through the development of knowledge and understanding of self-employment and legal obligations.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Comply with health and safety measures appropriate to the professional musician.
- 2 Describe the key obligations and requirements for the performing musician in relation to personal taxation and National Insurance.
- 3 Create, organise and maintain a range of professional records.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit will be at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had some experience in the use of computer and/or mobile technology such as word processing and e-mail. Candidates should also have good communication skills. These may be demonstrated by the achievement of Core Skill *Communication* at SCQF level 6 or by possession of a suitable NQ Communication Unit (SCQF levels 5/6).

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

General information (cont)

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

This is a mandatory Unit included in the frameworks for HNC/D Music. It is recommended that it is taught and assessed within the context of the particular award to which it contributes. The following HN Units within the HNC/D Music course may provide some opportunities for integration of delivery and assessment:

- ◆ Working in the Creative Industries
- ◆ Music: Live Performance 1
- ◆ Music: First Study 1: Instrument
- ◆ Music: Graded Unit 1
- ◆ Music Law 1

The assessment exemplar for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable Instrument of Assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the assessment exemplar to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment exemplars are available on SQA's secure website.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Comply with health and safety measures appropriate to the professional musician.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Personal health and safety
- ◆ Third party health and safety
- ◆ Public liability insurance
- ◆ Risk assessment

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will provide written and/or evidence to demonstrate their understanding and awareness of health and safety for musicians. The evidence will include:

- ◆ A brief description of the importance of a positive attitude to general health and safety as well as a more detailed description of the relevance to the musician of each of the areas in the Knowledge and/or Skills.
- ◆ Information leaflets or other publications on health and safety for musicians or reference to them. Candidates will include a short justification for their inclusion of these. Candidates will explain how the information or guidance contained is relevant to them at the present time, or might become relevant for them in their future career.
- ◆ Completed risk assessments, based on the Knowledge and/or Skills above, and the hazards below. As appropriate, these will include:

Health and safety of the performing musician including but not limited to:

- hazards resulting from audio equipment (electrical and non-electrical), musical instruments, other performers, audience, lighting levels, sound levels
- risks of injury or death from unidentified hazards, identified and managed hazards, or identified but unmanaged hazards

Health and safety of the audience members including but not limited to:

- hazards created by performers, performers' equipment, or PA equipment
- risks of injury or death from hazards

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

Outcome 2

Describe the key obligations and requirements for the performing musician in relation to personal taxation and National Insurance.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Governmental bodies including Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- ◆ Regulations and obligations for registration for personal income taxation and National Insurance, and the circumstances for registration for Value Added Taxation (VAT)
- ◆ Mandatory requirement for maintaining accurate financial records
- ◆ Mandatory period for archived financial records
- ◆ Annual reporting and payment of monies due for personal income taxation and National Insurance based on the balance of income against legitimate business expenditure (eg expenses for travel, rehearsal, instrument/equipment purchase, maintenance and repair, etc)

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will produce written and/or oral evidence detailing their primary obligations for:

- ◆ maintaining accurate financial records
- ◆ archiving financial records for current mandatory period
- ◆ registering for income tax on earnings and national insurance and the legal requirement for an annual self-assessment tax return

Outcome 3

Create, organise and maintain a range of professional records.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Create and maintain records for: contacts; basic accounts; pre-performance health and safety documentation

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will produce a documentary and/or electronic portfolio of evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ select an appropriate method for the task of maintaining professional contact records, basic financial accounts, equipment testing and maintenance schedules, and pre-performance health and safety checks
- ◆ demonstrate a methodical approach to file handling and data storage

Candidates will produce a folio which demonstrates understanding and application of the theoretical aspects of Outcomes 1 and 2.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is intended to prepare candidates for professional work in the music industry. It is essential to address all aspects of the skills required to be a successful musician. Knowledge of statutory obligations, health and safety, etc contribute to the overall skills necessary to be a working musician.

This Unit is intended to develop in candidates an awareness of their professional responsibilities. Ideally, it will be delivered in an integrated fashion with other relevant Units where there is a synergy in the content, such as *Music: Live Performance Skills 1*. It may be useful for learning materials to be created to signpost candidates to appropriate resources produced or published by organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive, Musicians' Union and similar organisation where detailed, impartial advice can be obtained.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This is a mandatory Unit of the HNC/D Music Group Award and may contribute to the Graded Unit for that award. While all the Units can be assessed individually it is anticipated that integration will occur most often with the Graded Unit. This Unit would ideally be delivered throughout the course of the candidate's first year of study.

Outcome 1

Health and safety is a crucial area for the performing musician. Delivering centres and staff should make every effort to identify for and with candidates the potential hazards that will be encountered in most performance spaces and include those created by audio equipment (electrical and non-electrical) — power amplifiers, loudspeaker systems, combo amplifiers, musical instruments; lighting systems — lighting levels, audio leads/cables/multi-cores, mains multi-blocks, sound (pressure) levels; other performers moving around the performance space; and the audience. This may be best achieved through examining a range of stage/equipment set-ups to illustrate where the hazards exist and how to calculate the level of risk they present.

Candidates would benefit from an understanding of the benefits of devices such as residual current devices (RCD), anti-surge devices, and mains electricity socket testers. They should also be encouraged to use these when and where necessary. Additionally, although not strictly related to health and safety, the benefit of back-ups for electronic/digital data should be highlighted. Loss of data at a critical time is a concern for all professional musicians and back-ups are a means to mitigate risk.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

Additionally, candidates should explore the risks of injury or death from hazards that are identified and managed, or identified but unmanaged hazards, and consider how best to ensure that all hazards are identified and managed before and during performances. For 'club' or function bands that may perform in spaces where members of the public are not physically separated from the performers, and where the performers have responsibility for the stage layout and set-up, serious consideration must be given to the health and safety of the audience members, including the management of:

- ◆ hazards created by band or PA equipment
- ◆ risks of injury or death from hazards

It is important that candidates are aware that venues or agents may look for proof that electrical equipment has been subject to Portable Appliance Testing.

For musicians who play only acoustic instruments their response will allow them to show that certain aspects do not always apply to them (for example, those relating to PAT testing). However, they may at a future stage in their career take up another instrument that is affected by the legislation, or they may play as part of an ensemble in which these issues are relevant. In either case, it is important that the candidates possess and can demonstrate an awareness of the issues as they relate to the wider context of musicians' work spaces.

For personal health and safety, the candidate should undertake research into the issues that widely affect professional musicians. This will include the general working environments of dimly-lit stages, theatre pits, and other music performance venues, and may include aspects of over-use/repetitive strain injuries including hearing damage as a consequence of sustained high sound pressure levels.

For third party health and safety (or Public Liability), the candidate should undertake research into their obligations toward their audiences or to passers-by in and around their performance space. This most easily may be achieved through the creation of a portfolio of documentation, for example, information leaflets from the appropriate institutions, organisations, or trade associations. However, a collection of leaflets is not sufficient in itself; the candidate should demonstrate their understanding of any third-party leaflets or publications through a short justification for their reason for including the material. This will allow candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the relevance of the information in the portfolio with relation to the Evidence Requirements and to their personal situation.

Outcome 2

Legal regulations and obligations exist for self-employed or freelance individuals to ensure they are registered for personal income taxation and National Insurance and that they make annual reports to the appropriate authorities to declare and make payment of monies due. Sometimes the level of activity will be sufficient to justify employing an accountant or bookkeeper to maintain financial records and submit the tax assessment forms but for many this will be done by the individual. Outcome 2 presents an opportunity for candidates to identify those aspects that are relevant to their circumstances and to be fully informed about their obligations.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

These regulations change from time to time and it is important that information submitted is accurate and correct at the point of submission.

For all these elements, candidates will produce a portfolio that details the main considerations and a comprehensive commentary on how:

- ◆ they are affected in their current personal professional circumstances

or

- ◆ it might affect them in their future career

It may be helpful for candidates to use a real self-assessment form with actual or hypothetical data to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the form and the process of completion.

VAT registration is a requirement dependent on business activity measured against a monetary threshold, which varies subject to governmental budget-setting. Centres should seek to ensure that what is communicated to candidates is accurate according to whatever thresholds are currently in place.

It is important that candidates gain a comprehensive overview of their tax obligations without the need to go into complex detail on tax arrangements.

Outcome 3

The purpose of this Outcome is to encourage candidates to devise appropriate means of recording their business transactions and activities through, for example, lists of contacts; maintaining basic accounts (calculating income, expenditure, etc); equipment testing and maintenance schedules; health and safety documentation. The main requirement is that the candidate begins to consider carefully the sort of information that it would be advisable and/or desirable to record for business and reporting purposes.

Through this Outcome, the candidates will begin to devise and implement a system that both suits them and, at the same time, allows them to meet some of their professional obligations for record keeping and reporting.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

It may be appropriate, in some cases, for candidates to begin Outcome 3 part way through the delivery of Outcome 1 and to develop further part way through the delivery of Outcome 2. This will allow for some degree of integration of assessment and keep the practical aspects of Outcome 3 close to the more theoretical aspects of Outcomes 1 and 2.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Candidates will produce a portfolio of three components:

- 1 Information relating to general principles of health and safety, and those with particular relevance to musicians in their workplace.
- 2 An explanation on the information found in response to the above, and how it is relevant to them as a professional musician
- 3 A completed risk assessment pro forma that illustrates how these principles have been applied in practice.

It may be helpful for candidates if they are encouraged to recognise that their risk assessment records reflect their professional attitude to health and safety. A positive, safety-conscious mindset will develop better if a risk assessment is carried out prior to all musical activities, for example, live performances, studio sessions or rehearsals, to illustrate how their obligations have been met. At the early stages, candidates working in groups might conduct a risk assessment on their own and then discuss their observations within the group to enhance their learning.

Outcome 2

Candidates will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the legal requirement for, and their obligation to, maintaining records for the accurate reporting of business expenditure and earnings for purposes of personal taxation and National Insurance. This can be achieved through the development of the portfolio already created in Outcome 1.

Outcome 3

Through the creation and maintenance of these records as referred to in Outcomes 1 and 2, candidates will gain some insight into the practices of all legitimate businesses and the professional attitude required. Candidates should be encouraged to update their records regularly to help ensure accuracy. This can be monitored periodically to check for currency. All of these records are relevant also within the scope of the Graded Unit projects. It is suggested that the best practice of accurate record keeping is continued in year 2 of the HND. The principles and practices developed through this Unit should be enhanced throughout year 2 and are equally relevant to Graded Unit 2.

These records may be electronic or otherwise. They can be added to the portfolio created in Outcome 1.

Online and Distance Learning

While the theoretical content of this Unit may be delivered by open learning, assessment must take place with a tutor present.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities within this Unit for candidates to develop aspects of a range of Core Skills, such as *Communication* (discussion, negotiation, creating forms, completing forms, etc) as well as *Problem Solving*, for example, through the risk assessment process where hazards may be identified and there is no obvious solution to minimise or remove the risk.

There may also be opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Numeracy* in Outcome 2 when candidates describe issues relating to taxation and National Insurance.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Professional Practice for Musicians

This Unit is intended to prepare you for work as a professional musician. It is essential to address all aspects of the skills required to be a successful musician. Knowledge of health and safety, tax and National Insurance obligations and maintaining accurate business records and reporting to appropriate authorities are central to this Unit.

This Unit will help you to develop a range of skills, knowledge and understanding of the activities in which the professional musician must engage which do not involve performing but which are essential in order to be able to work as a professional business person.

This is a mandatory Unit of the HNC/D Music Group Award. It is anticipated that many of the Outcomes of this Unit will be assessed as part of other ongoing activities. It is equally valid, however, for the Unit to be delivered on a freestanding basis.