



Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Higher Music Course Specification (C750 76)

**Valid from August 2014**

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

<b>Course title:</b>	Higher Music
<b>SCQF:</b>	level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)
<b>Course code:</b>	C750 76

### Mandatory Units

H240 76 Music: Performing Skills (Higher)	6 SCQF credit points
Or	
H6NP 76 Music: Performing Skills with a Scottish Context (Higher)*	6 SCQF credit points
And either	
H23V 76 Music: Composing Skills (Higher)	6 SCQF credit points
Or	
H6NR 76 Music: Composing Skills with a Scottish Context (Higher)*	6 SCQF credit points
and	
H23X 76 Understanding Music (Higher)	6 SCQF credit points
and	
Course assessment	6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

\*Scottish Studies Award contributing Unit: This Course Specification should be read in conjunction with the relevant Scottish Studies Unit Specification on the [Scottish Studies Award web page](#).

### Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 Music Course or relevant component Units

### Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in Music
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

## **Equality and inclusion**

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

The Course allows learners to develop and consolidate practical skills in performing and creating music, while developing a detailed understanding of a range of music styles and concepts. It can meet the needs of a wide variety of learners with a range of musical interests.

The Course provides opportunities for learners to perform a variety of challenging music in solo and/or group settings, using their voice or their selected instrument(s). Through music, learners will extend their ability to express themselves and develop their personal creativity and self-confidence when performing and creating music. In the Course, learners will develop detailed knowledge and understanding of music concepts and musical literacy. They will recognise and distinguish between a wide range of music signs, symbols and music concepts as they perform, create and listen to music.

Across the Course, skills and experiences which complement and supplement each other are developed. Performing and creating music allows learners to express themselves musically and to critically reflect on and make improvements to their learning. This encourages learners to think imaginatively and to express themselves when developing their own creative ideas and music, applying their understanding of music concepts to their own creative practice. Understanding music through listening enables learners to develop detailed knowledge and understanding of music, bringing depth and breadth to their learning and raising their social and cultural awareness of the influences on musicians and composers.

The Course also provides opportunities for learners to further acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The purpose of the Course is to provide a broad practical experience of performing and creating music and develop related knowledge and understanding of music. Course activities allow learners to work independently or in collaboration with others, and can help learners to plan and organise, to make decisions and to take responsibility for own learning.

This Course is practical and experiential in nature and includes flexibility in the contexts for learning. It helps learners to develop and extend their interest in music, and to develop performing skills on their two selected instruments or on one instrument and voice. The Course also provides opportunities for learners to develop composing skills and broaden their understanding of music concepts and styles.

The Course enables learners to develop their skills and creative capabilities as a musician. Performing music, for example, demands skills of autonomy, interpretation and creativity, as well as providing the opportunity to increase confidence and self-esteem. The practice required to develop these skills can promote perseverance, among other things, as well as helping learners to learn how to learn. The skills that learners gain throughout the Course will be valuable for learning, life and work.

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop performing skills in solo and/or group settings on their selected instruments or on one instrument and voice
- ◆ performing challenging music with sufficient accuracy while maintaining the musical flow
- ◆ create original music using compositional methods and music concepts creatively when composing, arranging or improvising
- ◆ broaden their knowledge and understanding of music and musical literacy by listening to music and identifying a range of music signs, symbols and music concepts
- ◆ critically reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

This Course is a broad-based qualification. It is suitable for learners with an interest in developing and extending their applied musical skills and understanding of music, and for learners with a more specific interest in particular aspects of music. It could also provide a pathway for those who want to progress to higher levels of study.

The Course is practical and experiential and there is considerable scope for personalisation and choice through the activities of performing, creating and understanding music, and through opportunities for using music technology to create music. This makes the Course accessible as it takes account of the needs of different learners and can be contextualised to suit a diverse range of learner needs, interests and aspirations.

On completing the Course, learners will be able to: perform a programme of music with accuracy and maintaining musical flow; create their own original music; self-reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others; listen to music with awareness, understanding and discrimination; and improve their musical creativity and performing skills by critically evaluate their own work and the work of others.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

The Course has an integrated approach to learning and includes a mixture of practical learning, and related understanding of music. In the Course learners will draw upon their understanding of music styles and concepts as they experiment with using these in creative ways when performing and creating music.

To achieve the Course, learners must successfully complete the three mandatory Units, and the Course assessment. Each of the component Units of the Course are designed to provide progression to the corresponding Units at Advanced Higher.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

### **Music: Performing Skills (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will develop performing skills two selected instruments, or on one selected instrument and voice. They will perform challenging level-specific music with sufficient accuracy and will maintain the musical flow realising the composers' intentions. Learners will, through regular practice and critical self-reflection and evaluation, develop their technical and musical performing skills.

### **Music: Composing Skills (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will experiment with, and use compositional methods and music concepts in creative ways to realise their intentions when creating original music. Learners will critically reflect on and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of their choices and decisions on their music. They will also analyse how musicians and composers create music in different ways and the influences on their music.

### **Understanding Music (Higher)**

In this Unit, through listening, learners will develop detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of level specific music concepts, and music literacy. They will analyse the impact of social and cultural influences on the development of specific music styles and identify level-specific music concepts in excerpts of music, and music signs and symbols used in music notation.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. These are:

- ◆ preparing and performing a solo and/or group programme of suitably challenging music on two selected instruments, or on one instrument and voice
- ◆ performing examples of music with sufficient accuracy and maintaining the musical flow
- ◆ critically reflecting on and evaluating their musical and creative skills and identifying areas for improvement
- ◆ applied understanding of the creative process and composers' approaches when composing, arranging or improvising music
- ◆ analysing the musical impact and effect of social and cultural influences on composers and their music
- ◆ creating original music using compositional methods and selected music concepts in creative ways that make musical sense and realise their creative intentions
- ◆ the ability to recognise and understand level specific annotated music signs, symbols and terms
- ◆ recognising and distinguishing between a range of level-specific music concepts and styles of music

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.uk/scqf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/scqf)).

## Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the Unit Specification.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

#### **Music: Performing Skills (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of musical performing skills on their two selected instruments or instrument and voice. Learners will maintain the musical flow and play, with acceptable accuracy, examples of challenging level-specific music extracts showing technical, interpretive skills and musicality. They will also evidence the ability to critically reflect on and evaluate the quality and accuracy of their performing skills.

#### **Music: Composing Skills (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of applied understanding of the creative process. They will analyse how composers create their music and the influences on their music. They will apply this understanding when experimenting with and using compositional methods and music concepts in creative ways to realise their creative intentions. They will also critically reflect on their music and creative choices and decisions.

#### **Understanding Music (Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will be required to provide evidence of a breadth of knowledge of level-specific music concepts and music literacy. They will listen to music excerpts, identifying level-specific and other music concepts used in the music and analyse the impact of social and cultural factors on specific music styles. They will also identify and understand the meaning of music signs and symbols and terms.

### Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/jargonbuster](http://www.sqa.org.uk/jargonbuster)

In the Higher Music Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will draw on, extend and apply the skills they have learned during the Course. This will be assessed through a [performance](#)<sup>2</sup> and a question paper.

The performance will be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of music and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

The question paper will require demonstration of a depth of knowledge and understanding of music, music concepts, and musical literacy, drawn from the Units in the Course.

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Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/jargonbuster](http://www.sqa.org.uk/jargonbuster)

<sup>2</sup> See link above for definition.

# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## **3 Health and wellbeing**

### 3.1 Personal learning

## **5 Thinking skills**

### 5.3 Applying

### 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

### 5.5 Creating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Pages 3–4 — Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles section and Purpose and aims of the Course section reworded to aid clarity.  Page 5 — Course structure and conditions of award section: descriptions of Units revised to better explain their requirements.  Page 6 — List of skills, knowledge and understanding revised to aid clarity. Bullet point two: 'sections' changed to 'examples'; bullet point six: 'complex' removed.  Page 7 — Unit assessment section: Unit descriptors revised to better explain their requirements.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014
	1.2	Scottish Studies Award Unit contributing information added. No other changes made to document content.	Qualifications Manager	September 2014

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.

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