

**-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**

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**NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR**

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**-Module Number- 0091356 -Session- 1989-90**  
**-Superclass- LH**

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**-Title- MUSIC COMPOSITION 1: HI-TECH POP COMP**

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**-DESCRIPTION-**

**Purpose** The purpose of this module is to develop the student's skills in composing music through the use of multi-tracking devices. The module may be run in conjunction with module 91350 Music Invention 1 and module 91351 Music Invention 2 in an integrated programme which allows the student to be certificated at his/her maximum level of attainment.

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**Preferred Entry Level** No formal entry requirements.

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**Learning Outcomes** The student should:

1. compose music using multi-tracking devices;
2. demonstrate a practical ability in the use of recording equipment.

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**Content/ Context** Corresponding to Learning Outcomes 1-2:

1. Basic compositional devices eg.  
  
Melody line: pattern, repetition, transposition, variation, sequence.  
  
Harmony: suitable harmonic support, progression.  
  
Bass: related to harmony, motivated by the rhythm eg. pattern, riff, ostinato.  
  
Rhythm: percussion parts, fills, breaks.

Structure: a variety of simple structures eg. strophic, song form, blues, ostinato, ground, rondo.

Timbre: selection of suitable voices corresponding to the part, style and overall texture.

Style: any popular style eg. pop, rock, reggae, heavy metal.

Basic compositional devices can be illustrated by carefully chosen examples for listening.

Instrumental Resources: the module can be achieved by using any instrument(s) in conjunction with recording equipment eg. basic electronic keyboards with multi-track recording equipment or, keyboards with internal/external sequencer along with a cassette tape recorder.

2. Use of available equipment to record the composition on separate tracks to alter levels and balance.

Assembly, interconnection, operation and dismantling of equipment.

Good working practices with regard to safety, efficiency and care of all equipment.

Suggested  
Learning and  
Teaching  
Approaches

Methodology should be student centred, with emphasis being placed on practical activities. The tutor should motivate, advise, facilitate and teach directly employing varied approaches which include demonstration and discussion. Care should be taken throughout the module to adjust teaching approaches to each student's needs.

The tutor should demonstrate how to set up and operate equipment with regard to its efficient use, care and safe handling. The student should be encouraged to use the equipment and investigate and experiment with sounds and ideas.

Different approaches may be used. For example, if using a multi-track recorder, the student should learn to:

- set up instruments/microphones and tape recorder with appropriate connections;
- set suitable recording levels for each track;
- record on to individual tracks; (it is suggested that the rhythm pattern is recorded first to ensure accurate synchronisation);

- synchronise and adjust the balance of the tracks.
- monitor recorded tracks while devising a new track.

If using electronic keyboards with an internal/external sequencer, the student should be able to:

- set suitable levels for each track;
- record individual tracks; (it is suggested that the rhythm pattern is recorded first to ensure accurate synchronisation);
- play recorded tracks while devising a new track; synchronise and adjust the balance of the tracks;
- make a clear final recording to cassette.

Opportunities should be taken whenever possible to discuss with and take advice from those who regularly use such equipment both within and outwith the centre e.g. visits to recording studios.

With regard to safety and care of equipment, all leads and equipment should be set up according to the manufacturer's specifications.

Students should be encouraged to experiment with a variety of starting points depending on the selected style which will include short rhythmic patterns, short bass patterns or chord sequences.

It may be helpful for students to listen to music similar in style and instrumentation to the medium they are using. This may suggest structures or ways of expanding or varying initial ideas.

The tutor should advise on matters of appropriate instrumentation, voicing, timbre, tempo, texture, form etc and encourage awareness of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic possibilities.

Students should be encouraged to be critical of their work and be constantly aware of the possibilities of improving compositions.

The student should work through a number of compositions in order to become competent in the use of equipment and to develop compositional abilities.

The student should compile a diary explaining how his/her work has evolved.

Assessment Formative assessment should operate as an integral part of learning and teaching in the module. It may include assessment of the student's work by the tutor, by the student and by peers.

Procedures

This will be achieved in the main through discussion of work completed. Work should be recorded on audio for playback and review. Each student should keep a diary of work during this module. Diaries and audio recordings should be available to a Subject Assessor. Each student should be issued with an information sheet explaining the purposes of the module:

- (a) it informs the students of the minimum which is taught and learned;
- (b) it informs the students of the learning and teaching activities they will undertake (this section of the information sheet is open and is completed by the tutor).

The performance criteria which follow provide tutors and students with a statement of the minimum which is required. Many students, given the opportunity and encouragement may go well beyond the minimum requirements. A decision on whether or not a student has achieved the criteria should be taken only after he/she has had the benefit of additional teaching support to revise and improve on unsatisfactory efforts.

Acceptable performance in the module will be satisfactory achievement of all the performance criteria specified for each Learning Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used below:

LO Learning Outcome  
 PC Performance Criteria  
 IA Instrument of Assessment

NB. Safety procedures and safe working practices must be observed at all times.

LO1 COMPOSE MUSIC USING MULTI-TRACKING DEVICES

PC The student:

- (a) identifies a stimulus and decides on a medium;
- (b) explores the potential of the medium;

- (c) selects, structures, organises and refines ideas to compose music using multi-tracking devices;
- (d) refines the piece;
- (e) records or stores the piece.

#### IA Practical Exercise

The student will be tested on his/her ability to compose music comprising a minimum of 4 parts using multi-tracking devices. The medium will not preclude acoustic and vocal resources. A diary will be compiled to show evidence of the process.

The composition will be recorded on tape or stored on disk. The recording should be clear, well-balanced and the parts clearly identifiable and audibly discernible.

Satisfactory performance will be that the composition comprises a minimum of 4 parts which must include melody line, harmony, rhythm and bass and will be of not less than 1 minute's duration.

#### LO2 DEMONSTRATE A PRACTICAL ABILITY IN THE USE OF RECORDING EQUIPMENT

##### PC The student:

- (a) correctly assembles and interconnects equipment;
- (b) correctly operates equipment;
- (c) correctly dismantles equipment;
- (d) consistently demonstrates good working practices with regard to safety, efficiency and the care of all equipment.

#### IA Practical Exercise

The student will be tested on his/her ability to correctly assemble, interconnect, operate, dismantle and care for all equipment safely and consistently.

The student will maintain a diary or record of work containing observation checklists and details of practical exercises, dated and countersigned by the tutor.

Satisfactory performance will be based on evidence contained in the record of work that all equipment has been used correctly and competently and that the student has consistently demonstrated good working practices with regard to safety, efficiency and care of all equipment.

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13/02/98