



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: FN42 11

Superclass: LG

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Version: 01

Summary

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce students to the roots of Gaelic music making and singing, the transition to contemporary Gaelic music making and singing, the application of Gaelic to contemporary music genres and parallels in other Celtic cultures.

This is a mandatory Unit in the National Progression Award in Contemporary Gaelic Songwriting and Production, but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit. It is envisaged that candidates successfully completing this Unit will be able to progress to further study in Gaelic language and music.

Outcomes

- 1 Describe key aspects of the development of contemporary Gaelic music and song
- 2 Compile a simple programme of Contemporary Gaelic song and Celtic instrumental music

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have completed Intermediate 1 Gaelic / Gaidhlig course or have an equivalent skill level in the language.

General information (continued)

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**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.*

Core Skills

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

The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Problem Solving

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Describe key aspects of the development of contemporary Gaelic music and song

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the traditional roots of Gaelic music
- (b) Describe correctly a range of external influences on Gaelic music since 1950
- (c) Identify a range of genres of contemporary Gaelic music using recorded examples
- (d) Relate the development of contemporary Gaelic music to similar developments in other Celtic cultures

Outcome 2

Compile a simple programme of Contemporary Gaelic song and Celtic instrumental music

Performance Criteria

- (a) Prepare a simple programme of Gaelic songs performed in contemporary style
- (b) Prepare a simple programme of Celtic instrumental music

National Unit specification: statement of standards (continued)

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Evidence Requirements

Outcome 1

Written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved the Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Evidence must include:

- ◆ An explanation of the traditional roots of Gaelic music and song which must include reference to each of the following:
 - love songs, lullabies, work songs, ballads, religious songs and *puirt-à-beul*
- ◆ A description of at least 3 external influences on Gaelic music since 1950
- ◆ Identification of 4 examples of genres of Contemporary Gaelic music from played recordings
- ◆ A short description of the development of contemporary Gaelic music in relation to similar developments in at least 2 other Celtic cultures

Outcome 2

Performance or product evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved the Outcome and Performance Criteria.

Evidence must be in the form of a balanced programme containing:

- ◆ 15 minutes of Gaelic songs featuring at least two contrasting genres
- and
- ◆ 10 minutes of Celtic instrumental music which complement the choice of songs.

Additional written and/or oral evidence is required which explains the reasons for the choice of music and songs with reference to genre and influences.

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

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 a mandatory Unit within the Group Award in Contemporary Gaelic Songwriting and Production (SCQF level 5), but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

In this Unit candidates are required to produce a programme of Contemporary Gaelic Music. They will learn about the development of contemporary musical styles in Gaelic-speaking Scotland and across related cultures, e.g. Ireland, Wales, Brittany (France), Cape Breton (Canada) and Galicia (Spain). The instrumental music submitted for Outcome 2 may be drawn from any of these cultures, while the songs may be original compositions or drawn from the contemporary Gaelic repertoire.

Candidates would benefit from having knowledge and/or skills in the Gaelic language and in both traditional and contemporary music. External influences from British and American music should include the acoustic folk music of the 1950s and 60s, electric folk in the late 60s and early 70s, folk/country rock of the 70s and 80s, world music in the 90s and later developments such as rap and beatbox. Many of these musical styles could be reflected in the various genres of contemporary Gaelic music studied.

This Unit should prepare candidates for progression to further study in Gaelic language and music, in addition to improving candidates' presentation skills.

Development of National Occupational Standards

Through this Unit, candidates will be working towards development of the following NOS:

- ◆ Understand the cultural heritage sector, and the wider creative and cultural context in which you work: Creative and Cultural Skills (Dec 09)

National Unit specification: support notes (continued)

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

For Outcome 1 candidates would benefit from:

- ◆ Working as a class — eg to listen to recordings of influential traditional and contemporary Gaelic music performers
- ◆ Working in small groups — eg to discuss current and future Gaelic musical directions
- ◆ Having visits — eg from Gaelic performers and others within the Gaelic music industry, such as presenters and producers.
- ◆ Working individually — eg to research popular music developments since 1950

For Outcome 2 candidates would benefit from:

- ◆ Working as a class to listen to and formatively assess each other's programme choices
- ◆ Working in small groups to perform together
- ◆ Working individually to develop their own programmes
- ◆ Having visits from Gaelic performers
- ◆ Going on trips to live musical events

By adopting some or all of the above learning and teaching approaches and/or through the Outcomes and corresponding Evidence Requirements, the Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following skills for life, learning and work:

- ◆ creativity
- ◆ innovation
- ◆ confidence
- ◆ interpersonal skills
- ◆ organisational skills
- ◆ time management
- ◆ presentation skills

National Unit specification: support notes (continued)

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will describe the development of contemporary Gaelic music and song and compile a simple programme of Contemporary Gaelic music and song.

Candidates will:

- ◆ Explain the traditional roots of Gaelic Music
- ◆ Describe external influences on Gaelic Music
- ◆ Identify genres of Contemporary Gaelic Music listening to recorded examples
- ◆ Describe the development of contemporary Gaelic Music in relation to similar developments in other Celtic cultures
- ◆ Choose, plan, and present a programme of Gaelic music and song

This means that as candidates are working on this Unit they will be developing aspects of the Core Skills in Communication and Problem Solving.

There may be additional opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Working with Others through group discussion of musical styles and peer assessment of performances and recordings.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

The following approaches to assessment are suggested:

Outcome 1

Evidence could be compiled in a folio of evidence via continuous assessment. Alternatively, a cumulative test could be constructed using a combination of written questions, some of which could be based on video or audio extracts of different genres.

Outcome 2

Candidates should reach agreement on content with their tutor at the planning stage. This is to ensure that they compile a balanced programme in which the songs and instrumental music chosen should complement each other. The programme may or may not feature the candidates' own compositions.

The 10 minutes of Celtic instrumental music which complement the choice of songs may be drawn from any of the Celtic nations.

Candidates could be assessed on a live performance of their programme, or submit an audio or video recording compiled from commercially available material. In the case of a live performance this could take place in the presence of an audience at the discretion of the centre.

National Unit specification: support notes (continued)

Unit title: Contemporary Gaelic Music and Song (SCQF level 5)

In both cases, a short written or oral report justifying the choice of each item should be included. Copyright considerations should be observed at all times.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

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

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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