



# Common questions about National 5 and Higher Music Technology

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# Course assessment — assignment

## How many contexts do candidates have to cover for the assignment?

At Higher level, the assignment will be one piece of work which demonstrates planning, implementing and evaluation and must include **two** different contexts. Example briefs are included in the course assessment task document for Higher Music Technology, available on SQA's secure website.

## Do candidates have to include music from two different genres in the assignment?

Yes, at Higher level, candidates must include music from **two** or more genres.

## Can I adapt the assignment briefs to suit my centre?

The assignment briefs can be adapted, provided that the adapted brief presents an equal challenge to the candidate. There are a wide variety of options for design brief formats.

For National 5, examples of acceptable briefs could include a dramatic script with sound clips/samples and musical accompaniment to enhance the script. This could also be advertisements for fictional films with voiceover, sound effects and music. Both could be treated as sound recordings, with no video being used. However, this would include multi-track recording, along with production and editing features to produce a final master.

For Higher, if centres/candidates are following assessment task 1, the three live performances may be, but need not be recorded at three separate events. If candidates recorded the three performances at the same recording event this would be acceptable. Candidates may record sections of pieces/songs. Full pieces/songs are not required.

Below is some additional guidance for centres that are adapting assessment tasks 1 and 4 and have combined these assessment tasks:

- ◆ It would be acceptable for the assignment to include one multi-track recording and two live recordings. Live recordings could be as simple as a stereo recording using a stereo pair of mics and/or a portable recorder in this case.
- ◆ Another possibility is for candidates to include one multi-track recording and accompany this with jingles/background music which has significant candidate input (ie built on loops or multi-tracked with some mic inputs).

- ◆ In addition, another possibility could be for the candidate to include one multi-track recording and do live recordings (ie stereo recording using mics and/or portable recorder) of a jingle(s) or background music.
- ◆ For candidates recording live performances, it would be acceptable to mix/edit the recording of their performance post recording (ie adding EQs, effects, panning)

## **What Understanding Standards materials are available for Music Technology?**

SQA are publishing examples of candidate evidence with commentaries as part of the Understanding Standards programme. These materials are for teachers and lecturers to help them develop their understanding of standards required for assessment. As these materials become available, they are being published in the following locations:

- ◆ SQA's secure website — materials relating to Unit assessment and the Music Technology assignments. Teachers and lecturers can arrange access to these materials through their SQA Co-ordinator.
- ◆ Understanding Standards website — materials relating to the Music Technology question papers.

More information on our Understanding Standards programme can be found on our [Understanding Standards](#) page.

## **Question paper**

### **Can candidates use headphones during the question paper?**

Candidates are permitted to use headphones during the question paper for National 5 and Higher Music Technology.

Some centres have languages labs, which have the facility to play one CD and for this to be played out to multiple sets of headphones. In other centres, which have a studio facility, CDs also can be played out to multiple sets of headphones. Both of these options would be acceptable.

If these facilities are not available, then our advice is that the question paper CD is played through stereo speakers and candidates are seated centrally in the room between the two speakers.

## **Unit assessment**

### **How many contexts do candidates have to study at Higher level for the Music Technology in Context Unit?**

Candidates must cover three contexts. For Unit assessment, candidates should produce three short pieces of work in response to briefs provided by the centre. Example briefs are found in the Unit assessment support (UAS) packs on SQA's secure website.

### **Is it possible to integrate assessment so that Assessment Standards can be achieved in both the Music Technology Skills and the Music Technology in Context Units?**

Yes, many centres will find that this is an effective way to approach assessment. Examples of how this can be achieved are located in the combined approach UAS packs on SQA's secure website.

### **How long does the report need to be for Assessment Standard 1.4 in the Understanding 20th and 21st Century Music Unit?**

The report may be fairly brief but must cover a range of intellectual property issues and be linked to one real-life case study. As a guide, the report should be a minimum of 200 words.

Curriculum for Excellence questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA's website.