

Our ref: S&SS\FS

28 October 2003

To: SQA Co-ordinator  
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
X	Note and pass on
	None – update/information only

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Dear Colleague

### **National Courses — Music**

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Music.

Attached is an update on what has happened during session 2002/2003 together with information about plans for the next two sessions:


- ◆ NQ Review— Music
- ◆ Assessment of Practical Performance — 2004 and 2005
- ◆ Moderation 2003/2004
- ◆ Appeals/Absentees 2004
- ◆ Changes to Standard Grade 2004/2005
- ◆ Music Assessment Panel Report
- ◆ HN Review — Music

Mary McDonald has recently joined the team as Qualifications Manager and will work with Fiona Scott to provide centres with support in this subject area.

Centres can access the following on the music pages of the SQA web-site ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) — Arrangements Documents, update letters, NQ Review Reports, Principal Assessor Reports, Senior Moderator Report, Marking Instructions for the 2003 examinations in Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher Listening (mandatory and extension) and Advanced Higher Listening (mandatory).

Centres may also order copies of past papers, CDs, etc from the Customer Contact centre (0141 242 2214). There is a fee of £4.00 per paper plus £1.95 handling charge.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Mary McDonald  
Qualifications Manager

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## **NQ REVIEW — MUSIC**

Five National Seminars are planned for October and November 2003. The Seminars will give feedback on the initial consultation process carried out by the Development Officers, and will update on the two course models which have emerged. These proposed revised structures fit the required framework for National Qualifications and also address the views/concerns of the profession expressed through the lengthy consultation. Delegates attending the seminars will be given the opportunity to comment on these revised models.

Centres will be kept informed of further development/progress.

## ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE 2004

### 1. *Date and Duration*

Visiting Examination in practical performance at Standard Grade, Intermediate 1 and 2, and Higher levels will take place from 16 February to 26 March 2004. Advanced Higher will be held from 10 May to 28 May 2004.

There are **no** changes to the duration of performances, content of programmes, or drum kit/guitar requirements from those in place for 2002/2003, for 2004 **or** 2005.

Durations of Performance to Visiting Examiners are:

Standard Grade	}	4 – 6 minutes
Intermediate 1 Mandatory		
Intermediate 2 Mandatory		
Intermediate 1 Extension		
Intermediate 2 Extension 1	}	
Intermediate 2 Extension 2	}	6 – 8 minutes
Higher Mandatory		
Higher Extension		approximately 12 minutes
Advanced Higher		practical timings remain at 12 – 15 minutes for Mandatory, 20 – 30 minutes for Extension 1 and 25 – 30 minutes for Extension 2.

### 2. *Pipe Band Drumming* — **NB: New information**

An ever increasing number of candidates are being presented with pipe band drumming as their solo instrument. Centres will be asked to indicate if they are presenting pipe band drumming on the same form on which they list tabla and bagpipe candidates (in December 2003). This will ensure that specialist visiting examiners in all three instruments will be assigned to centres involved.

### 3. *Levels of Performance*

In 2003 some centres entered candidates for a Higher course but with the extension unit at Advanced Higher level. This caused confusion, particularly during the Visiting Examining procedures. Centres are referred to page 7, (2.6) of Conditions and Arrangements 2003, which states that candidates may pass an **internal** unit at the level above the Course but must achieve all the components of the external assessment at the level for which they are entered.

Candidates who are in advance of the standard required for their level may be better advised to complete a course, say at Higher level and sit a free standing unit at the level above.

## **MODERATION 2003/2004**

Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher Mandatory Inventing will be subject to Central Moderation from 5 – 8 May 2004. Further guidance will be issued to centres at a later date.

### **Quality Assurance of Internal Evidence**

Centres were informed in March 2003 of the appointment of a full time moderator in Music, Mr John Mabon.

John has been carrying out moderation visits in schools across the country, dealing specifically with internal evidence related to completed units in practical performance. Other areas of internal assessment will be reviewed in due course.

Visits have proved to be very valuable to the schools selected so far, in that they have provided support and guidance across a wide range of assessment issues. John has also been involved in a number of visits which have been purely developmental in nature, allowing for the sharing of good practice and guidance with SQA procedures.

Centres may request a development visit by contacting SQA moderation section on: 0141 242 2107.

## **ABSENTEES/APPEALS 2004**

### **Absentees**

Candidates who are absent at the time of their practical examination and who subsequently send in evidence must submit a recording of one piece with score **and a completed assessment criteria sheet**. A recording alone is not sufficient for a mark to be awarded.

### **Appeals**

**National Qualifications** — centres are referred to the document “*Exemplification of Appeals*” (BB1768, issued February 2003).

**Standard Grade**— to inform the Appeals procedure, it is very helpful to examination teams when centres submit specific evidence of candidate performance eg:

Solo performing: taped evidence of as much as possible of a candidate’s performance (with a copy of the music).

## **CHANGES TO STANDARD GRADE 2004/2005**

After consultation with the Examination Teams and the Music Assessment Panel, SQA has approved the following amendments to Standard Grade Requirements:

1. *Alternative to Group Performance*

Candidates may opt to perform on a second solo instrument (different to that professed for solo category) as an alternative to Group Performing. This performance will be assessed internally and moderated externally as before. This option will be available from 2004 onwards.

2. *Foundation Listening Paper*

**From 2005**, candidates will be instructed as follows — “Place a cross (X) above each word where a change of chord takes place”.

This replaces the previous instruction to underline the word, and will be used in Foundation Level Listening papers from 2005.

## **Music Assessment Panel Report — overview of Business — Session 2002–2003**

Assessment Panels are allocated two meetings per year. Each year the Panel for Music, in their September and March meetings, seek to pick up business unable to be covered comprehensively in two meetings by establishing sub-groups for specific issues. Thereafter, the full Panel receive verbal progress reports from each.

Two sub-groups for Session 2003–2004 were formed.

Sub-group (1) NQ Review, submitted a detailed response to the NQ Review proposals following a full day meeting. This can be found on SQA's website.

Sub-group (2) Percussion/Drumkit consisted of panel members, class and co-opted percussion teachers. A series of meetings during this session followed initial planning meetings in the previous session and included consultation with Principal Examiners and the Co-ordinator for Performing. Following comments of concern from both class and instrumental teachers, the task of the sub-group was to consider appropriate revisions to the current arrangements in an attempt to ensure parity with other instruments and to take account of the evolving nature of Percussion/Drumkit, with particular reference to Drumkit. The group are currently preparing learning and teaching material with accompanying audio exemplification and repertoire lists in an attempt to support teachers and students. Given the current NQ review process, this material will be passed to the Development Officers and other associated groups responsible for NQ Review work for their consideration. The Assessment Panel are grateful to the sub-group for their detailed work.

During the session, the Assessment Panel gave consideration to a range of other issues. These included:

### **Music Making Units**

Current uptake is to be verified before the removal of any Music Making units which duplicate NQ units.

### **Visiting Examiners' Training Meetings**

Two panel members and the convener reported on their attendance at two Examiners' Training Meetings in February, one in Midlothian, and the other in Glasgow.

### **Categories of Instruments for Performance**

Given the intention to revise percussion/drumkit arrangements, the Panel expressed a wish to review the Categories of Instruments list. They were advised that this would be more appropriately dealt with as part of the NQ Review process.

### **Concertina**

Following comments from centres, Concertina will be included in the Categories of Instruments list.

### **Harmonica**

Following comments from centres, Harmonica will be included in the Categories of Instruments list.

### **European Virtual School Community Website**

Teachers are reminded of the website of the European Virtual School. [www.eun.org/vs](http://www.eun.org/vs)

Contributions are welcome. An official launch in Scotland is planned around the end of November. Information will be forwarded to schools in due course.

### **Performing — Visiting Examination**

Consultation on the arrangements for practical examinations is taking place as part of the NQ Review process.

### **Listening Papers**

Following discussion on the choice of music within examination papers, the Listening Co-ordinator assured the Panel that advice on balance of content is given in his "Guide to Setters".

### **Correspondence**

Correspondence received from centres covered a wide range of issues. Where appropriate, the Panel advised the Lead Officer of appropriate responses.

### **PA Reports**

The Panel are required to comment on Principal Examiners' and Moderator's Reports following each diet of examinations. Concerns raised and recommendations contained within these reports were noted and appropriate action subsequently advised.

### **Examinations 2002–2003**

The Assessment Panel for Music wish to thank all members of the examination teams for their work.

The profession are also grateful to their examination team colleagues for their commitment, which ensured that procedures progressed smoothly during Session 2002–2003. In addition, the forward preparation of papers for Session 2003–2004 was also accomplished, which was a huge achievement given the timescales involved.

Examination work eats hugely into the personal time of teachers. Those involved in examination teams require to reserve their release days for visiting examining. In this sense, other work related to setting, vetting and appeals procedures has to take place in evenings and on weekends throughout the session, in order that all requirements are met. Examination procedures continued until July 14 this session with appeals procedures requiring attention during the weekends up to September 7.

This year there were fewer appeals, which gives a positive message both about the effectiveness of examination procedures, and those involved in presentation across centres.

## **REVIEW - HN MUSIC**

Revised frameworks for HN Music, Music Business and Music Technology have been placed on the SQA website.

Centres wishing to comment on the proposed frameworks should submit observations as soon as possible, either by e-mail or to the Glasgow postal address.

Any comments received will be passed to the steering group who are overseeing development.