

13 August 2007

To: SQA Co-ordinators  
Secondary schools

Cc: HMIE  
LEA contacts  
SQA Customer Support Managers

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	None — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

**National Qualifications — Standard Grade Music update August 2007**

Please pass this letter to the member of staff responsible for Music.

There have been no changes to Standard Grade Music as a result of the NQ Review in Music; all existing Arrangements, concepts and conditions for assessment continue unaltered. This letter is in the form of frequently asked questions and answers and contains information and reminders about external assessment relating in particular to drumkit, guitar and keyboards.

Pages 6 to 8 of this letter contain the list of Standard Grade concepts which were revised and published in 2000 and to which there is no change.

Please pass a copy of this letter and the appendix to your Music teaching and instrumental staff. If you would like to discuss any of the contents of this letter please contact Muriel Walker (contact details above) or myself on 0131-561 6811 or e-mail [mary.mcdonald@sqa.org.uk](mailto:mary.mcdonald@sqa.org.uk).

Yours faithfully



Mary McDonald  
Qualifications Manager  
National Qualifications  
Performing Arts

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

### **1. What is the total duration of a Solo Performing programme at Standard Grade?**

The performing time for Solo Performing programmes **on all instruments** at all levels (Foundation, General and Credit) is **4-6 minutes**. The **minimum time duration is 4 minutes** and all candidates must adhere to this minimum time. For all instruments, each candidate's programme should include two or three pieces contrasting in style although more pieces may be performed if time permits.

It is each centre's responsibility to provide appropriate accompaniments at all levels. Taped accompaniment is acceptable if stylistically appropriate.

### **2. Does music for Standard Grade Solo Performing need to be sent to SQA for prior approval?**

No. This requirement applies to the NQ levels of Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher and does not apply to Standard Grade.

### **3. Standard Grade Music (any instrument) what happens if a candidate fails to meet the criteria to gain a level of achievement C?**

In this case the candidate would be awarded a 7 for that particular piece.

### **4. In Solo Performing do singers have to perform from memory?**

It is recommended that singers perform from memory to allow convincing presentation and interpretation. Pieces may be accompanied or unaccompanied and transposed to any appropriate key. Although not advisable, it is acceptable for singers to perform with the music in front of them and no penalty would be imposed for this fact alone.

### **5. Bagpipe and Pipe Band Drumming candidates require a specialist Visiting Examiner. What is the mechanism for informing SQA about this?**

In early December of each year SQA sends to all centres a pro forma to be completed if a specialist Visiting Examiner is required. It is each centre's responsibility to complete and return this so that advance arrangements can be made.

### **6. Group Performing is subject to internal assessment and external verification by SQA. Is it possible for a candidate to present a second solo instrument rather than group performing?**

Yes. This alternative has been available since 2004. Note — this element is always listed as 'Group Performing' on the candidate's certificate. The second solo instrument as an alternative to group performing is also internally assessed by centres and subject to external verification by SQA.

**7. What are the requirements for keyboards presented as a second solo instrument, rather than Group Performing?**

Candidates playing keyboard as a second solo instrument are required to play with two hands, performing both melody line and chords (as in Solo Performing).

**8. Is this also the case for keyboards as part of Group Performing?**

No. Candidates playing keyboard in Group Performing may play with one hand melody only. (Please note, however, that this different demand may impact on the task level).

**9. Are marking instructions for the Standard Grade Music Listening papers available?**

Yes. In common with all subjects, Standard Grade Music marking instructions have been published annually since the 2005 examination. To access these, go to **www.sqa.org.uk** then select the National Qualifications icon, then select a subject area — Music. Scroll down the Music homepage to *Marking Instructions*.

**(See pages 6 to 8 of this letter for full list of Concepts for Standard Grade Music)**

## **Drumkit**

### **1. Which styles are appropriate for drumkit programmes at Standard Grade?**

The following styles are amongst those suitable for drumkit: Rock, Blues, Disco, Waltz, Shuffle, Swing, Bossa Nova, and Cha-Cha.

### **2. What is the required content of drumkit programmes?**

<b>Drumkit requirements</b>	<b>Foundation (task level 3)</b>	<b>General (task level 2)</b>	<b>Credit (task level 1)</b>
No. styles	2	3	4
No. fills within each style	2	3	4
4-way independence should feature in at least....	N/A (3-way required)	2 styles	3 styles

### **3. In Standard Grade drumkit programmes is it possible to mix task levels?**

All of the styles in a programme should be in the same task level category; a programme of mixed task levels is not appropriate here.

### **4. Do drumkit candidates have to be accompanied?**

Candidates presenting drumkit in Solo Performing must be accompanied and this may be live or pre-recorded. Accompaniment from more than one instrument is acceptable if stylistically suitable.

### **5. What is the minimum requirement for drumkit equipment for examination purposes?**

The minimum requirement for drumkit is: bass drum (with pedal), snare drum, hi-hat, suspended cymbal and two or three tom-toms. The use of electronic drumkit, played conventionally, is permitted.

### **6. What does the Visiting Examiner need in terms of drumkit notation?**

As the very minimum requirement, the Visiting Examiner should be provided with four bars of notation for each style plus notated fills appropriate to the task level.

### **Please note the following change for drumkit for the 2008 examination and after:**

In the past, if all prepared drumkit styles couldn't be accommodated in the 4-6 minute programme it was possible for the centre to profess that the candidate had covered the remaining style. From the 2008 examination and after the Visiting Examiner will require to hear **all** professed styles, eg four styles at Credit level; judicious cuts or fades can be made in the music to allow this.

## Guitar

### 1. What are the requirements when presenting a chordal guitar programme?

Foundation (task level 3)	Minimum six chords
General (task level 2)	Minimum nine chords
Credit (task level 1)	Minimum 12 chords

It is possible to play a guitar programme combining melody/lead guitar with chordal playing and the following would apply:

- ◆ Where a candidate plays 2/3 of a programme on melody/lead guitar and 1/3 chords, task level is determined by requiring 50% of the number of chords listed for that task level.  
*(eg in the case of task level 1 programme, a minimum of six chords should be performed.)*
- ◆ Where a candidate plays 1/3 lead guitar and 2/3 chords, the total chordal requirements for the task level must be met.
- ◆ Where a candidate plays 1/2 lead guitar and 1/2 chords, the total chordal requirements for the task level must be met.

### 2. What is required in terms of accompaniment and notation?

In a performance which requires musical background (for example guitar strumming), the relevant melodic and/or harmonic background must be provided in order to ensure that the performance can be assessed in context. The background may be on one instrument but need not be restricted to the piano. Accompaniment on more than one instrument is acceptable if stylistically suitable. This may be live or pre-recorded.

Notation: Standard notation must be provided for the Visiting Examiner; tablature alone is not sufficient.

Scottish Qualifications Authority

Standard Grade Music in and after 2000

Table of Revised Concepts

*Foundation*

Compositional Techniques				Contexts	
Melodic	Harmonic	Rhythmic	Structural	Timbre	Styles/Forms
Ascending Descending	Chord Chord change Consonance Dissonance	Repetition  Faster/slower Longer/shorter Pause	Single line Unison/octave Harmony	Sound, silence Louder, softer	Baroque
Stepwise Leaping Broken chord	Notes together	Accented Beat/pulse	Solo Ensemble	Sustained, staccato, legato, striking, blowing, bowing, strumming, plucking, slapping	Jazz Rock/pop
Repetition Sequence		In simple time: 2/3/4 beats in a bar On/off the beat	Ostinato Riff	Orchestra: woodwind, brass, strings, percussion	Scottish
Phrase Question Answer		Pattern	Round	Bands: brass, pipe, rock, steel, dance (Scottish), wind/military	March, Strathspey, Reel, Waltz
		Drum fill  Scotch snap	Accompanied Unaccompanied	Groups: folk, pop, jazz	Latin American
			Repetition/contrast Section	Instruments: guitars (electric, acoustic), keyboards (piano, organ, synthesiser), accordion, fiddle, drums, pipes, voice	
				Vocal, choral, lead vocals, backing vocals	

**Table of Revised Concepts (contd)**

*General*

<b>Compositional Techniques</b>				<b>Contexts</b>	
<b>Melodic</b>	<b>Harmonic</b>	<b>Rhythmic</b>	<b>Structural</b>	<b>Timbre</b>	<b>Styles/Forms</b>
<b>Theme Variation</b>	<b>Chord progressions using I, IV, V in major</b>	<b>Down/up beat Anacrusis</b>	<b>Chords, cluster Arpeggio</b>	<b>Crescendo, Diminuendo</b>	<b>Blues, ragtime, swing</b>
<b>Imitation</b>	<b>Tonality: major/minor</b>	<b>Compound time</b>	<b>Walking bass Descant</b>	<b>Individual instruments: orchestra, keyboard, folk, Scottish, string, rock/pop</b>	<b>Romantic</b>
<b>Ornament</b>	<b>Modulation</b>	<b>Speed change: accelerando, rallentando, rubato</b>	<b>Contrary motion</b>		<b>Opera/musical</b>
<b>Scales: pentatonic, major, minor, chromatic</b>	<b>Vamp</b>		<b>Canon</b>	<b>Recorders, pan pipes</b>	<b>Fanfare</b>
	<b>Drone</b>	<b>syncopation</b>	<b>Binary, ternary AB, ABA, AABA</b>	<b>Voices: soprano, alto, tenor, bass</b>	<b>Concerto, symphony</b>
<b>Tone Semitone</b>			<b>Minuet and trio</b>	<b>Effects: distortion, reverb, delay</b>	<b>Gaelic Psalms</b>
<b>Scat singing</b>			<b>Rondo</b>	<b>Electronic drums</b>	<b>Scots ballad, Bothy ballad, Waulking song, Mouth music, Slow air</b>
			<b>Theme and variations</b>	<b>Ghanaian drum ensembles</b>	<b>Ghanaian</b>
			<b>Programme</b>	<b>Gamelan</b>	<b>Indonesian gamelan</b>
				<b>Latin percussion ensembles</b>	<b>Improvisation</b>
					<b>Jig</b>
					<b>Samba, salsa</b>

**Table of Revised Concepts (contd)**

*Credit*

<b>Compositional Techniques</b>				<b>Contexts</b>	
<b>Melodic</b>	<b>Harmonic</b>	<b>Rhythmic</b>	<b>Structural</b>	<b>Timbre</b>	<b>Styles/Forms</b>
<b>Modulating</b> <b>Relative major</b> <b>minor</b>	<b>Chords: I, IV, V, VI in</b> <b>major and minor keys</b>	<b>Groupings in simple and</b> <b>compound time</b>		<b>Voices: mezzo soprano,</b> <b>countertenor, baritone</b>	<b>Dixieland, Boogie-woogie</b> <b>Impressionist</b> <b>Minimalist</b> <b>Aleatoric</b>
<b>Tonal</b> <b>Atonal</b>	<b>Modal</b>  <b>Modulation to relative</b> <b>major, minor</b>	<b>Cross rhythms</b>	<b>Pedal</b> <b>Inverted pedal</b> <b>Ground bass</b> <b>Alberti bass</b>	<b>Muted</b> <b>Glissando</b> <b>Flutter tonguing</b> <b>Double stopping</b> <b>Arco</b> <b>Pizzicato</b> <b>Col legno</b> <b>Tremolando/tremolo</b> <b>Vibrato</b> <b>A capella</b> <b>Register</b>	<b>Classical</b>  <b>Scherzo</b>  <b>Cantata/oratorio/passion</b>
<b>Trill</b> <b>Grace note</b>	<b>Cadence: perfect,</b> <b>imperfect</b>		<b>Homophony</b> <b>Polyphony</b>	<b>12-string guitar, slide guitar,</b> <b>fretless bass guitar</b>	<b>Chorale/hymn tune</b> <b>Pibroch</b>
<b>Syllabic/melismatic</b> <b>word setting</b>	<b>Tierce de Picardie</b>  <b>Discord</b>		<b>Obbligato</b> <b>Counter melody</b>	<b>Sitar, tabla</b>	<b>Recitative, aria, chorus</b>  <b>Soul, country</b>
<b>Word painting</b>	<b>Suspension</b>		<b>Strophic</b> <b>Through-composed</b>		<b>Indian</b>
<b>Scales: blues,</b> <b>whole-tone</b>	<b>Passing note</b>		<b>Coda</b> <b>Cadenza</b>		
<b>Interval</b>	<b>Interval</b>				