



**National Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Music**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Qualifications (NQ) awards

Titles/levels of NQ awards verified

DV45 10&11 Music : Composing (Intermediate 1 and 2)

DV45 12 Music : Composing (Higher)

DV45 13 Music : Composing (Advanced Higher)

DV41 13 Music : Listening (Advanced Higher)

General comments

In 2011, 50 centres were selected for central verification and, in the great majority of cases, centres' assessment decisions were found to be in line with national standards and were Accepted. Of the centres Not Accepted initially, all were Accepted following resubmission.

Candidate folios were generally well organised and centres provided evidence that staff were comfortable in their role as internal assessors.

In addition, in January 2010, a further 10 centres were selected for visiting verification of the Music: Composing Unit. This involved the Verifier coming to the school/college to verify incomplete candidate evidence and offer assessment advice and guidance.

Course Arrangements documents, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Most centres were familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. However, a few centres were still not aware that exemplification materials are available on SQA's secure website, or that the date for folio submissions was in late March and not April.

Evidence Requirements

Most centres demonstrated that there was a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements. On a few occasions parts of the Evidence Requirements were not provided, eg the Assessor's Process Observation Checklist and Assessor's Pro Forma.

Administration of assessments

Most centres assess candidates' work on a regular basis, eg every two or three weeks with feedback to the candidate provided via the Assessor's Process Observation Checklist.

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

Many examples of good practice were found including folios which were well organised and contained a wide range of compositional styles, particularly in contemporary and popular genres. Most of the scores now submitted are realised with the use of computer software such as Sibelius, and this adds a degree of clarity not always found previously. In the Music: Listening Unit DV41 13 — the Listening Commentary — the choice of music to be analysed was perceived to be that which allowed the candidate to use their knowledge and show their ability to apply the concepts studied as part of their Listening Course.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Programme notes which are informative and clarify the stimulus, composition and decision-making process, concepts deployed, and actual contribution of the candidate.
- ◆ Assessor's supplementary comments in the Assessor's Pro Forma which bring focus and insight to the centre's rationale for assessment decisions.
- ◆ Scores or performance plans which are complete and accurate.
- ◆ Audio CDs (not minidisc) which are clearly recorded and labelled. Where possible, each candidate should have an individual audio CD.
- ◆ Computer-generated scores, which are quantised and reflect the timbres chosen.
- ◆ Completed Assessor's Pro Forma and Assessor's Process Observation Checklist with comments that inform the Verifier.
- ◆ Folio time requirements which are correct for each level.
- ◆ Candidate compositions which show convincing control of all five areas of melody, harmony, rhythm, structure and timbre in at least one composition within the folio.
- ◆ Centres which make full use of exemplification materials provided by SQA in order to understand the content and standard required for each of the levels of Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher.
- ◆ Listening Commentaries which follow the methodology found in the exemplification on SQA's secure website.
- ◆ The Listening Commentary should be concept driven, with each concept being supported by a referenced audio excerpt on CD and a manuscript example embedded in the text.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified

- F3F4 10 Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice (Intermediate 1)
- F3F4 11 Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice (Intermediate 2)
- F3F4 12 Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice (Higher)
- F3F4 13 Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice (Advanced Higher)

General comments

Of the centres selected for verification in 2011, most had a clear understanding of the national assessment standards.

Assessment evidence was generally well organised with centres providing evidence that staff were comfortable in their role as internal assessors.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors were very familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials.

Evidence Requirements

In all centres there was clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements, with the Assessor's Pro forma, Programme Notes and Diary/Log available.

Administration of assessments

Most centres assess on a regular basis, eg every two or three weeks with structured feedback to the candidate.

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

The suite of Units F3F4: Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice is proving popular in centres with an encouraging uptake at all levels, and Higher level in particular. A wide range of candidates and instruments is being entered for these Units, and there are examples of good practice where instrumental staff use the Units to formalise the instrumental lesson. In some centres teaching staff are presenting the Units in general interest/elective classes to candidates unable to commit time to a full Music Course.

Outcome 1: Carry out an effective practice routine

There are instances where the practice log/diary is used as a vehicle to promote and support pupil evaluation; rather than just recording the piece they have practised, candidates are identifying areas for improvement and evaluating progress.

Outcome 2: Describe music chosen for performance

Some centres are guiding their candidates to the six areas of compositional techniques as a means of identifying features of the music chosen, and this is supporting and enhancing candidates' understanding.

Outcome 3: Perform music in contrasting styles

Unit performance is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis and some centres are encouraging high standards by discussing the assessment strands on the external Music Performing Candidate Mark sheet as they review candidate performances.