

31 March 2005

To: SQA Co-ordinators (Secondary Schools and FE Colleges)
Directors of Education
SCIS
LEA Contacts
Customer Account Managers

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications – Music Update March 2005

This letter contains important information on the progress of the National Qualifications Review in Music as we move towards implementation of new reviewed Courses and Units in 2006/2007. The contents of this letter should be passed on to the member of staff responsible for Music.

On 7 February 2005 delegates from all LEAs in Scotland, along with other representatives of the teaching profession, attended a national seminar in Glasgow. This seminar provided an update on developments in the Review of National Qualifications in Music, and information delivered at the seminar is summarised in this letter in the form of frequently asked questions and answers.

Please make copies of the attachment to this letter and distribute to your Music teaching and instrumental staff.

Should you wish to discuss any of the contents of this letter, please contact Muriel Walker on the above contact details or myself on 0131-271 6774.

Yours faithfully



Mary McDonald
Qualifications Manager

**National Qualifications – Music Review
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (Q1-17)**

1. Why are National Qualifications in Music being reviewed?
2. When will Reviewed Courses and Units be implemented?
3. What are the changes to the structure of Courses in Music?
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1. Why are National Qualifications in Music being reviewed?

National Qualifications in Music are being reviewed as a result of the investigation into the implementation of Higher Still Qualifications in all subjects. The Review of Music Courses raised a large number of concerns, mostly related to Design Criteria and to assessment and assessment workload issues. The Review process has involved detailed and extensive consultation with the profession and with other interested parties, and has sought and achieved consensus on the way ahead at all stages.

2. When will Reviewed Courses and Units be implemented?

New Units and Courses will start in session 2006/2007, and 2007 will be the first examination diet for these Courses. This postponement from the original implementation date is designed to give centres more time to prepare.

The implementation date of 2006/2007 will have the following effect on candidates:

- ◆ Candidates entering S3 this summer and following Access 3, Intermediate 1 or Intermediate 2 qualifications over two years will meet new assessment arrangements in S4.
- ◆ Candidates entering S4 this summer will meet new arrangements if they continue to study towards National Qualifications in S5.
- ◆ Candidates entering S5 this summer will meet new arrangements if they continue to study towards National Qualifications in S6.

3. What are the changes to the structure of Courses in Music?

From 2006/2007 onwards Music Courses at all levels and the Cluster at Access 3 will consist of three 40 hour Units. All candidates will study two Mandatory Units in Listening and Composing, and choose either Performing or Performing with Technology as their route:

- ◆ Music: Listening (mandatory Unit)
- ◆ Music: Composing (mandatory Unit)
- ◆ Music: Performing **or** Music: Performing with Technology

There are two separate entry codes for the course, depending on whether candidates take the performing or performing with technology route.

To gain the Course award, candidates must pass all the Unit assessments **and** the external assessment components as illustrated below:

Music with Performing Route

Performing on two instruments	60 marks
or	
Performing on one instrument + Accompanying	
Listening Question Paper	40 marks

Music with Technology Route

Performing on one instrument + MIDI Sequencing Folio	60 marks
or	
Performing on one instrument + Sound Engineering and Production Folio	
Listening Question Paper	40 marks

Please note that there are no longer Extension Options in Listening or Inventing (Composing) and that Training and Directing is no longer a Course Component Option at Advanced Higher. Where Accompanying is currently an optional Unit, it will now provide an alternative form of evidence in the Performing Unit. Where MIDI Sequencing and Sound Engineering are currently optional Units, these activities will now provide alternative forms of evidence in the Performing with Technology Unit.

The aim of this model is to:

- ◆ sustain the curricular advances which resulted from the Higher Still Development
- ◆ meet the nationally agreed design criteria set out for the Review
- ◆ reduce overall volume and duplication of assessment

4. Are there any changes to arrangements for Performing?

The necessary removal of Extension levels means that the minimum task level for each instrument must be the same at each level. The relevant minimum task levels will be exemplified in SQA's Repertoire Lists. In broad terms they equate to:

Access 3:	Associated Board Grade 1
Intermediate 1:	Associated Board Grade 2
Intermediate 2:	Associated Board Grade 3
Higher:	Associated Board Grade 4
AH:	Associated Board Grade 5

In order to ensure robust assessment, centres will now be responsible for:

- ◆ ensuring appropriately levelled pieces are presented by candidates for performing. Standards will be verified by accessing the Repertoire Lists published on SQA's website and/or by submitting other pieces for prior approval. Details on how to submit pieces for approval will be communicated by SQA as soon as possible. This change will avoid the risk of candidates being downgraded as a result of inappropriately levelled performance programmes
- ◆ noting individual piece and overall programme durations on the candidates' marks sheets

Please note that centres will no longer be required to maintain audio recordings of candidates' performances.

Furthermore, candidates' experience in assessment of Performing will be affected as follows:

- ◆ There are some changes to time requirements for Unit and Course Assessment purposes.
- ◆ Prepared programmes will be sampled for Course Assessment. Such sampling will be the responsibility of the Visiting Examiner, who will follow set procedures designed to ensure candidates are treated equally.

In addition, there will be some changes to prohibited categories of instruments.

5. What are the changes to Listening?

1. Very minor changes to concept content at various levels.
2. An increased, but manageable, emphasis on musical literacy (as requested by the profession). Literacy content is precisely specified at each level.
3. The re-introduction of 'prescribed' works at each level from Intermediate 1 to Advanced Higher (as requested in consultation). This is designed to provide learning and teaching materials which will enhance candidates' experience of listening and literacy. Please note that these set works will not be to the same scale and level of detail as known in the past.

6. What are the changes to Composing?

Composing now has an enhanced status as a 40 hour Unit, and it will contribute to the Course award on a pass/fail basis. In this sense, candidates who do not pass the Composing Unit will not be eligible for a Course award.

While acknowledging the difficulties in objective marking of candidates' creative work, it is intended that clear criteria for pass/fail borderlines and detailed exemplification will support the understanding of standards.

It is intended that this new Composing Unit will in future be extensively moderated through a system of Visiting Moderation. Under new arrangements there will be a reduction in the minimum length of folios at all levels, and an increased emphasis on the Assessor's recorded observation of the process.

7. What are the changes for Technology candidates?

As the Course model demonstrates, the Technology content is now contained within the Performing with Technology Unit.

Following extensive discussion and consultation, the mandatory knowledge base for both MIDI Sequencing and Sound Engineering and Production has been revised and updated.

For Unit assessment purposes candidates will be required to demonstrate practical knowledge and understanding of MIDI or SEP processes, and to show aural and theoretical understanding to pass the NAB.

For Course assessment candidates will submit a folio of their instrumental or vocal performances and of completed MIDI or SEP recordings. There will no longer be an external Question Paper in either MIDI Sequencing or Sound Engineering and Production.

8. Are there any particular changes to specific levels?

In order to meet the design criteria, a hierarchy of Cluster/Courses has now been established from Access 3 to Advanced Higher levels. As a result, it is now possible for candidates to present evidence in MIDI/SEP/Accompanying at all levels, including Access 3.

In current arrangements for Advanced Higher candidates are externally assessed in Listening through two Course components: the Listening Commentary and the Question paper. In order to meet design requirements the Commentary will now form the basis of Unit assessment, and a redesigned Question Paper will form the Course assessment.

Training and Directing will no longer be an external component of the Advanced Higher Course.

9. What are the roles of Unit and Course Assessment?

Unit Assessment is designed to verify achievement of Learning Outcomes as measured against Performance Criteria. Course Assessment is designed to grade achievement. There is now a deliberate differentiation between Unit and Course Assessment in National Qualifications in Music which is designed to ensure that a Course award carries 'added value'.

10. What are the changes to assessment workload for centres?

1. There is no longer a requirement to maintain audio records of candidates' work in Performing.
2. The use of sampling of candidates' performance programmes will result in some reduction in Visiting Examining times.
3. Candidates' work in Composing will now be assessed on a pass/fail basis rather than on a scale of 0-20; Centres will maintain an Assessor's Process Observation Checklist.
4. The introduction of Visiting Moderation for the Composing Unit means that evidence will be retained in the centre rather than being despatched for Central Moderation.
5. There will now be only **one** Question Paper at each level; This will ease the burden on centres in the approach to the examination diet and in the organisation of examinations.
6. In the case of Performing with Technology, centres will record candidates' instrumental/vocal performances for central marking.
7. Centres will assess candidates' Commentaries at Advanced Higher level on a pass/fail basis, and will maintain an Assessor's Process Observation Checklist. Commentary evidence will be retained in centres as it may be required for moderation.

11. What will be available in terms of assessment materials?

- ◆ One Specimen Question paper at each level.
- ◆ Generic NABs at each level for the Performing Unit and Composing Unit.
- ◆ Three Listening NABs at each level from Access 3 to Higher.
- ◆ One NAB for Advanced Higher Listening.
- ◆ At least one NAB at each level for both MIDI Sequencing and Sound Engineering and Production.

12. Which support materials will be provided?

It is planned that a range of support materials will be available in the form of:

- ◆ Literacy Workbooks at all levels from Intermediate 1 to Advanced Higher.
- ◆ Revised Concept Glossaries.
- ◆ Revised Technology Glossaries for MIDI and Sound Engineering and Production.
- ◆ A DVD of most of the prescribed works, recorded by students of RSAMD.
- ◆ Edited, annotated scores for the prescribed works.
- ◆ Support materials for the prescribed works.
- ◆ A Composing Guide (for Higher and Advanced Higher)

In addition, there will be a review of current learning and teaching materials for Composing.

13. What are the implications for administrative arrangements in centres?

The number of codes for Music Courses will be reduced and the existing codes will be simplified. There will be **one** Course at each level from Intermediate 1 to Advanced Higher level. There will be **two** entry codes at each level, one for candidates opting for the Performing Unit and one for candidates opting for the Performing with Technology Unit.

14. What will be the impact on current Extension Units?

Extension Units as such will be phased out. An investigation into alternative forms of Unit certification to meet Music candidates' needs will be completed by December 2005.

15. Are there any changes to existing Core Skills provision?

There will be no automatic certification of Core Skills in any of the reviewed Units or Courses. Units and Courses will continue to provide opportunities for candidates to develop Core Skills.

16. How do I find NQ Review information on SQA's website?

www.sqa.org.uk

Who are you? - *Teacher*

Select a subject – Music

NQ Review

Music Investigation Report, Update Letters etc.

17. What happens next?

April 2005	Publication of Unit and Course Specifications on SQA's website
November 2005	National launch events
May 2006	Understanding Standards seminars