

Our ref: S&SS\FS

11 November 2002

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

Action by Recipient
<input type="checkbox"/> Response required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Note and pass on
<input type="checkbox"/> None – update/information only

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Dear Colleague

National Courses - Music

I attach an update on issues arising during session 2001/2002.

- ◆ NQ Review – Music (including guidance on use of Course Log)
- ◆ Assessment of Practical Performance 2003
- ◆ Moderation 2002/2003
- ◆ Appeals 2002
- ◆ Assessment Panel – Report
- ◆ New Posts in Examination Team Structure
- ◆ Advice to Centres from Technology Co-ordinator
- ◆ HN Review – Music

Extracts from Principal Assessors' reports on the 2002 diet of examinations in Music are on the SQA web-site (www.sqa.org.uk).

In addition to the information contained in the Advanced Higher Report, centres presenting candidates at this level are urged to refer to the CD Rom "Exemplification of Standards 2001" (issued May 2002), which provides further information and examples of Advanced Higher work.

Yours faithfully



Fiona Scott

◆ NQ Review – Music

The agreed actions of the subject review for music were published in June 2002. These were:

- i) To issue clear guidelines on the use of Course Logs in the assessment process.
- ii) To revise the structure and assessment of courses in music.

In order to implement the recommendations in (ii) SQA are appointing a Development Officer. The aim is to complete development work by December 2003, to launch revised courses in the Spring of 2004, and to implement these courses in 2004/05.

Guidance on the Course Log (i) will be effective from the date of this letter.

Course Log

There has been much uncertainty over the Course Log since 2000. The “Course Log” — not to be confused with “Session Log” in Sound Engineering or “Rehearsal Log” in Training and Directing — is referred to in the Arrangements Documents under “Listening” (Mandatory and Extension), and is included in the proformas for internal assessment of Listening. It is also mentioned in “Advice on Listening Resource Pack.”

While SQA recognises the value that the Course Log can represent as an integral part of Learning and Teaching, the Course Log does not contribute to any Unit/Course assessment and will not be called for in Visiting Examination, Moderation or for Appeals purposes.

Quality Assurance Models Project

As well as reducing the complexity, variety and total volume of assessment in all National Qualifications, another part of the NQ Review is a comparison of approaches to Quality Assurance in the assessment of “Performance”. Music (along with Drama, Physical Education and other performance-led subjects) will be included in this work. The views of the Assessment Panel, Principal Assessors and Tertiary Sector, as well as the recent consultations on Moderation Models for Music, are all being incorporated into this project. Centres will be informed in plenty of time if there are changes to Visiting Examination arrangements, none of which are expected before February 2004. Further information is available from Jackie McKay, NQ Review Team on 0141 242 2431 (e-mail jackie.mckay@sqa.org.uk).

◆ **Assessment of Practical Performance 2003**

Visiting Examination in practical performance at Standard Grade, Intermediate 1 and 2, and Higher levels will take place from 17 February to 28 March 2003. Advanced Higher will be held from 12 May – 30 May 2003.

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

Durations of Performance to Visiting Examiners are:

Standard Grade	⋮	
Intermediate 1 Mandatory Unit	⋮	
Intermediate 2 Mandatory Unit	⋮	
Intermediate 1 Extension Unit	⋮	
Intermediate 2 Extension 1 Unit	⋮	4 — 6 minutes
Intermediate 2 Extension 2 Unit	⋮	
Higher Mandatory Unit	⋮	6 — 8 minutes
Higher Extension Unit	⋮	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.

◆ **Moderation 2003**

Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher Mandatory Inventions will be subject to Central Moderation from 7 — 10 May 2003. Further guidance will be issued to centres in March 2003.

Central Moderation 2002 – extract from Senior Moderator’s Report

General Comments on the overall presentation and standard of folios:

- ◆ examples of excellent folio work across all levels
- ◆ the greater majority of centres moderated were in line with national standards
- ◆ evidence that national standards had been applied more accurately than in 2001
- ◆ folios were generally more organised than previous years
- ◆ a greater range of styles and concepts in evidence, especially in contemporary genres
- ◆ fewer problems with programme notes and audio support materials than previously

Problems and areas for further development:

- ◆ unawareness of folio requirements still in evidence
- ◆ misunderstanding and inappropriate application of Composing Task Level Descriptors
- ◆ arranging within composing still misunderstood
- ◆ tendency of some centres to be over generous in allocation of marks to candidate folios

Difficulties with presentation of folios vastly reduced, but the following still in evidence at all levels:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ◆ programme notes | poor quality or missing |
| ◆ scores / performance plans | poor quality or missing |
| ◆ audio quality | poor / difficult to hear |
| ◆ computer scores | not quantised |

The following “Help List” was issued to all Centres who were centrally moderated in 2002. It may be of interest to other Centres.

National Qualifications 2002

Music Intermediate 1, 2, Higher and Advanced Higher Inventing – Composition

Requirements

- 1 Candidates are required to produce an audio folio of a composition or compositions of 2 — 10 minutes duration for Intermediate 1 and 2, 3 — 10 minutes duration for Higher and 5 — 12 minutes duration for Advanced Higher with programme note detailing the stimulus, compositional process and techniques deployed.
- 2 A score or performance plan must also be submitted.
- 3 Where an extended work is offered (in excess of 10 minutes for Higher and 12 minutes for Advanced Higher) the candidate would be expected to draw attention to an appropriate passage for external moderation and show through the programme note and score/performance plan how the selected passage related to the work as a whole. The audio folio should demonstrate appropriate developments of melody, rhythm, harmony and style, and be arranged appropriately for performance purposes.

Where candidates choose to take a stimulus from another composer's work to produce an arrangement, a copy of the original will be required. In such cases, candidates will be expected to demonstrate a range of compositional skills through a substantial melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and structural development of the borrowed musical ideas.

- 4 A recording of the composition should be submitted for each candidate. This should be submitted in the same envelope as the composition. Any difficulty in meeting this requirement should be the subject of correspondence with SQA Moderation Section Glasgow office.

Failure to meet any of the requirements above will mean that the full range of marks cannot be awarded.

Please complete the grid enclosed for each invention.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Column 1 | Give the title of the composition. |
| Column 2 | Give additional notes on how you arrived at the final assessment of each invention. |
| Column 3 | Give a mark out of 20 for each invention and enter the Raw Mark in box provided. |

Note: The total mark to be entered on the Internal Assessment Mark Form must be out of 60. If one invention only is submitted the 'Total Mark' is arrived at by multiplying the 'Raw Mark' by 3.

If more than one invention is submitted:

- i) add together the totals for each invention and enter the total in the box headed “Total Mark”;
- ii) divide that total by the number of inventions in the folio;
- iii) multiply that figure by 3;
- iv) this mark should be entered on the Internal Assessment Mark Form.

Details on the submission of the Inventing Composition are contained in the Instructions to Centres on Central Moderation for Course Assessment in Music.

◆ Appeals 2002

Standard Grade

To facilitate the appeals process, and in the interest of candidates, centres should submit evidence to support the internal assessment. Where written evidence is submitted for performance, centres should ensure they have applied the grade related criteria for this element.

Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

At all these levels, examination teams had instances where evidence submitted was either inappropriate or insufficient. A small number of centres had submitted no supporting evidence at all.

◆ Assessment Panel – Report

The following were among issues raised at the March and September meetings of the Panel:

- (a) PA Reports — discussion of reports received from Principal Assessors.
- (b) Percussion Review — the recommendations from the sub-group were approved. Information packs will be issues to centres in 2003 for implementation in 2004.
- (c) Categories of Instruments – “Concertina” has been added to the “Categories of Instruments for Performance” and will be in the same category as accordion.
- (d) European Virtual School — Teachers are urged to join the website and to contribute materials. For details of format contact Moira Hunter (moira@skene.fq.co.uk).
- (e) The Convenor, on behalf of the Panel, conveyed especial appreciation to the members of the four examination teams who give unstintingly of their time, energy and expertise throughout the year.

◆ New Posts in Examination Team Structure

3 new posts have been created in the Examination Team Structure for Music. The posts, effective from September 2001, are:

- ◆ Co-ordinator in Performing
- ◆ Co-ordinator in Listening
- ◆ Co-ordinator in Technology

Co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring appropriate progression between qualification levels in standards set for assessment. The contribution of the Co-ordinators in this initial year of the posts has been invaluable.

◆ Advice to Centres from Technology Co-ordinator

Midi Sequencing

- 1 Care must be taken by teachers that the protocols of loading and saving MIDI files are clearly understood by each candidate and that the finished work is 'saved' correctly and ready for scrutinising at the SQA.
- 2 Centres are asked to ensure that disks and CDs are sufficiently protected so that no damage occurs during transit to the SQA.
- 3 Disks should be formatted in such a way that they can be read by all types of computer. For instance, the Apple Mac computers can format either for the "Mac alone" or for "all computers". In this case please choose the option for "all computers".
- 4 Centres should remember that, up to and including Higher level, files **must** be saved as MIDI files. Centres should ensure therefore, that all MIDI information has been selected before saving. This will ensure that note information, controls and programme changes etc have all been saved. Many files, when reaching the SQA, contain only note information and little else.

Saving work at Advanced Higher is somewhat different. Because of the 'audio' file which is an essential part of the work, saving on floppy disk is not an option. Work should then be saved on a larger medium, preferably CD. ZIP disks may be used although CD is generally more acceptable. When saving the information, it is now acceptable to save the finished work as 'song' file for that programme. It has been found that, if the audio file and the MIDI file are saved separately, the positional information of the audio file can be lost and will then load up at bar '1' only!

The only problem foreseen by the SQA may be that the marking team may not have access to the programme(s) used. In future, Centres will be asked to complete a section on the appropriate fly leaf indicating the programme(s) for their MIDI presentations.

- 5 **IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR CANDIDATE TO USE MIDI AND/OR AUDIO INFORMATION IMPORTED FROM COMMERCIAL SOURCES OR FROM THE INTERNET!**
- 6 Centres are warned that the use of so-called 'cut-down' versions of sequencing programmes may not contain all the facilities, editing or otherwise, to fulfil the requirements of the course and examination. It should be noted also that some 'score-writing' and 'music desktop publishing' softwares may not have sufficient sequencing and/or editing power to fulfil the requirements for the course and examination.

A 'wall chart' – type list of 'bullet' points is enclosed with this document.

Intermediate & Higher

Coursework Checklist:

- ◆ Are you sure that your software can support all aspects of the course?
- ◆ Have you formatted your floppy disk correctly?
(Mac users format for “all computers”)
- ◆ Have you made sure that you have used enough examples of MIDI sequencing techniques?
(such as: programme controls, copy & paste, reverb, panning etc)
- ◆ File Management: Have you named all your tracks?
- ◆ Note Input: have all the notes and information been programmed by you?
- ◆ Have you saved your work as a ‘MIDI file’? Please check!
- ◆ A recording of the final mix should be sent with the file.
- ◆ Have you labelled and marked the disk with your name, centre and level of course?
- ◆ Have you packaged the disk securely?

Advanced Higher

Coursework Checklist:

- ◆ Are you sure that your software can support all aspects of the course?
- ◆ Are you sure that your equipment can cope with digital audio recording?
- ◆ If you are on a network is the anti-virus software switched off? It may interfere with your recordings!
- ◆ Have you made sure that you have used enough examples of MIDI sequencing techniques
(eg programme controls, copy & paste, reverb, panning etc)? Don’t forget to ensure that
the volume of your audio recording is balanced with the other tracks.
- ◆ File Management: Have you named all your tracks?
- ◆ Note Input: have all the notes and information been programmed by you?
- ◆ Have you saved your work as a song file correctly? It may be more secure to also save as a
MIDI and WAV file and write down the positional information of the audio file. You
cannot be too careful! Please check!
- ◆ A recording of the final mix should be sent with the file.
- ◆ Have you labelled and marked the disk with your name, centre and level of course?
- ◆ Have you packaged the disk securely?

Sound Engineering

1 Centres must ensure that the correct number of parts is recorded at each level ie

- ◆ Intermediate 1&2 = at least 4 parts
- ◆ Higher = at least 5 parts
- ◆ Advanced Higher = at least 8 parts

Each 'part' should be a different instrument and **at least** one part should be an acoustic recording. A drumkit or piano recorded over more than one track still counts as one part only.

- 2 Pieces recorded should be 'contrasting' in terms of musical production, recording of parts or instrumentation. They should not be exactly the same!
- 3 Final submissions can be recorded on cassette tape, CD or 'mini' disk. This must contain the 'stereo master' mix-down of the multi-tracked material.
- 4 'Session logs' are a vital part of the course and must be submitted along with the final recording. These 'logs' must contain a detailed account of the processes and equipment used to reach **each** final recording and whether the recording is analogue or digital.
- 5 Evidence of the use of effects/processors should be in at least one of the recordings presented and is desirable in both. It is reasonable to assume that, at Higher and Advanced Higher, more than one effect/processor should be used to gain 'excellence', potentially, in the final assessment.
- 6 Candidates must make themselves aware of all the other concepts which should be used in their recordings at the different levels from Intermediate 1 to Advanced Higher. Overdubbing should be done in all levels **except Int 1** and therefore no recording from Int 2 on, should be made from one recording!
- 7 At Advanced Higher the following extra points should be observed:
 - ◆ Each piece recorded should be accompanied by a **session log, a take sheet and an edit sheet**. A **score or performance plan** with details of instruments and/or voices is also required.
 - ◆ **Use of digital editing of takes and/or tracks is essential**
 - ◆ Recordings must be of 8 tracks or more for each piece.

Candidates' final recordings should be on separate CDs or Mini disks; they should **not** be compiled, along with other candidates, on the same medium.

◆ **HN Review – Music**

As part of the on-going curriculum review a consortium of Scottish Further Education Colleges (The Atrium Consortium) will standardise the music units available in the SQA catalogue and will create new Higher National Qualifications in Music. The consortium is working in partnership with Strathclyde University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Napier University, the University of the Highlands and Islands (through Perth College) and has held discussions with Paisley University to establish acceptable levels of entry into 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of their degree programmes.

The issue of varying standards on modern musical instruments, (eg guitar, bass guitar and drum kit) has required that a clear syllabus be developed for these instruments and this will be made available to all presenting centres. The syllabus will provide clear levels of attainment expected for entry into each level of post school education from NQ, through HNC, HND and up to degree level. In addition a simplified programme of HNC and HND qualifications, based on a greatly reduced number of available units, will allow a better understanding of what is on offer and should improve links between schools, FE Colleges and Universities.

School teachers who are interested and wish to have some input in this review should contact SQA at the e-mail address shown at the beginning of the letter.