

23 October 2009

To: SQA Co-ordinators
Secondary Schools and FE Colleges

cc: HMle
LEA Contacts
SQA Business Development Managers

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

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications – Music Update October 2009

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

This letter is an update on National Qualifications (NQ) Courses and Units in Music and contains important information for this current session 2009/2010.

- 1. External Assessment Timetable for Music 2009/2010**
- 2. Internal Assessment / External Verification of Music Units 2009/2010**
- 3. External Assessment Reports 2009**
- 4. Appeals 2009**
- 5. Performing Examinations 2009 – Guidance on Drumkit Programmes**
- 6. Amendments to Higher and Advanced Higher Question Papers for 2010**
- 7. New Developments in Music and Sound Production – Update**
- 8. New Units in Music Technology and Old Unit Lapsing Dates**

Appendix: A Guide to NQ Units and new Unit provision in Music

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 Emma Bratchell (contact details above) or myself on 0131 561 6811 or e-mail mary.mcdonald@sqa.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



Mary McDonald
Qualifications Manager, National Qualifications

1. External Assessment Timetable for Music 2009/2010
Summary of dates for external assessment this session:

<p>February 2010 – March 2010</p>	<p>The Visiting Examination (Performing exams) starts on 15 February 2010 for Standard Grade, Intermediate 1 and 2 and Higher Music.</p> <p>The Visiting Examination period ends on 26 March 2010.</p>
<p>April 2010 – May 2010</p>	<p>26 April 2010 is SQA uplift date for Music X233 – Performing with Technology folios (all levels).</p> <p>The Visiting Examination period (Performing exams) starts on 3 May 2010 for Advanced Higher Music.</p> <p>The Visiting Examination period for Advanced Higher Music ends on 21 May 2010.</p> <p><u>Wednesday 28 April 2010 (afternoon)</u></p> <p>Question Paper Examinations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate 1 Music • Intermediate 2 Music <p><u>Friday 30 April (afternoon)</u></p> <p>Question Paper Examinations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Grade Music (all levels) <p><u>Friday 28 May (morning)</u></p> <p>Question Paper Examinations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Music • Advanced Higher Music

Important information

www.sqa.org.uk select NQ (orange logo) and the select Music to access:

- ◆ 2009 Marking Instructions
- ◆ 2009 External Assessment Reports (available end of October)
- ◆ 2009 Internal Assessment Reports (available end of October)

2. Internal Assessment / External Verification of Music Units 2009/2010

Unit assessment takes place internally in centres. Candidate progress is monitored during the Unit, NAB tests are administered, reassessment opportunities are possible and then the assessment decision of Pass/Fail is made by the centre. Centres then retain candidate evidence (as stated in the Unit Specification). All Music Units are subject to SQA external Verification, which is the process of verifying that centres' assessment decisions are in line with national standards.

In Music for the past three years, Verification activity has concentrated on the following two Units:

- ◆ DV45 Music: Composing (all levels)
- ◆ DV41 Music: Listening (Advanced Higher)

For 2010, it is planned that the Composing Unit (all levels) and the Advanced Higher Listening Unit (Listening Commentary) will continue to be the main focus of SQA Verification.

There are two types of Verification by SQA: *Visiting Verification* or *Central Verification*. In 2010, Visiting Verification of the Unit DV45 Music: Composing will continue and schools selected for this will be informed in December 2009. This is the process which is based on *incomplete* or *interim* evidence and visits to centres will be scheduled for January – February 2010. Here, centres would present and discuss with the Visiting Verifier their candidates' Composing folios which, at this stage, are works in progress. This process is designed to provide teaching staff with detailed feedback, advice, guidance and support and SQA has received a great deal of positive feedback from schools and colleges previously selected for Visiting Verification. Staff in centres have commented on the degree and quality of the assessment support and the detailed oral and written feedback reports they have received.

Central Verification of complete evidence will take place in April 2010 and SQA's date for uplift of materials from centres is **25 March 2010**. This is the Verification model where centre submit to SQA a sample of 12 candidates' completed evidence, eg for the Composing Unit, this would be the folio. Centres selected for Central Verification are contacted well in advance and, very soon after the Verification event, all selected centres receive detailed written feedback which gives guidance and advice for the future.

In addition please note that all Units are subject to external Verification, including Music Units which are used on a free-standing or stand-alone. Please refer to the Unit Specification and the NAB or Assessment Support Pack for each individual Unit for details on Evidence Requirements and the evidence which needs to be retained by centres.

3. External Assessment Reports 2009

These reports were formerly known as Principal Assessor Reports. External Assessment Reports are published by SQA each year and the 2009 Reports will be available at the end of October 2009 on www.sqa.org.uk NQ, Music, External Assessment Reports.

These reports give valuable insight and guidance, reporting on overall performance of candidates in each year and providing detail on how candidate submissions can be improved. External Assessment Reports are presented in the following sections:

- ◆ General comments
- ◆ Areas in which candidates performed well
- ◆ Areas which candidates found demanding
- ◆ Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates
- ◆ Statistical information on entries and grade boundaries

4. Appeals 2009

SQA's Appeals process enables centres to come back to SQA after results and certification and to produce robust evidence that a candidate or candidates performed better on another occasion. Depending upon the degree of validity and reliability of that evidence, the Appeal may be granted and the candidate's result upgraded.

For Standard Grade Music it is possible to submit an Appeal for either of the externally assessed elements: Solo Performing or Listening. For all NQ levels, it is the final Course award which is being appealed for upgrade (not one of the external components) so Question Paper evidence is mandatory for all NQ Music Appeals.

There **must** be evidence for the Question Paper and this evidence must show the same breadth of coverage of the content of the Course as SQA's Question Papers. A prelim-type event is going to be an indicator of likely candidate performance in the external examination when pressure of time and retention of learning are significant factors. The evidence for the Question Paper must replicate the standard, conditions, duration, format and marks allocation of SQA's Question Papers.

- ◆ Question Paper evidence must be drawn from at least 3 different sources
- ◆ Question Paper evidence for Appeals cannot be one past paper which has been used in its entirety
- ◆ Question Paper (prelim-type papers) should be based on the Course Assessment Specification for each NQ Music level. This is found on www.sqa.org.uk NQ, Music, Course Assessment Pack and is a very useful document which lays out the exact specification of the Music Question Paper in terms of balance of types of question and the proportions of total marks awarded to each type of question.

For Appeals purposes, evidence for practical Performing is not mandatory, but is desirable. Many centres collate evidence for Performing by recording the prelim-type event. If this is not practicable for you, prelim Candidate Mark Sheets which have been marked up can be submitted to support an appeal. However, if there is no alternative evidence of this sort, the original mark awarded by the Visiting Examiner remains unchanged.

5. Performing Examinations 2009 – Guidance on Drumkit Programmes

As part of the National Qualifications (NQ) Review in Music, the document *National Qualifications Music: Performing* (the book of exemplification of pieces/ repertoire lists for each NQ level) was published in November 2005. This comprehensive document contains the requirements for NQ Performing on all instruments for the 2007 examination and subsequent years.

To access this document, see www.sqa.org.uk NQ, Music, Support Materials. The requirements for Drumkit for each NQ level are on page 48 of the Performing book and these requirements supersede any prior instructions or arrangements.

In addition, an exemplification pack with audio CDs – *National Qualifications Music: Performing Drumkit* was published in August 2006 and a copy was distributed to all centres at that time. This pack contains drumkit performing programmes for each level and within each programme there are pieces in contrasting styles which reflect the requirements on page 48 of the *NQ Music: Performing* book; Reggae, Latin, Funk and Heavy Rock are some of the styles contained in this publication.

Page 1 of the *NQ Music: Performing* book states that candidates may perform pieces from current or past syllabuses at appropriate grade levels of ABRSM, Trinity Guildhall, Rock School and London College of Music. However, as stated in the August 2006 letter which accompanied the drumkit pack:

If you don't use the exemplified pieces in the SQA drumkit pack you would refer and adhere to the guidance given on page 48 of National Qualifications Music: Performing

and

Centres must satisfy themselves that SQA requirements for each level as set out in page 48 of National Qualifications Music: Performing are fully met and should prepare music for assessment purposes accordingly.

This means that you can use, eg *Rock School* pieces without submitting these for approval but you must ensure that the programmes you present adhere to the requirements stated on page 48 of the *NQ Music: Performing* book and you should prepare music for assessment purposes accordingly where necessary: requisite number of fills, 4 way independence, contrasting styles.

The word **contrasting** is the key word here. This leaves centres free to compile a programme which can include and reflect styles from the wide contemporary interests of students today including Pop, Funk, Dance/House, Hip hop, Blues, Reggae, Metal, Rock, Latin, Swing and Shuffle. However, centres must be vigilant in ensuring that the styles contained within a drumkit programme are **contrasting** and not simply the same style with variations or slight or subtle differences.

6. Amendments to Higher and Advanced Higher Question Papers for 2010

The changes indicated below will apply to Music Question Papers at Higher and Advanced Higher level for the 2010 examination and subsequent years and these changes were first published in the Music Update Letter of November 2008. See www.sqa.org.uk NQ, Music, Update Letters, 2008 November.

1. Listening questions requiring short answers (one or two words, or a phrase) will examine concepts introduced at Higher level. For example, in the 2008 Question Paper this refers to questions such as Question 6(a).
2. The presentation of the multiple choice comparison of two musical excerpts has been revised in order to assist candidates further. The grid used for rough working (Grid 1) will indicate the number of concepts to be identified for each individual excerpt.

An example of the revised presentation (based on Question 8 from the 2008 Higher Question Paper) is printed in full in the November 2008 Update letter.

Please note the following:

- ◆ New sentence in paragraph 3 of the stem of the question as follows:
The number of ticks required for each excerpt is indicated at the foot of each column.
- ◆ The number of ticks required is now indicated in Grid 1 at the foot of that column for Excerpt 1 and the foot of the column for Excerpt 2.
- ◆ No change to Grid 2.

7. New developments in Music and Sound Production – Update

After a 2 year development period from 2007–2009, two new National Certificates (NCs) have been launched: the NC in Music (SCQF level 6) and the NC in Sound Production (SCQF level 6). Due to the size of these Group Awards it is anticipated that, generally, they will be offered in Scotland's colleges. However, during the development period 25 new or revised Units were developed and these have been available since August 2009, for delivery in both schools and colleges. (Please see Appendix to this Update letter).

SQA has now started Phase 2 of the NQ Group Award development programme in Music and Sound Production and we will write to you again in early 2010 about the progress of this. It is anticipated that new National Progression Awards (NPA) will be developed for use in 2010/2011 in the following areas:

- ◆ NPA in Music Performing
- ◆ NPA in Music Business
- ◆ NPA in Sound Production: Live
- ◆ NPA in Sound Production: Recording

National Progression Awards (NPA) are smaller awards than National Certificates and have a particular subject focus. It is anticipated that the proposed NPAs in Music and Sound Production will be awards of 3 Units (120 hours) and it is hoped that there will be interest and uptake from both colleges and schools in delivering NPAs. Please note that this new proposed provision does not replace any existing qualifications, but offers new, alternative pathways for learners. Please see the website for further details on proposed NPA frameworks – www.sqa.org.uk NQ, Music.

8. New Units in Music Technology and old Unit Lapsing Dates

The Units *Music: MIDI Sequencing* D352 and *Music: Sound Engineering and Production* D354 were published in 1999. During the recent NQ Music and Sound Production Unit development period, these Units (at all levels) have been revised to bring them up to date with the on-going evolution of Music Technology during the past 10 years. These revised Units have been available since August 2009.

These remain as 40 hour Units for either discrete MIDI Sequencing or discrete Sound Engineering and Production, but the Units have new codes and revised content. If you want you enter your candidates for a 40 hour Unit dedicated to MIDI Sequencing or a 40 hour Unit dedicated to Sound Engineering and Production, please see the new Unit Specifications.

If you are already undertaking the original Units D352 or D354, there is no problem in that they are still active until **July 2011**. After that time, these original Units will have lapsed and entries will no longer be possible. So, until July 2011 it is possible to enter candidates for either the original MIDI Sequencing or Sound Engineering and Production Units or the new Units but we would commend the new, up-to-date provision to you as you prepare for next session.

NB Neither the original Units or the new Unit provision in MIDI Sequencing or Sound Engineering and Production can contribute to an overall Course award, eg Higher Music. If you are entering candidates for, eg Higher Music with Technology, you must also enter the candidate for the component Unit of that Course – Unit DV4F *Performing with Technology*. This Unit requires performing on one instrument and either MIDI Sequencing or Sound Engineering and Production.

Please see the table below for details of new codes and lapsing dates of the original Units.

Original Unit	Finish Date	New Unit Code
Music: MIDI Sequencing		
D352 10	July 2011	* F78E 10 (now available)
D352 11	July 2011	* F5DX 11 (now available)
D352 12	July 2011	* F5DV 12 (now available)
D352 13	July 2011	* F7DB 13 (now available)
Music: Sound Engineering and Production		
D354 10	July 2011	F787 10 (now available)
D354 11	July 2011	F5DW 11 (now available)
D354 12	July 2011	* F58H 12 (now available)
D354 13	July 2011	F798 13 (now available)

NB An Assessment Support Pack is available for any Units with an asterisk *. ASPs contain instruments of assessment, marking information and any required checklists or pro forms. These can be accessed through SQA's secure site. Please see your SQA Co-ordinator for access to these documents.

Appendix: Guide to NQ Units and new Unit provision in Music



Guide to National Qualifications Units

What is a National Qualifications Unit?

NQ Units offer a wide range of opportunities for flexibility, personalisation and choice and are qualifications in their own right. NQ Units can be offered as:

- ◆ Free-standing or stand-alone qualifications (without the candidate following or being entered for a full Course award)
- ◆ Qualifications building blocks towards a National Course award, eg a Higher Course in any subject.

How long does a Unit last?

Most NQ Units are 40 hours long, and represent a notional 40 hours of learning/teaching. Each Unit contains several Outcomes, describing what a candidate needs to know or to be able to do to pass the Unit. Each Unit is assessed on a pass or fail basis (there are no grades).

Please note that the delivery length (40 hours) is nominal and individual learners may take more or less time to complete a Unit depending on factors such as previous knowledge or experience, maturity or mode of attendance.

How are Units assessed?

NQ Units are assessed internally in centres and are subject to external verification by SQA. Candidates will be awarded the Unit when they have achieved all of the Outcomes satisfactorily.

What do we need before we start to deliver an NQ Unit?

The first document you need is known as the Unit Specification which contains the following key information:

- ◆ Outcomes – what the candidate has to do
- ◆ Performance Criteria – how they have to do it
- ◆ Evidence Requirements – what needs to be produced by the candidate

In addition, each Unit Specification includes Support Notes giving guidance on Learning and Teaching, Content and Context and Approaches to Assessment.

Where do I find Unit Specifications?

Unit Specifications can be downloaded from SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk using the NQ Unit Search Facility, where you can search for a Unit by title, code or keyword.

What support is there for assessment?

For many Units, SQA provides assessment support in the form of National Assessment Bank materials (known as NABs) or Assessment Support Packs. These Unit assessment packages exemplify the national standard and they provide:

- ◆ Information on the organisation and conditions for Unit assessment
- ◆ Assessment Instruments – what is required
- ◆ Marking Guidelines
- ◆ Information on retaining evidence

NABs and Assessment Support Packs are available on SQA's secure website, and you should contact your SQA Co-ordinator to access these.

Who sets a Unit completion date?

Centres (not SQA) set completion dates for Units and this decision is made at the point of entering a candidate for a Unit. This decision will be based on delivery time and other conditions.

When should Unit assessment take place?

Again, this is a centre decision but first consider the Unit completion date you have set, consulting the NAB or Assessment Support Pack document for a particular Unit. See the section called *Assessment Conditions* and be aware that advice on assessment timings will vary according to the nature of the delivery and the evidence requirements for each Unit.

Where the information states that assessment should take place towards the end of a particular Unit, time that assessment event carefully so that

1. you ensure that the candidate is ready for this and
2. in the case of the candidate not attaining the necessary standard, you leave time for diagnosis, revision, consolidation and necessary remedial work so that reassessment opportunities can be given before the Unit completion date.

Can any NQ Unit or group of Units contribute to an SQA Course or Group Award?

No. All candidates entered for a full Course award must be entered for, and pass, what are known as the component Units of that Course (see Arrangements documents for this information). However, candidates may be entered for any Unit listed in the NQ Catalogue on a free-standing or stand-alone basis.

NQ Units in Music

Background

Many new or revised NQ Units have been developed since 2007 as part of the NQ Group Award development programme. These new Group Awards (known as National Certificates) are larger qualification blocks and tend, because of their size, to be offered in Scotland's colleges. However, all the **new or revised Units** which make up the Group Awards and any other NQ Units are available to **all schools and colleges**.

List of new or revised Units in Music and Sound Production

Music: MIDI Sequencing (SCQF level 7)
Music: MIDI Sequencing (SCQF level 6)
Music: MIDI Sequencing (SCQF level 5)
Music: MIDI Sequencing (SCQF level 4)
Music: Literacy
Music: Promotion in the Music Industry
Music: Management in the Music Industry
Music: Organising a Community-based Musical Activity
Music: Songwriting
Music: Live Performance (SCQF level 6)
Music: Live Performance (SCQF level 5)
Music: Technical Support
Music: Compositional Techniques
Music: Aural Skills
Music: An Introduction to the UK Music Industry
Music: Visuals for Live Performance
Appreciation of Music
Creative Project
Sound Engineering and Production (SCQF level 7)
Sound Engineering and Production (SCQF level 6)
Sound Engineering and Production (SCQF level 5)
Sound Engineering and Production (SCQF level 4)
Sound: Design
Sound: Reinforcement
Sound: Music Remixing
Sound: Digital DJing - An Introduction
Sound: Audio Electronics - An Introduction
Sound: Understanding the Signal Path
Sound: Synthesis and Sampling Skills

Approaches to Unit Delivery

It is possible to deliver NQ Units in a variety of settings, including the classroom and the instrumental lesson. In addition to the Units on the list, the Unit F3F4 *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* is available from Access 3 – Advanced Higher level. These Units, which provide a single instrument route, have been available since August 2008 and even after one year have proved very popular with candidates, Music teaching staff and instrumental staff.

In the Unit *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* candidates develop skills in solo instrumental or vocal performance. They rehearse a varied programme of music, develop knowledge of their chosen instrument/voice and its repertoire, and present a music performance.

At all levels this Unit has 3 Outcomes:

1. Carry out an effective practice routine
2. Describe music chosen for performance
3. Perform music in contrasting styles

The F3F4 *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* Units have particularly informative NABs which set out the conditions for assessment and how the assessments should be carried out. Within the NAB there is a very useful Assessor's Proforma on which to record candidate's progress and achievement through the Unit.

NB the Units *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* cannot contribute to a full Course award, eg Higher Music. If, for example, a candidate is entered for the Higher Music with Performing Course they must be entered for the following component Units of that Course:

- ◆ Music: Listening (DV41)
- ◆ Music: Composing (DV45)
- ◆ Music: Performing (DV46) – this is the two instrument Unit

There are a number of the new Music Units which may be of particular interest for delivery in the school Music teaching/instrumental teaching setting for a variety of reasons. These include opportunities for candidates to gain additional knowledge and skills and to specialise in particular areas; the opportunities to formalise experiences and situations which may already be in place:

- ◆ involvement in bands and ensembles
- ◆ preparation for external Music examinations
- ◆ planning, organising and participating in music activities both in school/college or in the wider community

The intention of the new NQ Music Units is that they should be accessible to all and they have been written in a context-free style for candidates with interest and expertise in the widest range of musical instruments and genres/styles including jazz, classical, rock, folk and dance.

See the following page for a summary of the contents of some of these Units.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is currently inviting schools and colleges to think creatively about the programmes and courses of study which they offer. The contents and delivery modes of NQ Units both respond to and endorse the four capacities of CfE:

- ◆ successful learners
- ◆ effective contributors
- ◆ confident individuals
- ◆ responsible citizens

F5E5 Music: Live Performance

This Unit is available at both Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5) and Higher (SCQF level 6) and in the Unit candidates will be given the opportunity to develop skills in preparing for and performing live music in a group or solo context. They will select and rehearse a programme of music, detail technical requirements for the performance, perform the programme at a live event and evaluate their own performance.

This Unit can be delivered in the context of any musical style or genre, eg rock group, orchestral ensemble, traditional Scottish folk group.

The key competencies of this Unit are contributing, participating and evaluating – endorsing the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.

An Assessment Support Pack is available for this Unit.

F58L 11 Music: Aural Skills

This Unit is currently available at Intermediate 2 level (SCQF level 5).

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop aural discrimination skills through listening to Music and there are 3 Outcomes:

1. Identify intervals, scales and tonality
2. Identify triads and chords
3. Identify rhythms and time signatures

This Unit has been written to correlate with the LTS Literacy Workbooks which were produced to support NQ Music Courses and could also be successfully integrated with preparation for the existing NQ Music: Listening Units or preparation for external Music Exams.

An Assessment Support Pack is available for this Unit and contains the aural test for this Unit. An online version of the test will be available during late 2009.

F5E6 13 Music: Organising a Community-based Musical Activity

This Unit is available at Advanced Higher level (SCQF level 7).

This is a Unit which is suitable for candidates who would like to gain experience of organising a community-based musical event and the Unit may be useful for candidates studying in the areas of music, music performing, music business, event management and/or community projects.

There are 3 Outcomes:

1. Investigate a range of community-based activities
2. Produce a plan for a community-based musical activity
3. Implement the plan and evaluate the community-based musical activity

During the Unit, candidates will have the opportunity to develop skills in time/resource management and will also have the opportunity to gain experience in interacting with people outside of their usual environment – affording valuable experience of working with others and developing communication skills.

F58F 12 Creative Project

This Unit has been written in a generic and context-free way to provide the widest possible range of ideas and creative possibilities for a creative project. The purpose of the Unit is to allow candidates to plan, implement and evaluate a creative project and they are required to produce a project in response to a given brief.

The project should be completed by an individual candidate. However, the production of the evidence may involve working collaboratively with others.

The Creative Project Unit gives candidates the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills and to develop key skills such as planning, communication, problem solving and time management.

A comprehensive Assessment Support Pack is available for this Unit.