



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communication

Unit code: FN1A 35

Superclass: KA

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Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to evaluate the impact of digital technology on the music industry. It equips candidates with the skills required to recognise the challenges and opportunities arising in the production, distribution and consumption of music as a consequence of digitalisation. It would be relevant to candidates interested in working with artists in the marketing and dissemination of their work, whether in the capacity of artist manager or record label.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the main issues and debates surrounding the digitalisation of the music industry.
- 2 Analyse the principal means of digitally distributing recorded music.
- 3 Analyse digital marketing strategies.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It would be beneficial if candidates have undertaken the Higher National Units: *Working in the Creative Industries* (DJ3A 34), *Creative Industries Infrastructure* (DJ21 34), *Music Industry Promotions* (DJ2R 34), *Music Law 1* (DJ2V 34) and *Music Industry Publishing 1* (DJ2T 34).

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre although candidates should have good communication skills as well as basic IT desktop skills. These may be demonstrated by possession of Core Skill Communication at Higher level or Higher English and Communication or a suitable NQ Communication Unit (SCQF level 6).

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment

Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 can be assessed individually or holistically by responses to questions or case studies. Assessment should take place under open-book controlled conditions.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the main issues and debates surrounding the digitalisation of the music industry.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Technology and copyright
- ◆ The impact of technology
- ◆ Industry response
- ◆ Consumer response
- ◆ Legislation

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide written or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Identify and discuss how music copyright is affected by technological developments.
- ◆ Compare and contrast digital distribution and marketing of music with that of traditional physical distribution and marketing and produce a SWOT analysis from the results.
- ◆ Describe using examples, how corporations, artists and consumers have responded to music digital distribution and marketing.
- ◆ Analyse digital music legislation with reference to its effectiveness for music businesses.

Evidence should take the form of extended answers generated in response to questions or case studies.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome could be conducted as a single controlled holistic assessment combining all three Outcomes where candidates respond to questions or case studies to produce extended answers. Where a case study is used candidates may be given a copy of this 7–10 days before the assessment event takes place. Candidates may bring self-prepared notes to the assessment.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communications

Outcome 2

Analyse the principal means of digitally distributing recorded music.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Product and service-based digital distribution
- ◆ Music streaming debate
- ◆ Direct to consumer retail

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide written or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Explain using examples, the key differences between product and service-based platforms considering the perspective of rights holders and consumers.
- ◆ Discuss at least two industry debates surrounding the potential benefits and threats of music streaming services including attitude of record companies, collecting societies and artists.
- ◆ Evaluate various platforms for engaging directly with the consumer.
- ◆ Analyse the potential consequences for the traditional music business model of direct engagement with the consumer.

Evidence should take the form of extended answers generated in response to questions or case studies.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome could be conducted as a single controlled holistic assessment combining all three Outcomes where candidates respond to questions or case studies to produce extended answers. Where a case study is used candidates may be given a copy of this 7–10 days before the assessment event takes place. Candidates may bring self-prepared notes to the assessment.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communications

Outcome 3

Analyse digital marketing strategies.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Digital marketing strategy
- ◆ Digital/traditional marketing strategy integration
- ◆ Social networking
- ◆ Viral marketing

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will be required to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge/skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Analyse, using examples, the components of a successful digital marketing strategy.
- ◆ Discuss the means by which a digital marketing campaign can be integrated with traditional marketing techniques.
- ◆ Identify social networking platforms and discuss means of effectively driving traffic.
- ◆ Provide a definition of viral marketing and discuss, using examples, how it can effectively be integrated into a music industry marketing campaign.

Evidence should take the form of extended answers generated in response to questions or case studies.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome could be conducted as a single controlled holistic assessment combining all three Outcomes where candidates respond to questions or case studies to produce extended answers. Where a case study is used candidates may be given a copy of this 7–10 days before the assessment event takes place. Candidates may bring self-prepared notes to the assessment.

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communications

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed to provide the candidate with a theoretical framework for understanding key issues arising from digital technology in the music industry as well as providing a platform for engaging in practical digital marketing techniques. It will enable the candidate to identify and critically evaluate the main issues surrounding the digitalisation of the music industry, and particularly the impact of these developments on traditional music industry business models and the opportunities and threats they present to the revenue streams of rights holders and musicians. It is essential to be informed of the ever-changing digital landscape of the contemporary music industry and this Unit will provide the candidate with a theoretical framework and working vocabulary for understanding the issues and debates engendered by digital technology.

Wherever possible the candidate's own experiences should be applied to illustrate the impact of digital technology on the practices of production, dissemination and consumption in the music industry. With this in mind, it would be beneficial to examine case study material to help contextualise debates and issues arising from digitalisation.

The knowledge and skills developed in this Unit should prepare the candidate for a position in various areas of the music industry including artist management, music retail, record company and publishing company.

The Unit will necessarily entail analysis of key online retailers such as I-Tunes, Amazon, Spotify and Bandcamp and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace.

The use of mailing lists, blogs and podcasts should be discussed with an emphasis on the means used to create a successful integrated marketing campaign.

Where analysing the issues arising for various interested parties in the digitalisation of the music industry, candidates should look at the wide range of articles available on the subject, critically evaluating the opinions of trade organisations such as the BPI, AIM, MMF and the governmental departments, Internet Service providers, artists and consumers.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

The delivery of this Unit could involve case studies of artists and record labels operating innovatively in the digital sphere. Examples of relevant case studies could include Trent Reznor and Radiohead.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communications

A wide range of resources could be used to engage with debates around digitalisation including music industry trade papers, websites and publications of organisations such as BPI, UK music, PRS for music and PPL. Similarly, there is a considerable amount of online resources available from music industry conferences such as Midem, In the City and South by Southwest (SxSW), which could be used to contextualise the opportunities and challenges presented by digitalisation.

Assessment could be carried out holistically allowing students to develop critical engagement with current music industry trends and debates.

Open learning

Elements of this Unit could be delivered by open learning, supplemented by on-site tutorials. Ensuring the authenticity of candidate's work would be the responsibility of the learning centre.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Music Industry Digital Communications

This Unit is designed to enable you to identify and critically evaluate the main issues surrounding the digitalisation of the music industry, and particularly the impact of these developments on traditional music industry business models and the opportunities and threats they present to the revenue streams of rights holders and musicians. It is essential to be informed of the ever-changing digital landscape of the contemporary music industry and this Unit will provide you with a theoretical framework and working vocabulary for understanding the issues and debates engendered by digital technology.

This Unit has three Outcomes:

Outcome 1 — provides an overview of the impact of digitalisation on rights holders, artists and consumers discussing the political, social and economic consequences.

Outcome 2 — looks at the impact of digitalisation on the distribution and dissemination of music and introduces digital retail platforms such as I-Tunes, Amazon and streaming services such as Spotify.

Outcome 3 — considers the possibilities inherent in digital marketing platforms such as social networking sites, websites, blogs and podcasts and compares digital strategies with traditional music marketing techniques such as print press and radio.

In order to achieve this Unit you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance on the assessed work. This may take the form of open-book extended answers generated in response to questions or case studies/project with a written or oral presentation.