Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

Unit code: H1LW 34

Superclass:	KG
Publication date:	June 2012
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to give candidates an insight into the multi-track recording process, related terminology, and key factors concerning the recording of music. It is aimed at candidates who have no prior knowledge of recording equipment.

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

1   Record signals on to a multi-track recorder.
2   Produce an edited stereo mix.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

No prior knowledge of recording equipment is required but candidates are expected to be able to make musical decisions. These skills may be demonstrated by the achievement of Higher Music, or a suitable NQ Music Unit (SCQF levels 5/6).

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

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.

General information (cont)

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

This is an optional Unit within the HNC/D Music framework. It is recommended that this Unit should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

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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

Record signals on to a multi-track recorder.

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Microphone types (condenser and dynamic)
♦ Microphone placement techniques
♦ Recording process, gain structure and input monitoring
♦ Overdubbing
♦ File management
♦ Create and maintain accurate documentation
♦ Appropriate studio etiquette and protocol

Evidence Requirements

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

♦ select appropriate microphones and placement techniques for the source signals
♦ effectively record sources with appropriate signal levels
♦ overdub tracks effectively
♦ effectively store recorded data
♦ create and maintain accurate documentation
♦ demonstrate appropriate studio etiquette and protocol

Candidates must record a minimum of three mic or line sources. This is a practical exercise to be undertaken in open-book conditions. Candidates will also be required to submit appropriate documentation identifying studio layout and equipment used. Assessors should observe candidates' performance and record results using an assessor's observation checklist.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

Outcome 2

Produce an edited stereo mix.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Editing techniques
- Time domain effects
- Signal dynamic control
- Equalisation
- Panning
- Mix level balancing

Evidence Requirements

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

- successfully deploy appropriate editing techniques
- effectively apply at least one time domain effect
- apply signal level balancing to achieve appropriate mix
- apply panning and equalisation mixing techniques to achieve an even stereo balance

Evidence should take the form of a stereo mix down (bounced mix) onto a professional audio format, plus the session data. It is recognised that centres will use different technologies, but the assessors should ensure that the candidates meet the standards set out in the Evidence Requirements. Assessors should observe candidates' performance and record results using an assessor's observation checklist.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

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 forms part of the HNC/D Music and is designed to offer candidates skills related to the recording process. The Unit concentrates on the application of the information given rather than the theory. It is primarily intended for musicians who want to use the studio to record music rather than to gain an in-depth understanding of the theoretical background of its technology.

This Unit is intended to give candidates an insight into multi-track recording processes. Learning experiences should be facilitated with consideration to the musicians' and engineers' perspectives. By the end of the Unit the candidate should be able to apply both technical and creative skills to produce an edited stereo mix down. This will involve the selection of appropriate microphones, application of effects and equalisation and then balancing individual parts to create an even stereo mix.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

It is preferable that the Unit is delivered towards the start of the award as it is envisaged that candidates will apply skills gained in *Recording Techniques for Musicians 1* to other aspects of their learning. This is a highly practical Unit and it is expected that candidates will have suitable time to access recording equipment in order to develop practical skills.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

This Unit should be assessed through the observation of candidates' practical skills. It is also expected that candidates will submit documentation to evidence the recording process. The purpose of this documentation is to allow candidates to re-create the conditions where the original recording was made. Information regarding studio layout with indications of equipment used should be produced by the candidates. Candidates may choose to submit photographs to support this.

It is envisaged that candidates will work through Outcome 1 followed by Outcome 2 in order to complete a mixed down audio recording. Outcome 1 should be assessed using an assessor's observation checklist plus the submission of appropriate documentation which should identify studio layout and equipment used. Outcome 2 should be assessed by the submission of a stereo mix down (bounced mix) onto a professional industry format, eg WAV file, plus the session data. It is recognised that centres will use different technologies, but the assessors should ensure that the candidates meet the standards set out in the Evidence Requirements.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Candidate performance for Outcome 1 should be recorded on an assessor's observation checklist plus the submission of appropriate documentation which should identify studio layout and equipment used.

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 should be assessed by the submission of a stereo mix down (bounced mix) onto a professional audio format, eg WAV file, plus the session data. It is recognised that centres will use different technologies, but the assessors should ensure that the candidates meet the standards set out in the Evidence Requirements. Assessors should observe candidates' performance and record results using an assessor's observation checklist.

Online and Distance Learning

This Unit is not suited to delivery by online and distance learning because it requires candidates to be observed by an assessor to ensure that equipment is operated safely and the work is that of the candidate.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Aspects of the Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 could be developed in this Unit during Outcome 1. *Working with Others* involves the ability to work with others to plan, agree, and take responsibility for tasks; to support co-operative working in appropriate ways; and to review the effectiveness of one's own contribution. This would fit with a group task to carry out a recording suitable for Outcome 1. The general skill at SCQF level 6 is 'Work with others in a group to analyse, plan, and complete a complex activity'. A group could carry out the task for Outcome 1, as it is a complex activity.

Candidates can be encouraged to analyse the task and negotiate goals, roles, and responsibilities, anticipating and responding to needs of others, supporting co-operative working, and evaluating and drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of one's own contribution.

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

General information for candidates

Unit title: Recording Techniques for Musicians 1

This Unit is designed to enable you to develop the skills required to record and mix down a piece of music. This Unit is about the use of the recording studio in the process of music creation and, as such, concentrates on the application of the information given rather than the theory. It is primarily intended for musicians who want to use the studio to create music rather than to gain an in-depth understanding of the theoretical background of its technology.

In this Unit you will be given information on many aspects associated with the recording process. You will be given the opportunity to spend time in a recording studio and to experience the recording process. This will include the setting up, selection and placement of microphones for different purposes and situations. You will be expected to interact with other musicians to complete this process. You will learn studio etiquette and will have hands-on experience of operating studio equipment.

In order to complete this Unit you will also have to complete a finished mix down of a recording to a satisfactory standard and have completed all the relevant documentation relating to the recording. The purpose of the creation of documentation is to allow you to re-create the studio conditions of the recording. Therefore, you are expected to produce information relating to the studio layout and equipment used. You may wish to submit photographs to support this.