



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J0LF 35

Superclass: XL

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

The purpose of this unit is to allow learners to operate within the role and function of the producer within the recording process. One aim is to develop awareness of the differences between the role of engineer and producer in the recording studio. The unit should enable learners to identify different production techniques with regard to musical style, instrumentation and arrangement, as well as commercial demands. This unit is aimed at learners wishing to pursue a career in music production.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Analyse production styles.
- 2 Apply production techniques to a piece of music.

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the unit

Access to this unit will be at the discretion of the centre. It is recommended that learners should have attained the unit: *Music: Recording Techniques for Musicians* (SCQF level 7) if the unit is being delivered as part of the HN Music group award or, *Sound Production: Recording and Mixing* (SCQF level 7) if delivered as part of the HN Sound Production group award.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill	None
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Core Skill component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6
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There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

Context for delivery

This is an optional unit in the frameworks for HN Music and HN Sound Production. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Analyse production styles.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Analysis of production styles
- ◆ Analysis of production techniques with regard to instrumentation and arrangement
- ◆ Analysis of production techniques with regard to technology

Outcome 2

Apply production techniques to a piece of music.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Use production techniques to produce a piece that is appropriate within its musical and stylistic context
- ◆ Organise musicians and/or programmers, engineers and resources
- ◆ Direct musicians and/or programmers with regard to performance and sound authenticity
- ◆ Use effective interpersonal skills to communicate with artist(s) and engineer(s)

Evidence requirements for this unit

Outcome 1

Evidence for this outcome will take the form of written and/or oral evidence and product evidence. Evidence should be generated in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout delivery of this unit.

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can research the work of at least two producers in a chosen genre and compare and contrast their production styles and techniques.

The assessment for this outcome should take the form of a case study. Research into the work of two or more producers in a chosen genre should be used as a basis for the case study. Learners will be required to present their findings, analysing at least two productions within the chosen genre and describing the differences and similarities between the two in terms of their musical quality, instrumentation, arrangement, use of technology and market sector, in either written or oral form. Recorded excerpts of the music being analysed should be included.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

Evidence for this outcome will take the form of written and/or oral evidence, product evidence and an observation checklist. Session files and a mix of the production should be retained. Evidence should be generated in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout delivery of this unit.

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can submit a finished piece of music in a specific production style.

The assessment for this outcome will take the form of a musical production recorded on a medium that is suitable for the chosen production genre. The recording must demonstrate the application of appropriate production techniques. Observation checklists should be used to provide evidence of the learner's performance during the recording process. The learner should describe the genre of the recording and provide title and artist information as sleeve notes as part of the final submission. A short written and/or oral report outlining the aims of production should also be included.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and 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 has been developed as optional to the delivery of the group awards of HN Music and HN Sound Production. The unit is intended to focus the learner's attention on the importance of the producer in the recording process.

Outcome 1 should be delivered through a number of case studies of production styles in different genres of music. The learner should select a genre for further research. The learner's response should contain not only the salient features of the research but the learner's own analysis of style based on findings contained in the learner's research. Attention should also be paid to the various environments used by producers from 'dance' production using sequencing as a main component to 'new metal' and 'rock' and the use of the studio and session musicians. Use of a traditional recording studio is not necessary if the genre chosen has its roots in 'bedroom production'.

Learners should be made aware of historically important producers across a range of music genres in the delivery of the unit.

Outcome 2 requires the learner to apply knowledge and skills to produce a piece of music. This will involve an in-depth understanding of production techniques as well as the characteristics, in terms of musical and stylistic features of the music to be produced. They must also demonstrate skills as a director to ensure accuracy of performance as well as sound authenticity, this will involve organising resources, both equipment and people — engineers and musicians. Finally, effective interpersonal skills are paramount if effective communication with artist(s) and engineer(s) is to be carried out.

This unit offers the potential for aspects of the following National Occupational Standards to be demonstrated:

CCSMR7	Use digital production technology in arranging music
CCSMR15	Use digital production technology in composing music

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit is optional within the group award frameworks of the HN Music and HN Sound Production. It is recommended that learners should have attained the HN unit *Music: Recording Techniques for Musicians* (SCQF level 7) if following the HN Music framework; or the HN unit *Sound Production: Recording and Mixing* (SCQF level 7) if following the HN Sound Production framework.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

Throughout delivery of this unit, suitable focus should be applied to the role of the music producer as someone who oversees the creative direction, and may have significant input into the creative direction of a music recording session. There should be a strong emphasis on developing the learner's critical listening skills throughout delivery of this unit.

It is suggested that the content for Outcome 1 is delivered before the learner commences Outcome 2 as Outcome 1 provides essential context for the activity of Outcome 2.

For Outcome 1, learners should be encouraged to analyse production styles of several notable producers and should be encouraged to investigate the producer's contribution to the choice of instrumentation, arrangement and technology utilised in the production. The learner would benefit from analysing commonly available examples of artists demo recordings and comparing those with the final produced version. Through doing this, learners will have the opportunity to appreciate the sometimes significant impact of the producer on the finished product.

Learners should be encouraged to undertake research on the role and contribution of the producer and there are a number of books, magazine articles, documentary films and online video features and interviews which would significantly enhance the learner's understanding of the role of the producer. The learner should be exposed to a wide range of producers and their production techniques before focussing on the work of two producers in their chosen genre.

For Outcome 2, learners would benefit if possible, from observing recording sessions where a producer has been employed to oversee the creative direction of a recording session. This could be facilitated through visits to recording sessions in studios, or alternatively, learners could observe a tutor undertaking the role of producer on recording sessions within the delivering centre.

Learners would also benefit from practice sessions where one learner takes on the role of producer with another learner assuming the role of recording engineer. Learners should be encouraged to be sympathetic to the needs of the recording artist and should be encouraged to communicate effectively with the recording artist prior to a recording session taking place in order to establish a professional working rapport with the recording artist, and to fully understand the creative direction that the production should take. From this communication with the recording artist, the learner will then be able to organise resources and direct musicians and engineers during the recording session to ensure a satisfactory performance and authenticity of sound in the context of the genre in which they are working.

During the recording session, learners should be encouraged to fully utilise their interpersonal skills with the recording artist to ensure a collaborative, effective working arrangement that is supportive of the recording artist and encourages the achievement of the artist's aims for the recording session.

Centres should ensure that learners proposed projects are manageable within the resources available and the timescale for the delivery of this unit.

Both outcomes should be assessed separately. There may be opportunities to integrate outcomes with outcomes from *Sound Production: Digital Audio Workstations* (SCQF level 8), *Music: Songwriting* (SCQF level 8), *Music First Study: Composition* (SCQF level 8) or *Music Second Study: Composition* (SCQF level 8), *Music for the Visual Arts* (SCQF level 8) and/or *Sound Production: Independent Studio Project* (SCQF level 8).

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

The assessment for Outcome 1 is a case study presented in either written or oral form.

The assessment for Outcome 2 will require learners to submit a finished piece of music in a specific production style and a short written and/or oral report outlining the aims of production.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Each outcome should be assessed individually.

The assessment for Outcome 1 should take the form of a case study presented in either written or oral form. If presented in written form, it would be acceptable to include hyperlinks to excerpts of music. These could also be included within slides accompanying an oral presentation.

The assessment for Outcome 2 will require the learner to submit a finished piece of music in a specific production style. This will be accompanied by a short written and/or oral report. Learners must demonstrate organisation of musicians and/or programmers, engineers and resources during the assessment for Outcome 2. As such, it would be sufficient for the learner to demonstrate that they can identify these requirements for the session in advance and maintain an organised approach to time management with musicians and/or programmers and engineers whilst working on the production.

For learners undertaking group awards, integration may be possible with units such as:

J01D 35	<i>Sound Production: Digital Audio Workstations</i> (SCQF level 8)
J0N3 35	<i>Music: Songwriting</i> (SCQF level 8)
J01P 35	<i>Music First Study: Composition</i> (SCQF level 8)
J0MV 35	<i>Music Second Study: Composition</i> (SCQF level 8)
J0MS 35	<i>Music for the Visual Arts</i> (SCQF level 8)
J0LN 35	<i>Sound Production: Independent Studio Project</i> (SCQF level 8)

Assessment guidelines

Outcome 1

If assessed orally, the oral presentation of the case study should take place on an appointed date. In the case of a written case study, a submission date should be given.

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

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

The finished piece needs only to evidence the application of production techniques, as the ability to fully mix and master recordings effectively should be assessed elsewhere. However, the learner will be required to submit session files and a rough mix from the session as evidence. There are opportunities for the piece recorded in Outcome 2 to be used as evidence for units where more emphasis is placed on mixing and mastering. Composition skills are not being assessed in this unit, however the piece could be used as evidence for other units where these are required.

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

Opportunities for 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 social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This unit provides the opportunity to develop the following aspects of Core and other essential skills:

Problem Solving: the learner will employ critical thinking when planning for and undertaking the production in Outcome 2.

Communication: the learner will have the opportunity to develop written and/or oral communication skills during Outcomes 1 and 2 whilst working on the case study and production.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): the learner could have the opportunity to develop skills in accessing information through the research aspect of Outcome 1 whilst undertaking this unit.

Working with Others: through working with musicians during the production in Outcome 2, the learner will have the opportunity to develop their skills in working co-operatively with others.

Employability skills: the learner will have the opportunity to develop self-management, problem solving, communication and literacy, team working and IT elements of employability skills.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Entrepreneurial skills: The learner will have the opportunity to enhance their career development skills by working on live briefs and being encouraged to work to deadlines. Learners will also develop skills in industry standard techniques and processes.

Critical listening skills: Throughout undertaking this unit, the learner will have the opportunity to develop and refine their critical listening skills.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when learners achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 embedded.	31/08/18

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General information for learners

Unit title: Music Production (SCQF level 8)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This unit is designed to give you an insight into, and an understanding of, the role of the producer and production techniques in general. It should clearly define the different responsibilities of producers and engineers in the recording process.

On completion of the unit you should be able to:

- 1 Analyse production styles.
- 2 Apply production techniques to a piece of music.

You will be expected to research production techniques used by others, analyse them with regard to instrumentation, arrangement and technology used and apply your findings to a project.

During the course of this unit, you will also be required to organise the musicians, the engineering personnel and resources such as rehearsal and recording studios. Following your analysis of style you should define a genre for your production and ensure that, through your direction, the musical performance is authentic.

The assessment for Outcome 1 will take the form of a case study — this may be presented in either written or oral form.

The assessment for Outcome 2 will require you to submit a finished piece of music in a specific production style. This will be accompanied by a short written and/or oral report.

Through undertaking this unit, you will also have the opportunity to develop the following core and essential skills: *Problem Solving, Communication, Information and Communication Technology, Working with Others*, employability skills, entrepreneurial skills and critical listening skills.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when you achieve the Unit, your Core Skills profile will also be updated to show you have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6.