



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Music: Literacy (SCQF level 5)

CODE F5EA 11

SUMMARY

This Unit will provide candidates with the opportunity to learn how to read music in the form of staff notation on a simple score or lead sheet. Candidates will be introduced to music notation and symbology; the basic building blocks used to communicate musical ideas to others. Candidates will be given the opportunity to learn about such elements as scale construction, basic chord function, key signatures and time signatures.

This Unit is an optional Unit within the National Certificate in Music (SCQF level 6), but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates with an interest and/or experience in music.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Accurately identify elements of staff notation and symbology.
- 2 Accurately identify tonal elements of music written in staff notation.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**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.*

Administrative Information

Superclass: LF

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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CORE SKILLS

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

The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Information Technology

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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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

Accurately identify elements of staff notation and symbology.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify key signatures.
- (b) Identify simple and compound time signatures.
- (c) Identify pitch name.
- (d) Identify note and rest time values.
- (e) Identify common musical terms and signs.

OUTCOME 2

Accurately identify tonal elements of music written in staff notation.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify scales.
- (b) Identify intervals.
- (c) Identify triads.
- (d) Identify cadences.
- (e) Identify chord progressions.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Written and/or oral evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidate has achieved all Outcomes to the standard specified in the Outcome and Performance Criteria. Evidence should be obtained under supervised, closed-book conditions on one assessment occasion.

The requirements for the Outcomes are:

Outcome 1

- (a) Identify key signatures for all major and minor keys up to and including two sharps or flats.
- (b) Identify simple time signatures of $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$ and compound time signatures of $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{9}{8}$ and $\frac{12}{8}$.
- (c) Identify the stave; the treble (G) and bass (F) clefs; the names of notes on the stave, including extensions of up to two ledger lines above and below both clefs; sharp, flat and natural signs and their cancellation.
- (d) Identify note values of semibreve (whole note), minim (half note), crotchet (quarter note), quaver (eighth note) and semiquaver (sixteenth note) and their equivalent rests, single-dotted notes and rests and tied notes to the same value.
- (e) Explain the meaning of common musical terms and signs concerning tempo, dynamics, performance directions and articulation marks.

Outcome 2

- (a) Identify major, melodic and harmonic minor and pentatonic scales in all keys up to and including two sharps or flats.
- (b) Identify intervals by degree above the tonic in all major and minor keys up to and including two sharps or flats.
- (c) Identify primary triads in all major and minor keys up to and including two sharps or flats.
- (d) Identify perfect and plagal cadences in all major and minor keys up to and including two sharps or flats.
- (e) Identify I, IV, V; I, II, V; I,VI, IV, V and I, VI, II, V chord progression in keys of C, F, G, Bb and D major.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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 an optional Unit within the National Certificate in Music (SCQF level 6), but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to music in the written form. The Unit is designed as an introduction to music notation and symbology and may be studied by those with no previous experience of reading music. By the end of the Unit candidates should understand scale construction, basic chord function, key signatures and time signatures. The candidate should also be able to read a simple score or lead sheet.

There are many practical class activities which can benefit learning, such as clapping games or using collections of percussion instruments to teach groups how to read and respond to rhythmic notation and time signatures. In addition, teaching staff may illustrate key signatures and pitch through the demonstration of different vocal ranges or keys used by brass or woodwind instruments.

Where possible candidates can be encouraged within the classroom to use their own instruments to practise topics covered, ie chord progressions in different keys or cadences. In addition, the tutor should be encouraged to use material familiar to the candidates to illustrate examples of cadences or major or minor tonality of the music.

In order to support learning of these topics staff should, where possible, make use of written notation which is being used in other Units, for example *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* (SCQF level 4, 5 or 6) or *Music: Live Performance* (SCQF level 5 or 6). It may also be of benefit to follow scores or lead sheets of material which is being studied in other Units such as *Music: Aural Skills* (SCQF level 5) or *Music: Songwriting* (SCQF level 6).

This Unit will support and enhance the knowledge and skills gained through study of *Music: Aural Skills* (SCQF level 5), *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* Units (SCQF level 4, 5 or 6), *Music: Live Performance* (SCQF level 5 or 6) Units, *Music: Compositional Techniques* (SCQF level 6) and *Appreciation of Music* (SCQF level 6). It is possible for this Unit to be taught in conjunction with other Units and this should be encouraged.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit can primarily be taught in a classroom context, however many varied approaches to teaching can be explored. It is important that this Unit is contextualised to the needs of the candidate. Each element should be introduced in a way that is meaningful to candidates within an area of music they are both familiar with and interested in. In order to understand relevant symbology and structural instructions, the tutor should use audio examples as much as is practical to illustrate the lesson content. Lessons must include written terms used when following a score in addition to symbols such as repeat, first time bar, etc. Where possible, teaching staff should relate teaching and learning to the instruments studied by the candidates and should encourage them to experiment with playing written notation on an instrument. This is particularly useful for underpinning knowledge where visual recognition of notation can be related to what they are seeing on their instrument (where possible), in addition to the aural recognition. It is beneficial to encourage candidates to refer to a songbook or scores of songs that they know and to follow both the notation and structure whilst listening to material. This helps support classroom lessons and is a task that can be undertaken in their own time. Listening to music they are familiar with will allow them to concentrate more upon the notation and musical instructions than they perhaps would with less familiar material heard during scheduled classes.

Candidates who are learning specific pieces for *Performing Music on One Instrument or Voice* (SCQF level 4,5 or 6) should be encouraged to follow written notation where possible to reinforce understanding. It is beneficial if instrumental instructors can help students with any difficulties in reading notation.

Use of information technology is recommended to support learning, and there are many online theory sites currently available in addition to software packages. This can be of particular benefit to candidates who are working at a different pace to others within the class group.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates will be producing written and oral communication evidence as part of the assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2. This offers ideal opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Communication*.

Should candidates choose to use online theory sites and software packages to support their learning then there will be opportunities for them to develop the Core Skill of *Information Technology*.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

One approach to assessment might be to provide candidates with a practical test where they listen to a piece of music and are required to mark up the score or lead sheet. The score/lead sheet could contain gaps to complete, errors to identify and specific components of the score to identify. Examples of this could include identification or naming of:

- ◆ intervals
- ◆ chords/triads
- ◆ time signature
- ◆ errors within a bar
- ◆ written instructions — Italian terms
- ◆ symbols — first time bar, etc.

If this approach is to be taken then both Outcomes can be assessed within one assessment event. Alternatively, both Outcomes may be approached discretely, however the holistic approach is recommended.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

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 communications 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)*.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).