

National Unit specification: general information

UNIT Music: Composing (Higher)

CODE DV45 12

COURSE Music (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit is intended for candidates who have an interest in creating their own music and who wish to develop their compositional skills. Candidates may study the Unit as part of a general education, as a leisure interest, or for vocational reasons. It is likely that candidates will have attained a level equivalent to Standard Grade Music at Credit level or Intermediate 2 Music.

This Unit can be studied on its own or as part of the Higher Music Course. It is one of a series of Composing Units which progresses from Access to Advanced Higher. It builds on previous levels of attainment by seeking a greater level of sophistication in the range of compositional techniques and an increase in product folio length.

Candidates will demonstrate the creative and technical skills required to complete an audio folio of two compositions, which may include elements of improvisation and/or arrangement, and which lasts at least two minutes in total.

In following the process which culminates in the production of their folio, candidates will make personal decisions about style, performance forces and compositional devices used. Where this Unit is being taken as part of the Higher Music Course it is likely that decisions will be informed by their experience of styles and compositional concepts in other areas of the Course.

OUTCOME

Produce original work which demonstrates development in the creative use of compositional techniques.

Administrative Information

Superclass: LH

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National Unit specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Music: Composing (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Standard Grade Music at Credit level
- ◆ Music: Composing (Intermediate 2) Unit

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

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

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

Produce original work which demonstrates development in the creative use of compositional techniques.

Performance Criteria

- a) Initial ideas are selected, explored, developed and refined over a period of time
- b) The development of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic possibilities is effective
- c) The deployment of performance forces is effective
- d) The structure of the pieces in the folio is effective
- e) Work included in the audio folio is original to the individual candidate and makes musical sense to the listener

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence requirements apply to the Unit as a whole.

Product and supporting documentary evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved the Outcome and Performance Criteria; this will take the form of:

- ◆ an audio folio of at least 2 minutes duration containing two contrasting pieces of completed candidate work in composition, each lasting at least 1 minute; these may include elements of improvisation and/or arrangement
- ◆ a detailed programme note and score/performance plan for each piece; these will be produced by the candidate, will detail the compositional process and will assist understanding of the product recorded as audio evidence
- ◆ an assessor's process observation checklist which records the compositional process over time, assists assessment by indicating candidate input and guides final product assessment. This will be maintained and kept up-to-date by the assessor.

A range of compositional techniques identified at Higher level is included in the Appendix to this Unit; it is expected that in their folio candidates will employ a range of techniques which are introduced at Higher level, in addition to others from Intermediate 2, Intermediate 1 and Access 3; candidates are not however limited to the techniques listed in the Appendix, and may wish, for example, to use a more sophisticated harmonic vocabulary. It is expected that their use of compositional devices will be secure and convincing.

At this level candidates will select musical ideas which are shown to be capable of development in a creative way, within structures that provide for variety, contrast and coherence. The use of two or more performance parts will enable candidates to show convincing control of melody, harmony, rhythm and timbre.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Music: Composing (Higher)

Details of the concept and literacy content specified for this level are given in the Appendix to this Unit.

Exemplification of an assessor's pro forma and assessor's process observation checklist is to be found in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessment and documentation it should do so in line with this exemplification.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Music: Composing (Higher)

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

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop their musical creativity and their technical competence in composition. Conceptual knowledge and understanding acquired through the study of a variety of musical styles encountered while listening and/or performing will help to inform this development of creativity. An appreciation of compositional concepts achieved through studying this Unit is of particular relevance to those studying the Higher Music Course, where an integrated understanding arises from the experience of composing, performing, and listening.

Details of the concept and literacy content specified for this level are given in the Appendix to this Unit.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit can be delivered in a variety of teaching situations: in class or by individual or group learning.

Although candidates at this level should be more able to select and explore initial ideas, they will, as at previous levels, continue to require individual guidance, constructive criticism and support. Teachers and lecturers may wish to deliver class instruction in compositional techniques to prepare candidates for individual work on their folio and group work may provide a useful teaching and learning process for developing creative compositional skills in the approach to the production of an individual folio. Since the focus of the Unit is an audio recording of composition, it is likely that candidates will be motivated by hearing performances of their own work and that of other candidates.

While musical literacy is not an outcome of the Unit, the majority of candidates will be assisted in their ongoing work and also in the final recording of their score or performance plan by a knowledge of notation.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

It is likely that assessment of the final product will take place towards the end of the Unit, allowing time for any re-working and re-assessment which may be required.

It is important that the assessor's observation checklist and candidate programme note are maintained throughout the Unit in order to inform assessment of the candidate's development in the creative use of compositional skills.

Centres should refer to the NAB item for this Unit for guidance on appropriate documentation and on product assessment in line with the statement of standards.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

APPENDIX

HIGHER CONCEPT CONTENT

The Concept Content at this level subsumes the content from previous levels.

	COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES				CONTEXTS	
	MELODIC	HARMONIC	RHYTHMIC	STRUCTURAL	TIMBRE	STYLES/ FORMS
ACCESS 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ascending ◆ Descending ◆ Stepwise, Leaping ◆ Broken chord ◆ Repetition ◆ Sequence ◆ Phrase ◆ Question, Answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chord ◆ Chord change ◆ Discord 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Repetition ◆ Faster, Slower ◆ Pause ◆ Accented ◆ Beat/Pulse ◆ Simple Time: 2/3/4 Beats in the bar ◆ On the beat, Off the beat ◆ Pattern ◆ Drum fill ◆ Scotch snap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Single line ◆ Unison/Octave ◆ Harmony ◆ Solo ◆ Ensemble ◆ Ostinato/Riff ◆ Round ◆ Accompanied ◆ Unaccompanied ◆ Repetition, Contrast ◆ Section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sound/Silence ◆ Louder/Softer ◆ Sustained, Staccato, Legato ◆ Striking, Blowing, Bowing, Strumming, Plucking, Slapping ◆ Orchestra: Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Percussion ◆ Bands: Brass, Pipe, Rock, Steel, Scottish Dance, Wind/Military ◆ Groups: Folk, Pop, Jazz ◆ Instruments: Electric Guitars Acoustic Guitar Drumkit Keyboards: Piano, Organ, Synthesiser Accordion, Fiddle, Pipes ◆ Voice, Vocal, Choral, Lead vocals, Backing vocals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Baroque ◆ Jazz ◆ Rock ◆ Pop ◆ Scottish ◆ March ◆ Strathspey ◆ Reel ◆ Waltz ◆ Latin American

APPENDIX (cont)

	COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES				CONTEXTS	
	MELODIC	HARMONIC	RHYTHMIC	STRUCTURAL	TIMBRE	STYLES/FORMS
INTERMEDIATE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Theme ◆ Variation ◆ Imitation ◆ Ornament ◆ Scales: Pentatonic, Major, Minor, Chromatic ◆ Semitone, tone ◆ Scat singing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chord Progressions using I, IV, V in Major ◆ Tonality: Major, Minor ◆ Vamp ◆ Drone ◆ Change of key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Down beat, Up beat ◆ Anacrusis ◆ Compound time ◆ Speed Change: Accelerando, Rallentando, Rubato ◆ Syncopation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chords ◆ Cluster ◆ Arpeggio ◆ Walking Bass ◆ Descant ◆ Contrary Motion ◆ Canon ◆ Binary, Ternary ◆ AB, ABA, AABA ◆ Minuet and Trio ◆ Rondo ◆ Theme and Variations ◆ Programme ◆ Middle 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Crescendo, Diminuendo ◆ Individual instruments: Orchestra, Keyboard, Folk, Scottish, String ◆ Recorders, Pan pipes ◆ Voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass ◆ Effects: Bending, Rolls ◆ Distortion, Reverb, Delay ◆ Electronic drums ◆ Ghanaian drum ensemble ◆ Gamelan ◆ Latin percussion ensemble ◆ Ceilidh band ◆ Chamber Music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Blues ◆ Ragtime ◆ Swing ◆ Romantic ◆ Opera ◆ Musical ◆ Fanfare ◆ Concerto ◆ Symphony ◆ Gaelic Psalms ◆ Scots ballad ◆ Bothy ballad ◆ Waulking song ◆ Mouth music ◆ Slow air ◆ Ghanaian ◆ Indonesian gamelan ◆ Improvisation ◆ Jig ◆ Samba ◆ Salsa

APPENDIX (cont)

	COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES				CONTEXTS	
	MELODIC	HARMONIC	RHYTHMIC	STRUCTURAL	TIMBRE	STYLES/ FORMS
INTERMEDIATE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Modulating ◆ Relative major ◆ Relative minor ◆ Tonal ◆ Atonal ◆ Grace note ◆ Trill ◆ Syllabic word setting ◆ Melismatic word setting ◆ Word painting ◆ Interval ◆ Blues scale ◆ Whole-tone scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chord Progressions using I, IV, V & VI in Major and Minor Keys ◆ Modulation ◆ Modulation to Relative Minor ◆ Perfect Cadence ◆ Imperfect Cadence ◆ Tierce de Picardie ◆ Suspension ◆ Passing note ◆ Interval ◆ Consonance, Dissonance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Groupings in Simple and Compound time ◆ Cross rhythms ◆ Triplets ◆ Dotted rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pedal ◆ Inverted Pedal ◆ Ground Bass ◆ Alberti Bass ◆ Homophony ◆ Polyphony ◆ Contrapuntal ◆ Obbligato ◆ Countermelody ◆ Strophic ◆ Through-composed ◆ Coda ◆ Cadenza 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Voices: Mezzo-Soprano, Countertenor, Baritone ◆ Muted/Con sordino ◆ Glissando ◆ Flutter tonguing ◆ Double stopping ◆ Arco ◆ Pizzicato ◆ Col legno ◆ Tremolando/Tremolo ◆ Vibrato ◆ A cappella ◆ Register ◆ 12-String guitar ◆ Slide guitar ◆ Fretless bass guitar ◆ Sitar ◆ Tabla 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dixieland ◆ Boogie-woogie ◆ Impressionist ◆ Minimalist ◆ Aleatoric ◆ Classical ◆ Scherzo ◆ Cantata ◆ Oratorio ◆ Passion ◆ Chorale ◆ Hymn tune ◆ Pibroch ◆ Recitative ◆ Aria ◆ Chorus ◆ Soul ◆ Country ◆ Indian

APPENDIX (cont)

	COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES				CONTEXTS	
	MELODIC	HARMONIC	RHYTHMIC	STRUCTURAL	TIMBRE	STYLES/ FORMS
HIGHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mode ◆ Harmonic and Melodic minor ◆ Acciaccatura ◆ Appoggiatura ◆ Turn ◆ Mordent ◆ Microtone ◆ Tritone ◆ Tone row 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Plagal cadence ◆ Interrupted cadence ◆ Dominant 7th ◆ Diminished chord ◆ Diminished 7th ◆ Augmented chord ◆ Added 6th ◆ Polytonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Time changes ◆ Pulse and Beat ◆ Irregular metres ◆ Three against two ◆ Hemiola ◆ Augmentation ◆ Diminution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Episode ◆ Exposition ◆ Subject ◆ Countersubject ◆ Transition ◆ Bridge ◆ Basso continuo ◆ Sonata form ◆ Antiphonal ◆ Inversion ◆ Retrograde ◆ Tonal answer ◆ Real answer ◆ Leitmotiv ◆ Stretto ◆ Ritornello 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Harmonics ◆ Coloratura ◆ Sprechgesang ◆ Consort ◆ Ripieno, Concertino 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Renaissance ◆ Nationalist ◆ Serial ◆ Neo-classical ◆ Late Romantic ◆ Jazz-funk ◆ Musique concrète ◆ Pavan & Galliard ◆ Plainchant ◆ Mass ◆ Motet ◆ Madrigal ◆ Overture ◆ Sonata ◆ Suite ◆ Concerto grosso ◆ Anthem ◆ Air ◆ Chant ◆ Chorale prelude ◆ Ballett ◆ Chaconne, Passacaglia ◆ Fugue ◆ Lied, Song cycle ◆ Symphonic/Tone poem ◆ Da capo aria

APPENDIX (cont)

HIGHER LITERACY CONTENT

The Literacy Content at this level subsumes the content from previous levels.

	MELODIC	HARMONIC	RHYTHMIC	TIMBRE
INTERMEDIATE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Treble Clef Stave: C – A’ ◆ Notation of Repetitions and Sequences 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Semibreve, Dotted Minim, Minim, Crotchet, Paired Quavers ◆ Barlines ◆ Double Barlines ◆ Repeat Signs ◆ 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 ◆ Accelerando, Rallentando ◆ Allegro, Andante, Adagio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>f</i> Forte <i>p</i> Piano ◆ Crescendo, Diminuendo
INTERMEDIATE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tones, Semitones, Accidentals ◆ Scales and Key Signatures: C, G and F Major, A Minor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chords of C, G and F Major, and A Minor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dotted Crotchet + Single Quaver ◆ Grouped Semiquavers ◆ Dotted Quaver + Semiquaver ◆ Scotch Snap ◆ 1st and 2nd Time Bars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>ff pp</i>
HIGHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bass Clef: E,₂ - C ◆ Note-naming and Transposing into bass clef 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Chords: I, IV, V & VI in Major and Minor Keys ◆ Naming and writing diatonic intervals formed from the tonic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 6/8 Time with straightforward note groupings, excluding dotted quavers ◆ Triplets ◆ Rests: Quaver – Semibreve ◆ Da capo, Dal segno, Fine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Slurs ◆ Accents ◆ Staccato marks ◆ Phrase marks ◆ <i>sfz</i>