



Advanced Higher
Course
Specification



Advanced Higher Music Course Specification

Valid from August 2015

This edition: April 2013, version 1.0

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this Course Specification can be downloaded from SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2013

Course outline

Course title: Advanced Higher Music

SCQF: level 7 (32 SCQF credit points)

Course code: to be advised

Mandatory Units

Music: Performing Skills (Advanced Higher)	8 SCQF credit points
Music: Composing Skills (Advanced Higher)	8 SCQF credit points
Understanding and Analysing Music (Advanced Higher)	8 SCQF credit points

Course assessment **8 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ Higher Music Course

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ other qualifications in music or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course 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. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*

Rationale

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the level and subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

The Course allows learners to develop skills in performing, creating, understanding and analysing music. The development of creativity is the main focus of this practical and experiential Course. In this Course, learners will engage in sustained and self-directed learning activities. They will perform challenging music on two selected instruments, or on instrument and voice. They will experiment with and explore how music concepts and compositional approaches can be used in sophisticated and creative ways when creating and developing their own original music.

The Course also provides scope for learners to broaden and deepen the understanding of music through the in-depth study and analysis of a selected area of music. By listening to music, learners enhance their aural discriminatory capability and develop detailed understanding of music concepts, styles and genres and musical literacy at this level.

The Course provides opportunities for personalisation and choice in selecting contexts for self-directed learning. Through independent learning, this Course allows learners to broaden and extend their performing, composing and listening skills in a variety of ways. Across the Course, skills and experiences which complement and supplement each other are developed.

In this Course, learners will become more autonomous as they develop the ability to think independently and to self-direct and manage their learning. Learners can also develop and extend the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities in the Course, including flexibility and adaptability; perseverance, independence and resilience; responsibility and reliability; and confidence.

Purpose and aims of the Course

The Course enables learners to develop skills in performing, creating, understanding and analysing music. It enables learners to develop and extend their applied music skills in challenging contexts and to develop greater depth of understanding of music through listening.

It provides learners with the skills they need to perform challenging music with musical and technical accuracy and fluency, while realising the composers' intentions. It also provides learners with opportunities to develop composing skills in sophisticated and creative ways. Further, the Course also helps learners develop advanced aural skills and demonstrate their understanding and analysis of music through researching and analysing complete movements or works.

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop autonomy and independent thinking skills
- ◆ develop creativity through performing
- ◆ develop self-expression when creating original music
- ◆ develop advanced skills in musical analysis and aural discrimination
- ◆ develop knowledge of music and musical literacy through in-depth study and analysis
- ◆ evaluate their own work and that of others

In the Course, learners will plan, organise and make decisions and take responsibility for managing their learning. They will apply their critical thinking skills when reflecting on their performing skills and their own music compositions. They will review and refine their music performances and compositions.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

This Course is a broad-based qualification, suitable for all learners with an interest in music. It is suitable for learners with a general interest in the subject, or for those wanting to progress onto higher levels of study within the field of music. This Course could provide opportunities for progression to a variety of other qualifications or careers in music or other related fields, including:

- ◆ a range of degrees in music
- ◆ a range of Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in Music or Music Business

The Course is practical and experiential and there is scope for personalisation and choice through the activities of performing, creating, and understanding music. This qualification will allow learners to develop and extend their skills in their chosen specialism of performance or composition.

The Course encourages creative approaches to learning. Learners will apply their understanding of music and of music concepts when performing, creating and listening to music. They will perform a programme of musically and technically challenging music in contrasting styles. They will also be able to create and listen to a variety of technically and musically challenging work. Through their own compositions and/or arrangements and/or improvisations, learners will develop original music in creative ways. The Course will also allow learners to develop their analytical skills in musical contexts.

Autonomy and independent thinking skills will also be developed across the Course as learners evaluate their own work and that of others.

Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

The Course consists of three mandatory Units and the Course assessment. Each of the component Units of the Course is designed to provide progression from the corresponding Units at Higher. It has an integrated approach to learning.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

Music: Performing Skills (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, learners will develop a range of advanced performing skills appropriate to their two selected instruments, or to their one selected instrument and voice. Through regular practice and reflection, learners will develop and creatively refine their performing skills while exploring a variety of musically and technically challenging music.

Music: Composing Skills (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, learners will develop a range of advanced skills in creating music. They will experiment with and apply a range of compositional techniques and devices in refined and sophisticated ways when creating their own original music, drawing on their understanding of composers' work and approaches and the creative process.

Understanding and Analysing Music (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, through listening, learners will develop their understanding of music styles, music concepts and musical literacy. Learners will work independently, demonstrating aural skills and an in-depth understanding of music and music concepts when investigating, analysing and commenting on sections of musical movements or works.

Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section.

These are:

- ◆ performing musically and technically demanding music in solo and/or group programmes
- ◆ using problem solving, planning and evaluation skills when developing and refining performing skills
- ◆ experimenting with and using a variety of compositional techniques in creating compositions and/or improvisations and/or arrangements
- ◆ in-depth knowledge of a range of music concepts, musical literacy and music styles
- ◆ analysis of musical works
- ◆ analysis of composers' use of music concepts and factors influencing the development of their music
- ◆ preparing and performing a recital of music of an appropriate level
- ◆ planning, developing and producing original music
- ◆ demonstrating aural perception and discrimination

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

Music: Performing Skills (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner has developed a range of advanced performing skills and that they can apply them sensitively and creatively. This will be demonstrated by performing a variety of musically and technically challenging music, on their two selected instruments, or on one instrument and voice, and critically reflecting and evaluating the quality and accuracy of their performing skills.

Music: Composing Skills (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner has analysed the impact of composers' creative choices and the contexts which have influenced their work and approach. Learners will critically reflect on their developing ideas and will use a range of compositional techniques and devices in creative ways to produce musically coherent and original music.

Understanding and Analysing Music (Advanced Higher)

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner can demonstrate a breadth of knowledge and understanding of music, music concepts and musical literacy. Learners will analyse sections of musical movements or works, demonstrating detailed understanding of the music. They will also demonstrate the ability to analyse the impact of social and cultural influences on their selected music.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units is provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)¹. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Advanced Higher Music Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The learner will draw on, extend and apply the skills they have learned during the Course.

They will be assessed through either a [performance](#)² or a [portfolio](#)³. All learners will also complete a common question paper.

For the performance, learners will prepare and perform a programme of music on two selected instruments or on one selected instrument and voice. This activity will be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of music. It will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

For the portfolio, learners will produce a folio of original music. The portfolio will consist of compositions and/or arrangements and/or improvisations. This activity will be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of music and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

The question paper will allow learners to demonstrate a depth of conceptual knowledge and understanding of music, music concepts, and musical literacy developed across the Units and the Course.

¹ Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

² See link above for definitions.

³ See link above for definitions.

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

3 Health and wellbeing

3.1 Personal learning

5 Thinking skills

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

5.5 Creating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Administrative information

Published: April 2013 (version 1.0)

History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this specification can be downloaded from SQA's website at www.sqa.org.uk.

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2013