



# Common questions about National 5 and Higher Music Technology

## General questions

### What Understanding Standards materials are available for Music Technology?

SQA are publishing examples of candidate evidence with commentaries as part of the Understanding Standards programme. These materials are for teachers and lecturers to help them develop their understanding of standards required for assessment. As these materials become available, they are being published in the following locations:

- ◆ The SQA secure website — materials relating to the Music Technology assignments and unit assessments. Teachers and lecturers can arrange access to these materials through their SQA Co-ordinator.
- ◆ [Understanding Standards website](#) — materials relating to the Music Technology question papers.

More information on our Understanding Standards programme can be found on our [Understanding Standards](#) page.

### Can candidates' evidence be submitted on a memory stick with a folder for each candidate?

Yes. Prior to the uplift dates for the Music Technology assignments, SQA will issue packets for hard copy evidence to be submitted in, along with Ex6 forms which list the candidates for each centre. Each Ex6 form lists up to 10 candidates in alphabetical order, by surname. You can use one CD or memory stick for each group of up to 10 candidates. Electronic files with evidence for up to 10 candidates can be submitted on one CD or memory stick.

## **Can candidates use headphones during the question paper?**

Candidates can use headphones during the question paper for National 5 and Higher Music Technology.

Some centres have languages labs, with the facilities to play one CD to multiple sets of headphones. Other centres have studio facilities which can play CDs out to multiple sets of headphones. Both options are acceptable.

If these facilities are not available, then our advice is that the question paper CD is played through stereo speakers and candidates are seated centrally between two speakers.

# **(Revised) National 5 course assessment — assignment**

## **How many contexts do candidates have to cover for the assignment?**

At National 5 level, from session 2017–18, candidates are required to complete **two** pieces of work, each one in a different context.

Six example briefs are included in the [Assessment tasks and sample briefs](#) document which is available on the [National 5 Music Technology webpage](#).

Candidates may choose any two of these contexts.

## **Can a candidate choose audiobook and gaming, or are they too similar? Are there any two briefs that are not allowed to be a chosen combination?**

Candidates may choose any two briefs which cover all of the requirements stated in the course specification. However, the chosen briefs must cover two different contexts.

## **Can I adapt the assignment briefs to suit my centre?**

Assignment briefs can be adapted, provided that they present an equal challenge to the candidate.

There are a variety of options for design brief formats, but the amount of detail in the instructions for candidates in the sample briefs should be used as a guide for centres devising their own briefs or adapting the sample briefs.

For National 5, examples of acceptable briefs could also include:

- ◆ a dramatic script with sound clips/samples and musical accompaniment to enhance the script
- ◆ an advertisement for a fictional film with voiceover, sound effects and music

Both could be treated as sound recordings, with no video, and would include multi-track recording, along with production and editing features to produce a final master.

## **Can you confirm that the assignment still requires a minimum of five tracks, two recorded with microphones?**

Yes. Each of the two tasks must include at least five tracks, two of which must be recorded using microphones.

## **Does the requirement of 'at least two microphones' refer to two different tracks captured by a microphone or to two different types of microphone?**

This refers to the number of tracks recorded using a microphone; the same microphone could be used for each of the two tracks. However, as candidates need to know about all the polar patterns listed in the concept tables, it is helpful to give them opportunities to use a range of microphones during teaching and learning.

## **Can you confirm the allowed length of the completed assignments?**

The permitted production length is included in the first paragraph of the instructions for candidates. Candidates should make sure that their finished production meets that requirement. For the Foley, computer gaming, radio broadcast and audiobook tasks, the maximum length is 2 minutes. For the live and multi-track recording tasks it is 3 minutes.

## **Would it be acceptable to include a vlog for the assignment?**

SQA has no plans at present to develop a vlogging assignment brief. However, an assignment based on vlogging might be acceptable at a future date if it met all the requirements set out in the course specification and had the same degree of difficulty as existing tasks.

## **Is it possible to submit the progress record and the evaluation as an audio track or as a vlog?**

Yes, the progress record and the evaluation report can be submitted in any written, electronic and/or recorded oral form. They will be assessed for content rather than how they are presented.

## **(Revised) National 5 course assessment — question paper**

### **Will the ‘case study’ question (question 6 in the specimen paper) always assess intellectual property (IP) or will other aspects of the music industry be assessed?**

It is useful for candidates to learn about the music industry in order to understand the development of different genres styles and technologies. However, question 6 of the question paper will always focus on understanding of intellectual property (IP).

### **Will the list of technological developments be assessed in the question paper?**

The list of technological developments (player pianos, etc) appears in the course support notes. Knowledge of specific items in the list is not mandatory and will not be assessed in the question paper. However, an awareness of how technology has developed over time (eg the quality of reel to reel compared to a digital recording) may help candidates to identify genres.

### **How will scaled marks be calculated for National 5 Music Technology?**

Marks will be scaled for both the assignment and question paper. To support with centre estimates, please refer to the scaling tables in Appendix 1.

## Higher course assessment — assignment

### How many contexts do candidates have to cover for the assignment?

At Higher level, the assignment will be one piece of work which demonstrates planning, implementing and evaluation. This must include **two** different contexts. Example briefs are included in the course assessment task document for Higher Music Technology, available on the SQA secure website.

### Do candidates have to include music from two different genres in the assignment?

Yes, at **Higher level**, candidates must include music from **two** or more genres.

### Can I adapt the assignment briefs to suit my centre?

Assignment briefs can be adapted, provided that they still present an equal challenge to the candidate.

There is a variety of options for design brief formats, but the amount of detail in the instructions for candidates in the sample briefs should be used as a guide for centres devising their own briefs, or adapting the sample briefs.

For Higher, if centres/candidates are following assessment task three, the three live performances may be, but need not be recorded at three separate events. If candidates recorded the three performances at the same recording event this would be acceptable. Candidates may record sections of pieces/songs. Full pieces/songs are not required.

Below is some additional guidance for centres that are adapting assessment tasks one and four and have combined these assessment tasks:

- ◆ The assignment can include one multi-track recording and two live recordings. Live recordings could be as simple as a stereo recording using a stereo pair of mics and/or a portable recorder.
- ◆ Candidates can include one multi-track recording accompanied by jingles/background music (ie built on loops or multi-tracked with some mic inputs).
- ◆ Candidates can include one multi-track recording and do live recordings (ie stereo recording using mics and/or portable recorder) of a jingle(s) or background music.
- ◆ When recording a live performance a candidate can mix/edit the recording of their performance post recording (ie adding EQs, effects, panning).

## **Higher unit assessment**

### **How many contexts do candidates have to study at Higher level for the Music Technology in Context Unit?**

Three contexts. For unit assessment, candidates should produce three short pieces of work in response to briefs provided by the centre. The unit assessment support (UAS) packs, on the SQA secure site, sample briefs.

### **Is it possible to integrate assessment so that assessment standards can be achieved in both the Music Technology Skills and the Music Technology in Context units?**

Yes, many centres will find that this is an effective way to approach assessment. Examples of how this can be achieved can be found in the combined approach UAS packs on the SQA secure website. There is also Understanding Standards materials which exemplify this approach.

### **How long does the report need to be for assessment standard 1.4 in the Understanding 20th and 21st Century Music Unit?**

The report may be fairly brief but must cover a range of intellectual property issues and be linked to one real-life case study. As a guide, the report should be a minimum of 200 words.

.

## Appendix 1 — National 5 Music Technology scaling table

Mark	Scaled mark 100–70 (assignment)	Scaled mark 40–30 (QP)	Mark	Scaled mark 100–70 (assignment)	Scaled mark 40–30 (QP)	Mark	Scaled mark 100–70 (assignment)	Mark	Scaled mark 100–70 (assignment)
1	1	1	26	18	20	51	36	76	53
2	1	2	27	19	20	52	36	77	54
3	2	2	28	20	21	53	37	78	55
4	3	3	29	20	22	54	38	79	55
5	4	4	30	21	23	55	39	80	56
6	4	5	31	22	23	56	39	81	57
7	5	5	32	22	24	57	40	82	57
8	6	6	33	23	25	58	41	83	58
9	6	7	34	24	26	59	41	84	59
10	7	8	35	25	26	60	42	85	60
11	8	8	36	25	27	61	43	86	60
12	8	9	37	26	28	62	43	87	61
13	9	10	38	27	29	63	44	88	62
14	10	11	39	27	29	64	45	89	62
15	11	11	40	28	30	65	46	90	63
16	11	12	41	29		66	46	91	64
17	12	13	42	29		67	47	92	64
18	13	14	43	30		68	48	93	65
19	13	14	44	31		69	48	94	66
20	14	15	45	32		70	49	95	67
21	15	16	46	32		71	50	96	67
22	15	17	47	33		72	50	97	68
23	16	17	48	34		73	51	98	69
24	17	18	49	34		74	52	99	69
25	18	19	50	35		75	53	100	70