



## Music (National 4)

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## Draft National Course Specification

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

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Music (National 4)

**SCQF:** level 4 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** to be advised

*There are two routes to the National 4 Music Course, which will be distinguished by the choice of optional Unit.*

### Mandatory Units

**Music: Composing Skills (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

**Understanding Music (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

#### Added Value Unit

**Music: Practical Activity (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for the assessment of added value in the Added Value Unit. Further information on this Unit is provided in the Assessment section.

### Optional Units

**Music: Performing Skills (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

or:

**Music: Technology Skills with Performing Skills (National 4)** 6 SCQF credit points

### Recommended entry

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

- ◆ Music (Access 3) Course or relevant component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes will be given in the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Progression**

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ other SQA qualifications in Music or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment 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* and the *Course Assessment Specification*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect the 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 and fit for purpose and they 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 subject area.

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

This Course enables learners to develop and broaden skills and experiences in creating, understanding and performing music. Creating, understanding and performing music is the essence of this Course. The Course, which allows for a flexible approach, can meet the needs of learners with a range of musical interests.

The Course engages the learner through practical musical activities and provides scope for personalisation and choice. Learners can, for example, perform music in a variety of styles on their own choice of instrument. Learners will develop their ability to express themselves through music, which encourages creativity and autonomy.

The Course also enables learners to gain the knowledge and understanding of music concepts and musical literacy.

Across the Course, skills and experiences which complement and supplement each other are developed. Creating music encourages learners to think imaginatively and to explore and develop their own ideas, making use of musical ideas and concepts, knowledge of which has been developed in the Course.

Understanding music through listening enables learners to build their knowledge and understanding of music, bringing depth to their learning and raising their social and cultural awareness. Performing music allows learners to express themselves musically and to reflect on their learning.

The Course provides opportunities for learners to further acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, including: creativity, flexibility and adaptability; enthusiasm for learning and the motivation to learn; perseverance, independence and resilience, responsibility, and reliability; and confidence and enterprise.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The Music (National 4) Course enables learners to develop skills in creating, understanding and performing music in a variety of contexts. It provides the opportunity for learners to develop and consolidate a general interest in music but also permits them to acquire skills in an area which may be of particular interest to them. The Course also provides opportunities for learners to develop a range of fundamental skills in the use of music technology.

Overall, the Course gives learners the skills they need to create and perform music and to confidently discriminate between a range of different styles and genres of music. The Course enables learners to develop their skills and capabilities as a musician. The added value in the Course comes from applying the skills learned through the Units in the context of either a performance of a programme of music or the creative production of music using music technology.

The skills that learners gain throughout the Course will be valuable for learning, life and work. Performing music, for example, demands skills of autonomy, interpretation and creativity, as well as providing the opportunity to build confidence and self-esteem. The practice required to develop these skills can promote perseverance, among other things, as well as helping learners to learn how to learn.

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to:

- ◆ develop skills in creating music, which includes composing, arranging and improvising, by applying a range of basic compositional techniques
- ◆ develop skills in musical analysis and to discriminate between a limited range of styles and genres of music
- ◆ develop their musical literacy through an understanding of a limited range of music concepts and ideas
- ◆ perform a variety of music on their chosen instrument(s) with accuracy
- ◆ have the opportunity to acquire skills in the use of music technology
- ◆ reflect on, and evaluate their own work and that of others

Developing skills in creating, understanding and performing music allows for Course activities in which learners can work independently and in collaboration with others. In addition, activities can help learners to plan and organise, to make decisions and to take responsibility for own learning. Further, the practical and experiential nature of the Course gives learners opportunities to show imagination and creativity by refining and developing their fundamental musical ideas.

The Course also provides opportunities for vertical and lateral progression to National Courses, and to other SQA qualifications in music and other related fields.

The Course also provides progression for learners from previous experiences and outcomes in the expressive arts.

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

This Course is suitable for learners with a general interest in music and for learners with a more specific interest in particular aspects of music. The Course allows learners to consolidate and extend musical skills and knowledge and understanding developed through the experiences and outcomes for Music and other Access 3 Courses. The Course enables learners to develop skills in creating, understanding and performing music. It provides a pathway for those who want to progress to higher levels of study.

The Course is practical and experiential in nature, and there is considerable scope for personalisation and choice through the activities of creating, understanding and performing music, and through the use of music technology. This makes the Course as accessible as it can be, contextualised to suit a diverse range of learners' needs, interests and aspirations.

On completing the Course, learners will be able to explore and experiment to create original music, using a range of simple compositional techniques, and listen to a limited range of music with awareness, understanding and discrimination. Learners will also be able to perform a programme of music with accuracy; have the opportunity to apply music technology; and reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others to identify strategies to improve musical creativity and performance.

The Course has an integrated approach to learning through practical activity. Through creating, performing and using music technology, learners will develop and apply their understanding of music and will experience music in a variety of styles.

Reflective skills will be developed across the Course as learners learn to evaluate their own work and that of others. In this Course learners will be required to make straightforward evaluative judgements using music criteria with which they will be familiar.

## Course structure and conditions of award

### Course structure

*There are two routes to the National 4 Music Course, which will be distinguished by the choice of optional Unit made by each learner.*

The Course consists of three mandatory Units, including the Added Value Unit, and one optional Unit from a choice of two.

Each of the component Units of the Course is designed to provide progression to the corresponding Units at National 5.

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

### Mandatory Units

#### **Music: Composing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will develop skills in creating music, which includes composing, arranging or improvising, in order to create their own original music. This Unit allows learners to explore, experiment with, and apply straightforward compositional techniques. Learners will also develop understanding of a limited range of musical styles/genres and an awareness of the social and cultural influences on music.

#### **Understanding Music (National 4)**

In this Unit, through listening, learners will develop knowledge and understanding of music, a limited range of music concepts, and basic musical literacy. This knowledge and understanding will be enhanced from integrated learning across the Course. Learners will explore music of a limited range of styles and genres and consider the social and cultural influences on music.

#### **Added Value Unit: Music: Practical Activity (National 4)**

This Unit adds value by introducing challenge and application. In the Music practical activity, learners will draw on and extend the application of their practical skills in context. This context will either be a performance of a programme of music or the creative production of music using music technology. These contexts and activities will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

### Optional Units

Learners must choose one of the following optional Units:

#### **Music: Performing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will develop performing skills appropriate to their chosen instrument(s)/voice. They will develop the ability to play accurately and maintain musical flow. Through regular practice and reflection, learners will develop technical and musical skills while exploring a range of music.

or:

### **Music: Technology Skills with Performing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, learners will explore and develop skills and techniques relating to the use and application of music technology. They will also develop performing skills appropriate to their chosen instrument/voice, and through reflecting on the process of production/performance will further develop musical and technical skills.

### **Conditions of award**

To achieve the Music (National 4) Course, learners must pass all of the required Units, including the Added Value Unit. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

*National 4 Courses are not graded.*

### **Skills and knowledge**

Full skills and knowledge for the Course will be given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be covered in the Course includes:

- ◆ applying knowledge of simple compositional techniques through composing, arranging or improvising
- ◆ basic knowledge of a limited range of music concepts, musical literacy and styles/genres of music
- ◆ knowledge of the social and cultural influences on music
- ◆ learners' ability to reflect on their own development of technical and musical performing skills through regular practice/rehearsal
- ◆ applying technical and musical performing skills while exploring a limited range of music
- ◆ knowledge of basic skills and simple techniques relating to the creative use and application of music technology
- ◆ learners' ability to evaluate their own work and identify areas for improvement
- ◆ learners' ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning

For those who choose the optional Unit *Music: Performing Skills*:

- ◆ perform a programme of a range of music

For those who choose the optional Unit *Music: Technology Skills with Performing Skills*:

- ◆ produce music creatively using music technology

## Assessment

Information about assessment standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which will provide 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 will be assessed pass/fail within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

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

#### **Music: Composing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner has developed a limited range of skills in composing or arranging or improvising, in order to create their own original music.

#### **Understanding Music (National 4)**

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of music, a limited range of music concepts, and musical literacy.

#### **Music: Performing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner, through regular practice/rehearsal and reflection, has developed simple technical and musical performing skills on their chosen instrument(s)/voice while exploring a range of music.

#### **Music: Technology Skills with Performing Skills (National 4)**

In this Unit, evidence will be required that the learner:

- ◆ has explored and developed straightforward skills and techniques relating to the use and application of music technology
- ◆ through regular practice/rehearsal and reflection, has developed simple technical and musical performing skills on their chosen instrument(s)/voice while exploring a range of music

### Added Value Unit

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 4, added value will be assessed in an Added Value Unit. The Added Value Unit will 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 and application.

In this Course, the Added Value Unit will focus on challenge and application.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

*successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor*

Learners will draw on, extend and apply the skills they have learned during the Course. This will be assessed through a [practical activity](#)<sup>2</sup>. The practical activity will be in the context of either a performance of a programme of music or the creative production of music using music technology. Both of these activities will be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of music and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

Exemplification of possible approaches for Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

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

It is expected that learners will also develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that are likely to be appropriate for this 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

### **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.2 Working with others

### **5 Thinking skills**

5.1 Remembering

5.2 Understanding

5.3 Applying

Amplification of these 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

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**Published:** April 2011 (version1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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