



National
Qualifications

Music

Performance

General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the performance Component of Higher Music Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task(s) for this Component of Course assessment, which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

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Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Higher Music performance.

This performance is worth 60 marks. The marks contribute 60% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a question paper.

This performance has two Sections.

Section 1, titled 'Instrument 1/voice', will have 30 marks.

Section 2, titled 'Instrument 2/voice', will have 30 marks.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the music performance Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes 60% of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the performance in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

- ◆ the ability to perform a prepared programme of music on two selected instruments, or one instrument and voice, either solo and/or in a group setting
- ◆ the ability to maintain musical flow and realise the composer's intentions when performing

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for the added value of this Course by means of a music performance. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course rationale.

This Course assessment Component allows candidates to demonstrate their performance and musical skills.

In this assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ challenge – requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application – requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in a practical context

Assessment overview

The music performance allows candidates to demonstrate their musical and technical skills in a new and appropriately challenging context. The music programme will be set by centres within SQA guidelines.

It allows candidates to demonstrate practical performing skills developed in the mandatory Unit, *Music: Performing Skills*. The music can be performed either solo and/or in a group setting.

The choice of music for the 12-minute programme will be agreed with the candidate. Centres are responsible for ensuring that appropriately levelled pieces of music are performed by candidates.

The selection of contrasting pieces of music will be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of music, developed in the *Understanding Music* and/or in the *Music: Composing Skills* Units.

Candidates can perform the programme of music on either:

- ◆ two selected instruments
- ◆ one selected instrument and voice

A list of approved instruments and combinations of instruments for the Course is provided in Appendix 1 of the Higher Music *Course Assessment Specification*.

The overall programme length *must not* exceed 13 minutes.

Music for the performance programme could, for example, be selected from current or past syllabuses (including graded anthologies) at the appropriate

grade level (Grade 4 or above) from any of the following, or any other equivalent music organisation:

- ◆ Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM)
- ◆ Trinity Guildhall
- ◆ Rockschoo
- ◆ London College of Music
- ◆ Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) Scottish Traditional Music Graded Exams

The music in the 12-minute programme should allow the candidate to demonstrate sufficient levels of technical and musical skills. It should include complete pieces of music and be of an appropriate level in terms of complexity and demand.

The total number of pieces and the styles of music performed in the 12-minute music programme can vary from candidate to candidate, but within the music performance programme, candidates must perform a minimum of two contrasting pieces of music on each of their two selected instruments, or on one instrument and voice.

While candidates do not need to perform for an equal length of time on both of their instruments or on their instrument and voice, the shortest performance time for any instrument or voice must be at least four minutes within the overall 12-minute programme.

Bagpipes (Scottish)

Highland bagpipe must be presented at this level. Practice chanter cannot be presented at this level.

Candidates must perform a programme containing a minimum of two pieces and, at this level, it is not mandatory to include a march, Strathspey and reel. All pieces must be played from memory.

Drum kit

The required content of a drum kit programme at Higher is as follows:

Number of contrasting styles required in a programme	Number of different fills required within each style	4-way independence required in
5	4	All styles

Candidates must perform a programme of contrasting styles and must select only **one style** from each style bank (see Appendix 1).

Judicious cuts or fade-outs (in the case of backing tracks) may be appropriate to keep within the time limit, and should be at the discretion of the centre. Centres should ensure that the requisite number of fills is included before the cut or fade out. Within any one programme it is possible for one piece only to include two styles and, in this case, double the requisite fills is not a requirement. 4-way independence must be demonstrated in all styles.

Candidates presenting drum kit must be accompanied. This may be live or recorded. However, one unaccompanied piece may be included, but only one within any one programme. This would count as one of the styles in the programme.

Percussion categories

Category 1	Category 2
Drum kit	Tuned percussion: marimba, xylophone, glockenspiel
Snare drum	
Pipe band snare drum	
Timpani	

For assessment purposes, candidates must select one instrument only and perform a complete programme on either drum kit, snare drum, pipe band snare drum or timpani. It is not possible to present a second instrumental programme on another instrument from Category 1. However, it is possible for a candidate to present, eg a drum kit programme and also present a complete programme on tuned percussion, as these instruments are in different percussion categories.

Guitar (electric and acoustic)

There are three different and separate approaches to presenting a guitar programme:

- ◆ a programme of pieces of chordal/rhythm guitar throughout
- ◆ a programme of pieces which is a mixture of lead/melodic guitar and choral/rhythm guitar – in which case the full chordal requirements for each level must be in the programme
- ◆ a programme of pieces of lead/melodic guitar entirely

In the latter case, there is no requirement to include chords/chordal/rhythm guitar within the programme and the requirement for a set of number of chords does not apply.

Chordal requirements are shown below:

Minimum number of chords	Style
18	Chords should be played in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ a continuous accompanying style, which could include finger picking, arpeggiated chords, barre chords or more complex playing techniques appropriate to the styles of the music – techniques might include alternating bass, runs, slurring, bending and harmonics

The above requirements also apply to ukulele programmes as appropriate.

Keyboard

Single fingered chords are required at this level. If a candidate plays with right hand only, the candidate will be awarded 0 marks for the piece.

Voice

It is recommended that singers perform from memory to allow a convincing interpretation and presentation; however performing from memory is not a mandatory requirement.

Songs may be accompanied or unaccompanied (where appropriate) and transposed to any suitable key.

Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This assessment is a single assessment event. It will be conducted under a high degree of supervision and control.

In this assessment, the full programme of music will be performed in front of an SQA Visiting Assessor.

This assessment has two stages:

- ◆ a planning/preparation stage, which should be completed over a period of time prior to the assessment event
- ◆ the music performance

Candidates can be provided with some formative assistance from assessors prior to the formal assessment event.

The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example, by offering advice on how to select suitable pieces of contrasting music for the performance programme during the planning/preparation stage. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis.

When preparing for assessment, centres will follow SQA guidelines for visiting assessment.

The candidate will require practice and rehearsal time to prepare for the assessment. Centres should also ensure that time before the assessment of the music performance is sufficient to prepare and warm up the instrument(s)/voice.

Centres are responsible for identifying the title and duration of individual pieces of music on the candidate's assessment record prior to the assessment event. An exemplar candidate assessment record can be found in the *Higher Music performance: assessment task*, available on SQA's secure website.

Group work approaches are acceptable as part of the preparation and also for the formal assessment. However, there must be clear evidence to show that each individual candidate has met the assessment requirements of the music performance. The balance within group performances should allow the SQA Visiting Assessor to clearly hear each candidate's performance programme.

Evidence to be gathered

For the purposes of Course assessment, the assessment of candidates will be carried out by an SQA Visiting Assessor.

They will assess candidates' performing skills by listening to them perform their full programme of music. Assessment decisions will be recorded by the SQA Visiting Assessor on a candidate assessment record provided by SQA.

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

Evidence of the candidate's ability to:

- ◆ perform a 12-minute prepared programme of music on either two selected instruments, or one instrument and voice – this will include performing a minimum of two contrasting pieces of complete music on each of the two selected instruments, or instrument and voice

General Marking Instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following general marking instructions are addressed to the Marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

Visiting Assessors appointed by SQA will carry out the assessment.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

General Marking Principles for the performance

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles the Visiting Assessor must apply when marking candidate responses to this performance. These principles must be read in conjunction with the Detailed Marking Instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these General Marking Principles and the Detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

Detailed Marking Instructions for the performance

Marks in the performance will be awarded by the SQA Visiting Assessor for the following, as appropriate:

- ◆ melodic accuracy/intonation
- ◆ rhythmic accuracy
- ◆ maintaining the tempo and flow of the music
- ◆ conveying mood and character
- ◆ tone
- ◆ dynamics

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate musical skill and control on:

- ◆ each of their two selected instruments
- OR
- ◆ their selected instrument and voice

The same overall mark weighting will apply to each instrument/voice in the programme (30 marks/30 marks).

Each individual piece of music performed within the programme will be assessed by an SQA Visiting Assessor, before being awarded a final mark out of 10.

As the number of pieces of music in individual candidate's programmes will be variable, the final marks for each piece of music will be added together by the SQA Visiting Assessor, and scaling will be used to determine a final overall mark for each instrument/voice.

SQA Visiting Assessors will record their assessment decisions on a candidate assessment record.

In assessing performances, SQA Visiting Assessors will be exercising their professional judgement, guided by the summary statements for each mark range on the following page. The candidate assessment record includes space where Visiting Assessors can provide comments which support the assessment decisions.

Music performance – summary statements

Mark range 9-10	
A convincing and stylish performance which demonstrates excellent technique	
Melodic accuracy/intonation	Excellent level
Rhythmic accuracy	Excellent level
Tempo and flow	Appropriate and musically convincing
Mood and character	Conveyed with sensitivity
Tone	Confident, convincing and well-developed instrumental/vocal sound
Dynamics	Convincing
Mark range 7-8	
A secure performance musically and technically	
Melodic accuracy/intonation	Secure
Rhythmic accuracy	Secure
Tempo and flow	Appropriate and consistent
Mood and character	Conveyed securely
Tone	Secure and effective control of instrumental/vocal sound
Dynamics	Effective
Mark range 5-6	
A mainly accurate performance displaying effective technical and musical control	
Melodic accuracy/intonation	Mainly accurate
Rhythmic accuracy	Mainly accurate
Tempo and flow	Appropriate and mainly consistent
Mood and character	Conveyed with some success
Tone	Some evidence of development and control
Dynamics	Some contrast
Mark range 3-4	
An inconsistent performance lacking sufficient technical and/or musical skill to communicate the sense of the music	
Melodic accuracy/intonation	Inconsistencies in melodic accuracy and/or passages of poor intonation
Rhythmic accuracy	Inconsistencies in rhythm
Tempo and flow	Inappropriate speed and/or some breaks in continuity
Mood and character	Not conveyed satisfactorily
Tone	Little evidence of development and control
Dynamics	Not observed satisfactorily
Mark range 0-2	
A poor performance with little or no evidence of required technical and/or musical ability	
Melodic accuracy/intonation	Inaccurate melody and/or consistently poor intonation
Rhythmic accuracy	Frequent inaccuracies
Tempo and flow	Totally inappropriate speed and/or frequent stumbling
Mood and character	Not conveyed
Tone	Poor
Dynamics	Ignored

Appendix 1: Drum kit styles

For external assessment purposes, candidates must perform a programme of contrasting styles and must select **only one** style from each of banks 1 to 9. Please refer to the number of styles required for each level.

Bank 1	Bank 2	Bank 3	Bank 4	Bank 5	Bank 6	Bank 7	Bank 8	Bank 9
Rock Heavy rock Rock ballad Metal rock	Disco 16 th note rhythm	Blues (three quavers to one crotchet)	Shuffle	Jazz (2 or 4 feel)	Waltz	Reggae	Cha-cha	Irregular time signatures
Pop	16 beat	12/8	Funk shuffle	Swing	3 beats (Simple or compound time)	Ska	Bossa nova	Free choice of any other style not listed in banks 1-8.
Hip hop				Big band swing	9/8		Latin	
Soul							Samba	
Hard rock							Rumba	
Punk							Calypso	
Funk								
R 'n' B								
Rock 'n' roll								

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Page 3: Assessment overview section – change to maximum overall programme length (from 12 and a half minutes to 13 minutes).	Qualifications Manager	November 2014
1.2	The 'Assessment overview' section has been updated to include the specific requirements for a range of instruments for the Music Performance. 'Appendix 1: Drum kit styles' has been added.	Qualifications Manager	September 2015

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