Music Technology

Assignment

General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the assignment Component of National 5 Music Technology 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.

Valid from session 2013/14 and until further notice

Contents

Introduction

This is the general assessment information for National 5 Music Technology assignment.

This assignment is worth 70 marks. The marks contribute 70% 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 document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the assignment 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 70% of the total marks for the Course.

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

♦ application of skills in using music technology hardware and software to capture and manipulate audio
♦ application of music technology in creative ways
♦ skills in planning, implementation and evaluation of a sound production
♦ the ability to critically reflect on own work

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for the added value of this Course by means of an assignment.

Assessment overview

The assignment is a meaningful and appropriately challenging task requiring challenge and application. The candidate will draw on and apply technological and musical skills and knowledge, at an appropriate level, developed through the Units of the Course. The creative production may be in any appropriate context, such as (but not limited to) live performance, radio broadcast, composing and sound design for film, TV themes, adverts and computer gaming.

The completed product should clearly demonstrate application of knowledge and skills, at an appropriate level, from each of the three Units of the Course (as defined in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of the *Course Assessment Specification*).

The assignment is designed to allow learners to demonstrate their ability to work independently.

The assignment is set by centres within SQA guidelines.

Appendix 1 of the *Assessment task and sample briefs* document contain exemplification material showing five possible alternative assignments, each based on a different context:

♦ an assignment which requires the learner to develop a **soundtrack to support a short film**
♦ an assignment which requires the learner to carry out **live studio recording and mixing of a performance** by a small instrumental group
♦ an assignment which requires the learner to carry out **multi track studio recording (with overdubbing) and mixing of a performance** by a small instrumental group
♦ an assignment based on **producing music and sound to support a computer gaming environment**
♦ an assignment based on **creating a short radio broadcast** involving sound, speech and music.

Centres may adapt these exemplar assignments to suit individual local needs, resources and circumstances, as long as these meet the requirements stated in the *National 5 Music Technology Course Assessment Specification.* For example, the 'foley' task outline may be adapted for use with a different film clip, or the studio recording example may be adapted for a rock group or folk band.

Full instructions for candidates are contained within each assessment task.

Where centres adapt these tasks, the assignment must meet the following conditions to be a valid assessment for the Course:

♦ The specification for the assignment should be agreed between the candidate and the assessor.
♦ The agreed specification should allow the candidate to demonstrate competence in a range of recording, editing and mixing skills, showing some creativity.
♦ An appropriate assignment will be a meaningful and appropriately challenging task, which will allow the candidate to apply technical skills developed in the National 5 Music Technology Skills Unit, show musical understanding developed in the National 5 Understanding 20th and 21st Century Music Unit, and show understanding of context developed in the National 5 Music Technology in Context Unit.
♦ The production should include a minimum of five parts, at least two of which should involve the use of a microphone.
♦ The assessor should provide overall guidelines for the assignment and a list of questions/tasks/prompts, similar to those provided in the exemplars, which will lead candidates through the assignment in clear stages.

Notes for assessors adapting these assessment tasks

Example assessment task: sound design and foley for film
When devising your own assessments based on this example task, the film clip used should require accurate sequencing of sounds and music, fade in/fade out and level automation, and additional processing as appropriate. There must be at least five different audio tracks used, and at least two of these must be recorded using a microphone. A typical film clip for this assessment should be around 2–3 minutes in length.

Example assessment task: live recording of a performance
The example brief involves live recording of a rock band, comprising five different instruments. The brief may be amended to suit other groupings of instruments/voices requiring similar levels of skill. The assignment could also be based on a live concert or a classroom performance. Five or more musical parts must be recorded, with at least two recorded by microphone, using different microphone techniques. For National 5, the recording must include a range of sources, so a group of identical instruments/voices would not be acceptable. Any instrument recorded with more than one microphone (eg a drum kit) should be classified as one musical part using one microphone. A typical performance for this assessment should be around 3-4 minutes long.

Example assessment task: multi track recording a performance
This is similar to the live recording task, but involves recording the group in a studio by multi-tracking/overdubbing.

Example assessment task: computer gaming
When adapting assessments based on this example task, the game sequence used should require accurate sequencing of sounds and music, fade in/fade out and level automation, and additional processing as appropriate. There must be at least five different audio tracks used, and at least two of these must be recorded using a microphone. A typical game sequence for this assessment should be around 2-3 minutes in length.

Example assessment task: radio broadcast
When adapting assessments based on this example task, the radio broadcast produced should require accurate sequencing of sounds, speech and music, fade in/fade out and level automation, and additional processing as appropriate. There must be at least five different audio tracks used, and at least two of these must be recorded using a microphone. A typical radio broadcast for this assessment should be at least 2-3 minutes in length, but can be longer depending on the specific format.

Marks will be awarded for:

♦ Planning the production   15 marks
♦ Implementing the production   45 marks
♦ Evaluating the production   10 marks

The assignment will be marked by SQA, in line with the marking instructions provided in this document.

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. Candidates should undertake the assessment at an appropriate point in the Course. This will normally be when they have completed most of the work on the Units in the Course.

The three main stages of the assignment are likely to be completed within a notional time of eight hours, but candidates may be given more time if required.

This is an open book assessment. There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

Candidates must undertake the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. 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, advice on how to develop a project plan. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger that it becomes support for assessment and assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the wording of a brief, specification or instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

Some guidance may be provided during the planning stage, but the candidate should work independently throughout the implementation and evaluation stages.

Assessor input and advice on the candidate's planning is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next stages of the assessment. The assistance provided must be recorded so that the candidate's own planning work can be marked/judged fairly.

As this assignment is a summative assessment, support and guidance during implementation and evaluation stages should be limited to minimal prompts and questioning, referring the candidate to the instructions provided in the assessment task.

The assignment will be conducted under some supervision and control. Assessors should put in place processes for monitoring progress and ensuring that the work is the candidate's own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Assessors should put in place mechanisms to authenticate candidate evidence. For example:

♦ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
♦ short spot-check personal interviews
♦ checklists which record activity/progress
♦ photographs, film or audio evidence

Group work approaches as part of the preparation for assessment can be helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks, and promote team working skills. However, group work is not appropriate once formal work on assessment has started.

Once the assignment has been completed and submitted, it should not be returned to the candidate for further work to improve their mark.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

♦ a formal plan for the production, which includes explanations and justifications for all decisions relating to technological and musical aspects of the production (in written, electronic and/or oral form)
♦ the completed audio master (and, for the foley and computer game tasks, the relevant video or game sequence)
♦ a record of progress through the task (such as an electronic log or diary maintained by the candidate)
♦ a short report evaluating the production (in written, electronic and/or oral form)

This evidence must be retained for quality assurance purposes.

General Marking Instructions

This assessment will be marked by SQA using the following marking instructions. Separate information will be given on arrangements for submission of evidence.

Assessors will allocate a mark for each of the stages, by applying the instructions below to the evidence provided, and adding a comment justifying why the mark was awarded.

Notes
♦ Marks for planning should be based on the formal plan provided as evidence.
♦ Marks for implementation should be based on the completed audio master **and** the progress report.
♦ Marks for evaluation should be based on the evaluation report provided as evidence, which must relate to the audio master provided.

For each of the stages, the marker should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the evidence presented. Once the best fit has been selected:

♦ where the evidence almost matches the level above, the highest available mark from the range should be awarded
♦ where the candidate's work just meets the standard described, the lowest mark from the range should be awarded
♦ otherwise an appropriate mark from the middle of the range should be awarded

Notes
♦ Where the evidence completely matches the highest level band descriptor for any stage, and has been produced by the candidate working independently, **full marks** should be awarded for that stage.
♦ If no audio master is provided, **award 0 marks for implementation.**
♦ If no progress report is provided, **award 0 marks for implementation.**
♦ If no audio master is provided, **award 0 marks for evaluation.**

Criteria for stage 1: Planning the production

Fully informative, detailed and complete evidence of planning	13-15
Informative and complete evidence of planning	10-12
Evidence of planning which is mostly complete and appropriate, but lacking in detail in some areas	7-9
Incomplete evidence of planning	4-6
Little or no evidence of planning, or with evidence of significant assistance and advice given	0-3

Criteria for stage 2(a): Implementing the production — audio capture including microphone placement

Completed to a high standard, demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge of recording techniques, fully documented in progress report	13-15
Completed to a reasonable standard, demonstrating a good knowledge of recording techniques, and documented in progress report	10-12
Completed to a minimally acceptable standard, demonstrating some knowledge of recording techniques, partially documented in progress report	7-9
Incomplete, or, completed, but with little evidence in progress report	4-6
Incomplete, or with no evidence in progress report	0-3

Criteria for stage 2(b): Implementing the production — mixing skills

Completed to a high standard, demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge of mixing skills and technical awareness, fully documented in progress report	13-15
Completed to a reasonable standard, demonstrating a good knowledge of mixing skills and technical awareness, and documented in progress report	10-12
Completed to a minimally acceptable standard, demonstrating some knowledge of mixing skills and technical awareness, partially documented in progress report	7-9
Incomplete, or, completed, but with little evidence in progress report	4-6
Incomplete, or with no evidence in progress report	0-3

Criteria for stage 2(c): Implementing the production — creative and appropriate use of sound and/or music

Implementation includes significant creative use of appropriate sounds and/or music, and fully documented in progress report	13-15
Implementation includes some creative use of appropriate sounds and/or music working, and well documented in progress report	10-12

Implementation includes some creative use of appropriate sounds and/or music, and partially documented in progress report	7-9
Implementation includes minimal creative use of appropriate sounds and/or music, and with little evidence in progress report	4-6
Implementation shows little evidence of appropriate choices of sound and/or music, or with no evidence in progress report	0-3

Criteria for stage 3: Evaluating the production

Evaluation report is consistent, detailed and relevant, and with clear, valid evaluation	8-10
Evaluation report is consistent and relevant, and with clear, reasoned evaluation	5-7
Evaluation report is consistent and relevant, with some evaluative comments	3-4
Evaluation report is incomplete, unclear or inconsistent	0-2

The example below shows an extract from a possible candidate's record of progress, to provide an indication of the level of response required.

Note that the record of progress may be handwritten, or kept in electronic form (word processed document or blog entry), or spoken and recorded, or in any other appropriate format.

National 5 Music Technology assignment
(example extract from record of progress)

An example of an extract from a record of progress is shown below. This could be handwritten, or kept in electronic form (word processed document or blog entry), or spoken and recorded, or in any other appropriate format.

Name:	*A. Learner*
Date:	*02/03/14*

What I have done today:
Today, I completed the sound design map for my radio play, and started thinking about the incidental music I would use.

What help I needed today:
I had learned how to create a sound design map last term, so I was able to look back at what I had done then, and use ideas in my plan for this task. I asked my teacher for advice on suitable incidental music, and where I could find examples.

Evidence I have produced, and where and how it is stored:
Sound design map and sound design notes. They are stored as Word documents in my folder on the network.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

Security and confidentiality

This document can be used by practitioners in SQA approved centres for the assessment of National Courses and not for any other purpose.

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