

Music



This update contains information on any recent updates to documents for Music along with further information and guidance.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Changes to documents in August and September

As part of our agreed schedule of planned changes to documents for session 2016–17, the following documents have been revised.

National 5

Unit assessment support

Reference to the recognition and understanding of the main style of the music has been removed from the judging evidence tables. This is not required at National 5 level.

Advanced Higher

Coursework and Course and Unit Support Notes

The *Coursework Assessment Task*, *General Assessment Information* (portfolio option) and *Course and Unit Support Notes* have been updated to include clarification on what the requirements are if candidates choose to include an arrangement as part of their portfolio. Candidates must include original source materials used for their arrangement. The summary statements contained with the marking instructions have also been updated to clarify the mark ranges for the portfolio option.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheets have been updated to reflect the latest changes to documents. You can view these spreadsheets at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjectchanges

Further information and guidance

Changes to National Courses

In September 2016, the Deputy First Minister announced that unit assessments will be removed from National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses. These changes will be implemented over a three-year period and we have started to review how each course is assessed.

[Find out more about the changes to National Courses.](#)

What's next for Subject Review Reports?

Following the Scottish Government decision to make changes to unit assessment in National Courses, we are reviewing current activities with regard to the Subject Review Reports and associated guidance notes.

Completed review report actions for 2016–17 will remain. Actions for 2017–18 onwards may be cancelled or rescheduled in light of the work associated with the revisions to National Courses, especially those relating to unit assessments.

Further information and subject-specific updates will continue to be communicated via Centre News and the subject web pages.

Removal of exemplar question papers

Exemplar question papers were created as a revision resource for learners during the implementation of the new Higher and Advanced Higher National Qualifications. As we now have two years' worth of past papers for new Higher as well as a specimen question paper for each subject with an exam, the exemplar question papers will be removed from our website in the week commencing 24 October 2016. Associated guidance documents and guidance on the use of past paper questions documents will also be removed at this time.

The Advanced Higher exemplar question papers and associated guidance will remain for session 2016–17 and will be removed from the website in July 2017.

Amendments to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music Question Paper Marking Instructions for 2017 and subsequent years

There have been increased instances where long lists of unrelated concepts are being provided in answer to questions where candidates are asked to identify the prominent features in the music; this is neither the purpose of, nor in the spirit of, this type of question. Using 2016 as an example, these questions are question 8 in National 5, question 6 in Higher and question 6(a) in Advanced Higher.

Candidate responses should contain the prominent concepts under each heading relating to the music heard. From 2017 onwards, lists of concepts unrelated to the music and/or extensive lists of contradictory concepts will result in penalties being applied, as illustrated below.

Example 1

The excerpt is in 4/4 time throughout; the candidate correctly identifies this and is awarded 1 mark. If the candidate then goes on to list, eg 3/4, 6/8, 12/8 and 5/4 and these are not present in the music, a penalty of 1 mark is applied and the candidate loses the original mark awarded for this part of the question.

Example 2

The candidate correctly identifies the style of the excerpt as impressionist and is awarded 1 mark. If the candidate goes on to list, eg baroque and classical and minimalist and these are not applicable to the music heard, a penalty of 1 mark is applied and the candidate loses the original mark for this part of the question.

The Specimen Question Paper marking instructions have been updated to reflect this change.

Advanced Higher Music and Advanced Higher Music: portfolio course codes

Please note that there are **two** course codes for Advanced Higher Music:

- **C750 77 — Advanced Higher Music**
 - Candidates must be entered for this course code if they are preparing for their two instruments or one instrument and voice performing programmes to be assessed by SQA's visiting assessors between 1 and 19 May 2017.
- **C778 77 — Advanced Higher Music: portfolio**
 - Candidates must be entered for this course code if they are preparing for their composing portfolio to be externally marked by SQA. The uplift date for centres for portfolio is 12 May 2017.

All Advanced Higher Music candidates will complete the mandatory question paper and must complete the following units: H7XA 77 Music: Composing Skills (Advanced Higher), H240 77 Music: Performing Skills (Advanced Higher) and H7X9 77 Understanding and Analysing Music (Advanced Higher) in order to achieve the full course award.

Centres should check that all Advanced Higher Music candidates have been entered using the correct course code.

2016–17 Music external assessment timetable and year planner

November 2016 to December 2016	Week commencing 7 November 2016 : centres will be asked to notify SQA of the number of candidates being presented for bagpipes and pipe band drumming. SQA must be notified by 9 December 2016 .
February 2017 to March 2017	The visiting examination period (performing exams) starts on 13 February 2017 for National 5 and Higher. The visiting examination period ends on 24 March 2017 .
May 2017	The visiting examination period (performing exams) starts on 1 May 2017 for Advanced Higher Music. The visiting examination period for Advanced Higher Music ends on 19 May 2017 . Thursday 4 May 2017 (morning) Question paper examination for : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National 5 Music

	<p>Thursday 4 May 2017 (afternoon) Question paper examination for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher Music• Advanced Higher Music <p>12 May 2017 is the SQA uplift date for the Music: portfolio (X778 77). This coursework is marked by SQA.</p>
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Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject(s) and levels you are teaching. These reports are produced following the annual diet of exams and are published by the end of October. The reports provide informed and valuable commentary on the assessment for each component in the course, and include a summary of:

- candidate performance in the course assessment
- areas in which candidates performed well
- areas which candidates found demanding

The reports also contain advice on preparing future candidates, and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course Reports will be available from the relevant subject pages of our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects

Verification Key Messages

Key messages from rounds 1 and 2 of verification in session 2015–16 are available on the relevant subject pages of our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects. You can access them from the 'Verification and Course Reports' tab.

Looking ahead to session 2016–17

Marker recruitment opportunities for 2017

We are now accepting marker applications from teaching professionals to contribute to the 2017 exam diet. If you are interested in joining us as a marker, please visit the [appointee opportunities](#) section of our website where you will find a marker advert for all subjects and levels, with details of the role.

Becoming a marker helps to increase your awareness of the demands of course assessment and provides excellent professional and personal development.

Please check www.sqa.org.uk/appointees regularly for other appointee opportunities which may be of interest to you.

Understanding Standards programme

Our Understanding Standards programme will continue in the coming session and will include nominee training events, subject-specific course events and the publication of further Understanding Standards materials.

Understanding Standards course events 2016–17

We are running a programme of subject-specific Understanding Standards events from October 2016 until January 2017. These events will focus on the standards required for course assessment (question paper, performance and portfolio) at Advanced Higher.

For more information and to book your place, visit www.sqa.org.uk/ngevents. Please note that for each subject there is a maximum of one place per centre.

Understanding Standards materials

Understanding Standards materials contain real examples of candidate evidence from course and unit assessments, along with a commentary that explains why the evidence has or has not met the assessment standards. These materials are a really useful resource for helping you to strengthen your understanding of the standards required for assessment.

We will continue to publish new Understanding Standards materials throughout the coming session and you can access them from the following locations:

SQA Understanding Standards website (www.understandingstandards.org.uk)	SQA Secure website (https://secure.sqa.org.uk/secure/CFE/Understanding-Standards-Materials/Music)
Candidate evidence and commentaries for the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music question papers .	Candidate evidence and commentaries for unit assessment and the externally assessed components of course assessment (performance and portfolio).

You can arrange access to our secure website through your SQA co-ordinator. Any materials downloaded from our secure website must be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Extra support to help you deliver your courses

Continuing professional development (CPD)

We will continue to offer subject-specific CPD support at a local authority, independent school or college level, subject to request. This involves an experienced SQA appointee providing advice and guidance on any areas of concern that are not already addressed by the Understanding Standards programme.

Please note that CPD requests should be made by the appropriate representative from the local authority, independent school or college. For each request we will agree with the

representative the content to be covered and the most appropriate way to deliver the support, eg in person, by webinar or by video conference/teleconference.

CPD requests can be made at www.sqa.org.uk/cpdform

Stay informed

Subscribe to Centre News

Our weekly Centre News newsletter contains the latest news and updates for centres delivering SQA qualifications. It also includes subject-specific news and a regular reminder of key dates during the session.

To subscribe, visit <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk>

Visit your subject pages

Make sure you regularly visit your subject pages, where you can access documents and assessment support materials for your courses, Verification Key Messages and information on coursework. You will also find the latest news updates for your courses in the 'Updates and announcements' section.

Visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects

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