

Music Technology

The Qualifications Team

Daniel Beadle

Qualifications Manager

Rose Ann McIntyre

Qualifications Officer

David Bethune

Subject Implementation Manager

Changes to assessment at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher

As announced by the Deputy First Minister in September 2016, units and unit assessments are being removed from National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses on a phased basis over three years:

- National 5 from 2017–18
- Higher from 2018–19
- Advanced Higher from 2019–20

For more information, including a Q&A on the implications of these changes, please visit our website at www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges

Units that were previously part of National 5 courses

The units that were previously part of National 5 courses are now freestanding units at SCQF level 5. They can no longer be used to contribute to the achievement of a National 5 course.

We will remove all references to National 5 courses from the unit specifications, unit support notes and unit assessment support packs in due course, and the unit support notes will be added to the unit specifications as an appendix. The unit specifications will also be relocated to a new freestanding units web page for each subject.

Further information on the timescales for this will be provided in our weekly Centre News newsletter.

Changes to assessment in National 5

The National 5 Music Technology course is now assessed through the following components:

Component	Marks	Scaled marks
Question paper	40	30
Assignment	100	70

Changes to assessment in Higher courses from session 2018–19

Units and unit assessments will be removed from Higher courses from session 2018–19 and we have started our review of the Higher course assessments. For this, we are working closely with our National Qualifications Support Teams (NQSTs) for each subject. Our NQSTs include teachers and lecturers who currently deliver National Courses, and representatives of professional associations. We will also meet with a sample of teachers to gauge their views on the proposed changes and the implications of these.

The publication of new and revised Higher materials will follow a similar timescale to National 5:

End of April 2018	Revised Higher course specifications
End of May to end of September 2018	Course support notes New/revised specimen question papers New/revised coursework assessment tasks

We will provide further information on what the changes to assessment are for each subject by the end of January 2018.

Conditions of assessment for coursework

To ensure fairness for all candidates, it is essential that the specified assessment conditions for coursework are consistently applied in all centres. The following documents detail the specific conditions that must be followed in each assessment:

- course specification
- course assessment specification (Higher and Advanced Higher only)
- coursework assessment task

In addition to these documents, you must also refer to the following document, which is available from the coursework section of the National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher web pages:

- [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)
-

This document provides important information on the time and volume of assessment, the use of resources, and the supervision, control and authentication of assessment — including examples.

Changes to documents

Revised National 5 documents and assessment support materials

Following the removal of units and unit assessments from the National 5 Music Technology course, we have strengthened the course assessment to ensure it assesses the full content of the course.

We have published revised course specifications and revised assessment support materials for the National 5 course, which detail the requirements of the revised course assessments from session 2017–18 onwards. The documents are available from the National 5 subject web pages at www.sqa.org.uk/nqsubjects. Further information on the changes to documents and assessment support materials is provided below.

Course specification

In April 2017, we published a revised course specification which provided detailed information about the National 5 course and course assessment, including the conditions of assessment that must be followed. The revised document was produced by merging the previous course specifications, course assessment specifications and general assessment information into a single, streamlined document. Course support notes have been added to the course specification as an appendix.

The National 5 Music Technology course specification is available on the [National 5 Music Technology web page](#).

Specimen question paper

Ten marks were added to the Specimen Question Paper. The new questions are 4(b), 4(c), 4(d) and 6. One mark was added to question 1(d). All other questions were included in the previous version of this specimen question paper. The revised specimen question paper is available on:the [National 5 Music Technology web page](#) under the specimen question papers tab.

The audio CD containing the audio excerpts for the specimen question paper was issued to all centres week commencing 21 August 2017. Please speak to your SQA co-ordinator if this CD has not yet been received by your department.

Coursework assessment task

The assignment for National 5 Music Technology now requires candidates to complete two separate tasks, each in a different context. Each task is marked out of 50, giving a combined total out of 100. In each task candidates must demonstrate all of the following technical skills:

- Selecting and making appropriate use of at least two microphones, with placement appropriate to the sound sources.
-

-
- Selecting and making appropriate use of at least one of the following: direct line input, USB keyboard controller, MIDI controller or imported audio.
 - Successfully and safely constructing the signal path for one or more inputs.
 - Choosing and setting appropriate input gain and monitoring levels, with no distortion.
 - Applying creative/corrective equalisation.
 - Applying time domain effects and using compression or noise gate controllers.
 - Applying mixing techniques including volume, panning and fade-in/out.
 - Editing tracks (eg, to remove spillage).
 - Mixing down to an audio master in appropriate file formats.

Each production should involve a minimum of five parts, at least two of which should involve the use of a microphone. Finally, each production should be between 1 and 3 minutes long.

For sample briefs please refer to coursework assessment task document available on the [National 5 Music Technology web page](#) under the coursework tab.

Supportive resources

National 5 CPD webinars

To help teachers and lecturers prepare for the changes to assessment in the National 5 courses, we ran a series of subject-specific continuing professional development (CPD) webinars that focused on the requirements of the course assessments.

Recordings of these webinars are available to view online via the our website and can be accessed from the **CPD webinar/audio and support** tab on the [National 5 Music Technology web page](#).

Q&A document on the changes to assessment

During the question and answer section of the National 5 webinar(s), we received a number of questions about the changes to assessment. We have published a Q&A document that provides answers to the questions asked during the webinar, as well as some of the most frequently asked questions we have received from teachers and lecturers. You can access the Q&A document from the [National 5 Music Technology web page](#).

Candidate evidence and commentary materials

Candidate evidence, along with commentaries explaining the marks awarded are available for the National 5 and Higher Music Technology assignment on the SQA secure site.

Candidate evidence and commentaries for the National 5 and Higher Music Technology **question papers** are available from the [SQA Understanding Standards website](#).

Course Reports

We strongly recommend that you read the annual Course Reports for the subject 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

Common questions

The common questions documents for Music Technology will be updated and republished in November 2017. This document will be available from the [Music Technology subject page](#).

Centre News, our weekly newsletter, informs centres of the publication date for this document.

Further information and guidance

2018 Music Technology external assessment timetable and year planner

March 2018	21 March 2018 is the SQA uplift date for the National 5 Music Technology assignment. The assignment is marked by SQA.
April 2018	19 April 2018 is the SQA uplift date for the Higher Music Technology assignment. The assignment is marked by SQA.
May 2018	Thursday 10 May 2018 (morning) Question paper for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher Music Technology• National 5 Music Technology

Advanced Higher Music Technology

Following a scoping exercise, a business case has been approved to develop a new National Qualification in Music Technology at Advanced Higher level. A Qualifications Design Team (QDT) has been formed and the new qualification will be available for delivery in approved centres from August 2019.

Stay informed

Subscribe to Centre News

Our weekly Centre News newsletter contains the latest news and updates for centres delivering SQA qualifications. The newsletter is sent to your SQA co-ordinator and you can also subscribe directly at <http://mailer.sqa.org.uk/centrenews/step1>

Sign up to MyAlerts

To receive e-mail alerts when content you are interested in has been added to, or updated, on our website, subscribe to MyAlerts at www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts

Follow us online

Twitter: [@sqanews](https://twitter.com/sqanews)

Facebook: [Scottish Qualifications Authority](https://www.facebook.com/ScottishQualificationsAuthority)

LinkedIn: [Scottish Qualifications Authority](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ScottishQualificationsAuthority)

YouTube: [SQAonline](https://www.youtube.com/SQAonline)

Contact us

Please contact our Customer Support Team:

Tel: 0303 333 0330

Fax: 0345 213 5000

E-mail: mycentre@sqa.org.uk
