

## **Music with Technology**

### **The Candidate**

The candidate has cerebral palsy and very restricted movement. The candidate attends school in a wheelchair and is accompanied by a full time auxiliary, who facilitates movement around school, assists with physical tasks such as opening books, turning pages, and acts as a scribe. The candidate is in 5<sup>th</sup> year at school and has a good academic record of achievement. The candidate has chosen to study music because he enjoys it.

### **The Course**

At all NQ levels there are two routes to a whole course award in Music, *Music with Performing* and *Music with Technology*. Both courses contain the three elements of performing, composing and listening. For a candidate with restricted movement the major physical challenge lies within the performing element. In this particular case the candidate was doing Intermediate 1.

The performing element of the *Music with Performing* Course requires that the candidate prepares a programme of music on two different instruments and performs each programme to SQA's Visiting Examiner. The performing element of the *Music with Technology* Course requires that the candidate plays a programme of music on one instrument and that the centre records the programme, in exam conditions, and submits the recording to SQA for central marking.

### **The Issue**

Playing an instrument requires dexterity of movement, coordination, articulation, rhythmic and auditory awareness. Having identified that the candidate has some rhythmic and auditory awareness the music teacher searches for a suitable instrument. Voice could be a way forward but in this case the candidate also has a problem with speech.

## **The Solution**

The music department reads about The Drake Music Project on the internet and makes contact asking for a demonstration. The Drake Music Project invents enabling technology (<http://www.drakemusicproject.org>)

Together they identify appropriate software. The centre then contacts the special education department of their local authority and asks for funding to secure the technology identified to enable the candidate to access the performing element of the Course.

The software chosen allows the candidate to control a performance on computer with the use of a large mouse. The music and the accompaniment are notated into the computer by the music teacher. The candidate, through use of the mouse, taps the rhythm of the melody and the computer plays as she taps. If the candidate slows down or misses a rhythm the accompaniment and the melody also do so. The candidate is therefore totally in control of this performance. This can be compared to a performance on any instrument being accompanied by a sympathetic accompanist. The candidate can now access the performing element of this course.

## **The Assessment**

There are two areas of assessment in performance

- the level of difficulty of the music
- the level of achievement in the performance of that music

To approve the level of difficulty of piece the centre has to submit the music to the SQA who have to consider whether the piece is sufficiently demanding for the level. Given that there is no room for error in melody when performing using this software, SQA has to be satisfied that in this case the level of difficulty of the rhythm of the music is appropriate to the level. To measure the level of achievement six performance aspects can be assessed:

- Melodic accuracy/ Intonation
- Rhythmic accuracy
- Tempo & flow
- Dynamics
- Mood & Character
- Tone

In this case the two performance aspects of Rhythmic accuracy and Tempo /flow can be assessed. This is comparable to the assessment of a candidate who plays drum kit.

## **Challenges for the final exam**

The final recording of the performances in the candidate's programme should take place under exam conditions. The challenge for this candidate lies in the physical effort required to play through the programme of pieces one after the other. Therefore a short rest time between pieces is allowed as long as the pieces are performed within the one examination session, ie morning or afternoon.