



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Music
Levels	N3 to N5
Date published:	July 2014

This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2013-14.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Music
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	January 2014

National Courses/Units/Awards verified:

H23V	73	National 3: Music: Composing Skills
H23X	73	National 3: Understanding Music
H240	73	National 3: Music: Performing Skills
H23V	74	National 4: Music: Composing Skills
H23X	74	National 4: Understanding Music
H240	74	National 4: Music: Performing Skills
H242	74	National 4: Music Performance (Added Value Unit)
H23V	75	National 5: Music: Composing Skills
H23X	75	National 5: Understanding Music
H240	75	National 5: Music: Performing Skills

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Selected centres had clearly spent a great deal of careful time on assessment approaches and their submissions for verification.

In most cases, centres' approach to assessment was considered and informed, and this enabled candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in Music.

Music: Composing Skills

Evidence for the *Music: Composing Skills* Unit may be, but need not be, a complete piece(s) of music. The key focus of this Unit is the ongoing acquisition of composing skills and this can be evidenced in, for example, short sections of music.

There is no requirement for a candidate to submit a completed composition in order to pass the *Composing Skills* Unit. Smaller sections of composing work could be submitted to demonstrate the candidates' acquisition of composing skills. For further information, centres should refer to the Unit assessment support packs, where full details are given in the judging evidence tables.

Candidates' reflections should consist of comments relating to musical features of their composed sections of music, not to their experiences.

Music: Performing Skills

Candidate reflections should consist of comments relating to technical and musical features and not to pupil experiences. Please see the Unit assessment support pack for examples of appropriate responses.

Assessors comments for Assessment Standard 1.2 (candidate reflection) should be based on the quality of the candidate reflection and not simply that it has been done. Assessors should be careful to use open-ended questioning to elicit reflection from candidates. Conversely, the questioning should not be too closed or narrow as this can limit candidates to providing a 'yes' or a 'no' response.

Understanding Music

There was a wide range of assessment approaches used here, (both formative and summative), to gather evidence.

Centres should take care not to over-assess in this Unit, for example:

- ◆ taking a particular Assessment Standard and assessing this a number of times
- ◆ generating evidence for the same Assessment Standard across a number of different topics/styles/genres

The verification team were encouraged to see a range of assessment methods being used to capture naturally occurring evidence. This included presentations, small research projects, mind maps and work completed in jotters.

Assessment Standard 1.2: *Identifying and analysing the social and cultural influences that have influenced the distinctive sounds and structure of specific music styles* in the *Understanding Music* Unit at National 5 could be met in a number of ways including a small project or series of questions and need not be an extensive piece of written work.

Assessment judgements

Centres should ensure they clearly indicate which assessment decision (Pass/Fail) has been made for candidates and which Assessment Standard(s) that this applies to. Evidence should also be submitted in such a way that it is clear which Assessment Standard it supports. This can be recorded on the candidate assessment records which are available in the Unit assessment support packs.

03

Section 3: General comments

The SQA Unit assessment support packs and the judging evidence tables should be referred to when making all assessment judgements.

When submitting interim evidence for verification purposes, it is not necessary for all Assessment Standards in a Unit to have been assessed.

Centres should use the appropriate Flyleaves provided by SQA when submitting evidence for each candidate in the sample.

Centres should check recording quality when submitting audio/video evidence and ensure that the candidate being assessed can be heard clearly on the particular track.

If an audio/video recording for the *Performing Skills* Unit is not submitted, a detailed report on the candidates' performance must be included by the assessor to explain how and why assessment decisions were reached.

In the *Performing Skills* Unit, it is essential for centres to include a copy of the music to inform the verification process.

The verification process can be facilitated by presentation of materials on a USB pen drive. Electronic files containing copies of the music being played could also be included to save paper, and centres may find this easier to compile.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Music
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2014

National Courses/Units/Awards verified:

H240 73	Performing Skills (National 3)
H23V 73	Composing Skills (National 3)
H23X 73	Understanding Music (National 3)
H240 74	Performing Skills (National 4)
H23V 74	Composing Skills (National 4)
H23X 74	Understanding Music (National 4)
H242 74	Added Value Unit (National 4)
H240 75	Performing Skills (National 5)
H23V 75	Composing Skills (National 5)
H23X 75	Understanding Music (National 5)

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Generally centres have adopted a considered approach to assessment and are commended for the time and care taken in gathering evidence and making sound assessment judgements.

Understanding Music

There was a wide range of assessment tools used here to gather evidence, although most centres favoured SQA-produced Unit assessment support packages. Although this is a valid approach to assessing candidates, it was encouraging to see a range of other assessment methods being used to capture naturally-occurring evidence. This included work completed in jotters, mind maps, presentations and short research projects.

Assessment Standard 1.1

Assessment tasks should only contain content and concepts which are drawn from National 3, National 4 and National 5.

Assessment Standard 1.2

In the National 5 *Understanding Music* Unit, Assessment Standard 1.2 could be achieved by producing a small project or answering series of questions and need not be an extensive piece of written work.

Music: Composing Skills

Evidence for the *Music: Composing Skills* Unit may be, but need not be, a complete piece(s) of music. The key focus of this Unit is the ongoing acquisition of composing skills and this can be evidenced in, eg short sections or examples of music.

There is no requirement for a candidate to submit a completed composition in order to pass the *Music: Composing Skills* Unit. Smaller sections of composing work could be submitted to demonstrate the candidates' acquisition of composing skills. For further information, centres should refer to the Unit assessment support packages, where full details are given in the judging evidence tables.

Candidates' reflections should consist of comments relating to musical features of their composed sections of music and not to their experiences.

Assessment Standard 1.1

It is essential that centres provide candidate evidence for this and not just assessors comments that this has been completed.

Assessment Standards 1.2 and 1.3

It is essential that centres evidence the process involved in the acquisition and development of composing skills. This could take the form of a candidate log, an outline of tasks, a performance plan (other flexible approaches are acceptable — see Unit assessment support packages). The evidence should show the experimentation stage of the compositional process.

Assessment Standard 1.4

It is essential that assessor comments are sufficiently comprehensive to show how the assessment judgement has been reached. The assessor comment should relate directly to the quality and standard of the candidate reflection and not duplicate the assessor comment on the composing work, which relates to Assessment Standards 1.2 and 1.3.

Music: Performing Skills

For Unit assessment, the approach is distinct and different to that of Course assessment. Marks are not assigned as it is not appropriate to use the Course assessment marking instructions for Unit assessments. Centres are reminded that Assessment Standards in Units are judged on a pass/fail basis; therefore centres should avoid awarding marks. Centres should refer to the judging evidence tables and the assessor's pro forma contained in the Unit assessment support packs for *Music: Performing Skills*. Assessment judgements and comments should relate to, and be mapped against, the Assessment Standards.

Assessment Standard 1.1

- ◆ If an audio/video recording for the *Music: Performing Skills* Unit is not submitted, full details on the candidates' performance must be included by the assessor to explain how and why assessment judgements were made.
- ◆ For a completed *Music: Performing Skills* Unit, centres must submit a minimum of four examples (two on each instrument).
- ◆ For this Assessment Standard, the submission of audio or video evidence along with assessor's comments continues to be considered good practice.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that it is not necessary to send recordings of complete pieces of music, but that examples of level-specific music are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Unit.
- ◆ It is essential for centres to include a copy of the music to inform the verification process.

Assessment Standard 1.2

Assessor comments must be sufficiently comprehensive to show how the assessment judgement has been made. The assessor comments should relate directly to the quality and standard of the candidate reflection and not duplicate the assessor comment on the performance, which relates to Assessment Standard 1.1.

Candidate comments for Assessment Standard 1.2 (candidate reflection) should relate to musical aspects of their performing skills.

Assessment judgements

Centres should ensure they clearly indicate pass/fail and clearly show which Assessment Standard(s) that the assessment judgement applies to. Centres should refer to the recording documentation provided in the Unit assessment support packages for guidance on how to record this.

03

Section 3: General comments

It is essential that:

- ◆ centres clearly identify which Assessment Standards they are submitting evidence for
- ◆ assessor comments are sufficiently comprehensive to show how the assessment judgements have been made

If a centre is submitting interim evidence, it is possible for a candidate to be awarded an 'interim pass' for an Assessment Standard that hasn't yet been fully met. An example of this could be in the *Music: Performing Skills* Unit, where interim evidence consists of performing one example on each instrument which meets the standard for Assessment Standard 1.1. For complete evidence, a minimum of two examples on each instrument/voice is required.

Centres are reminded that a Unit pass is when minimum competence has been achieved.

Centres should ensure that any audio or video recording submitted as evidence is of a suitable quality for the verifier to make a verification decision. Clearly labelled materials and candidate work aids the verification process.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 3

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Music
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2014

National Courses/Units verified:

H242 74 Music Performance (National 4) Added Value Unit

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Centres are reminded that it is mandatory, for the purposes of assessing the National 4 Added Value Unit, to use the SQA Unit assessment support pack (UASP) during the first two years of delivery.

Most centres' approach to assessment was considered and enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Centres should ensure that each candidate's input is audible on the submitted recordings. Centres should sound-check their recording equipment prior to the assessment event.

Assessment Standard 1.1

Centres are encouraged to use a variety of means to generate evidence for this Assessment Standard. For example, some centres submitted mind maps which demonstrated candidates exploring the reasons behind their selection of music.

It is essential that centres provide candidate evidence for this Assessment Standard and not just assessor comments to show that this has been completed.

Assessment Standards 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4

A copy of the music (score or performance plan) must be provided and reflect the performance, eg swing rhythms or displaced octaves, and cuts made to the music.

Assessment Standard 1.5

Centres are reminded that the assessor's comment should relate to the quality of the candidate's reflection and is not another opportunity to assess the candidate's performance.

Assessment judgements

Interim evidence for the National 4 Added Value Unit is not appropriate and centres should refer to the UASP for guidance on setting the assessment.

Centres should make sure they clearly mark either Pass/Fail and communicate which Assessment Standard(s) that it applies to.

03

Section 3: General comments

Evidence submitted on a pen drive is encouraged as this aids the verification process. As well as copies of the recordings, this could also include electronic copies of the music score in PDF format if available.

Track lists should be included for all candidates. It would be helpful for centres to include timings for each individual piece.

It is essential that assessor comments are sufficiently comprehensive to show how the assessment judgement has been reached.

Clearly labelled materials and candidate work aided the verification process.

Centres should include evidence of internal verification and how this has guided the centre to reach their assessment judgements.

Candidate flyleaves should be used for all submissions.