



Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Music for the Visual Arts (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J0MS 35

Superclass: LF

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to provide learners with the skills to compose music for the visual arts. This will be achieved by learners creating a composition in response to a chosen piece of visual art and then, to critically evaluate their own work. The unit is aimed at learners who wish to develop a high level of competence in creating music for various visual arts including: moving image, electronic games, still images, sculpture, dance and theatre.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Describe visual stimuli and create initial musical response.
- 2 Compose and notate music in response to visual art.
- 3 Critically evaluate musical response to visual art.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8 (8 SCQF Credit Points at SCQF level 8)

Recommended entry to the unit

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if learners have completed, or are working towards the *Music Theory* (SCQF level 7), *Music First Study: Instrument* (SCQF level 7) or *Music First Study: Composition* (SCQF level 7) units.

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill	None
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Core Skill component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6
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There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

Context for delivery

This is an optional unit in the framework for HN Music. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Describe visual stimuli and create initial musical response.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Visual stimuli in art
- ◆ Initial musical response
- ◆ Tonality
- ◆ Timbre
- ◆ Style

Outcome 2

Compose and notate music in response to visual art.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Format of musical response
- ◆ Musical elements in composition
- ◆ Notation

Outcome 3

Critically evaluate musical response to visual art.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Environment for delivery of music and visual art
- ◆ Deployment of musical elements in composition
- ◆ Justification of musical decisions
- ◆ Effectiveness of music in response to visual art

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills across all outcomes by showing that they can:

Outcome 1

- ◆ create written evidence explaining at least three elements in the piece of visual art which illicit a musical response.
- ◆ provide a brief summary in writing of each intended musical response.

Elements can include though not be limited to: colour, mood, style, texture, character, theme, narrative or concept.

Create product evidence, responding to a piece of visual art with three musical sketches. The musical sketches will express the learner's initial responses to the piece of art through:

- ◆ tonality
- ◆ timbre
- ◆ style

Sketches can be captured by means of instrumental recordings or by using music production software. Sketches can feature acoustic, electric and/or electronic sounds. At least three sketches will be created. Suitable pieces of visual art can include, though not be limited to: moving image, electronic games, still images, sculpture, dance and theatre.

Written and/or oral evidence explaining at least three elements in visual art for musical response and a brief summary of each response is required. This will be generated under open-book conditions at appropriate points in the unit.

Product evidence of three audio sketches of musical response to these elements will also be retained in a high quality audio format for verification.

Outcome 2

Compose a piece of music in response to a chosen piece of visual art.

The piece must be a minimum of three minutes long and make effective use of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, structure, texture and timbre.

Product evidence to be retained will be:

- ◆ audio of the musical piece on a high quality format.
- ◆ notated musical score of the musical piece or a performance plan.

Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

- ◆ Create a critical evaluation in the form of a programme note which:
 - provides a title for the work
 - explains the learner's reasons for selecting the chosen compositional tools
 - justifies the choice of musical material in relation to the chosen piece of visual art
 - reflects on the environment for delivery of their music
 - critically evaluates the effectiveness of their work

Written and/or oral evidence is required to be generated under open-book conditions at appropriate points in the unit.

This unit should be assessed outcome by outcome under open-book conditions.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Music for the Visual Arts (SCQF level 8)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit has been developed as optional unit within the HN Music Group Award. The content of the unit involves the learner creating a composition to support a chosen piece of visual art after developing ideas in the form of rough sketches and critically evaluating their own work. The purpose of the unit is to allow learners to develop a high level of competence in creating music to visual art stimuli. This will enable them to develop relevant industrial skills for the roles of composer/producer of music for the visual arts including: moving image, electronic games, still images, sculpture, dance and theatre.

Outcome 1 offers learners the chance to explore their responses to a range of visual arts and they should be encouraged to look at and experiment with a variety of visual arts. During this experimentation, learners should examine their own initial emotional and intellectual responses to art. This should then be expressed with ideas about how music would express these responses. Initial responses could be written down with exercises to generate ideas which would then be filtered to find meaningful prompts to influence the direction of the musical sketches to be produced.

In Outcome 2, learners will make use of the skills they have developed in Outcome 1. By now, they should have formed an idea about what the finished piece will sound like. The finished piece in Outcome 2 can be a development of the sketches in Outcome 1, but it is not a requirement. It is more important to utilise the skills gained in Outcome 1 — recognising response and interpreting it in music.

Musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, structure, texture and timbre will be used effectively.

The ways in which melody, rhythm, harmony, structure, texture and timbre are connected to the visual art may not be immediately recognisable to the listener, but the connection can be made clear by the learner in the Outcome 3 for their programme note. In other words, it is not necessary to literally interpret each aspect of the visual art. In fact, this practice should be avoided in the interest of discouraging a clichéd musical response to the narrative of a piece of visual art. Learners should be encouraged to identify and represent their own responses rather than copying what has gone before.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Music for the Visual Arts (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 3 involves the learner critically evaluating their own work in the form of a programme note. Evaluations should go some way to explaining the learner's response to a piece of visual art and to what extent the response was effective. Learners should also use the evaluation to clarify some aspects of their response for the intended audience in case it is not immediately obvious what the connections are to the piece of visual art. Indeed, it is hoped that the connection is not too obvious from first listen as this could be the result of an over simplification of the task, for example, music that is a pastiche of a soundtrack to a famous scene from a film.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

It is important for centres to differentiate this unit from other units which are directed specifically towards film, television and gaming soundtracks. Learners should have the opportunity to explore a range of themes (covering the knowledge and skills from the unit) through experimentation with musical sketches before being assessed and a variety of visual arts should be explored. This is to encourage learners to develop a response to a variety of aspects of the visual arts and not just TV, film or game narratives. Colour, mood, style, texture, character, theme, narrative and concept should all be considered where possible and where appropriate when considering a musical response to visual art.

A learner centred, participative and practical approach should be encouraged.

Possible classroom activities for Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 could include:

- ◆ Exercises to generate ideas — individually and in groups and writing down initial thoughts and feelings about a piece of visual art. A template for this could be provided for guidance: colour, mood, style, texture, character, theme, narrative and concept, where appropriate. Individual exercise results can be private with the option of sharing to encourage free stream-of-consciousness thought.
- ◆ Research and listen to musical examples of compositions that have been written for a piece of visual art. Examples should be placed equally across a variety of art forms. Listen for ideas about how musical concepts such as melody, rhythm, harmony, structure, texture and timbre have been used effectively. Try to arrive at conclusions about what aspects of the visual art may have informed the way these musical concepts have been employed effectively.
- ◆ Using a single musical instrument — real or virtual — including voice, individuals and/or groups experiment with small melodic motifs or chords which are influenced by an aspect of a piece of visual art. Each learner could be given a different piece of visual art each time. Learners then explain the thinking behind the creation of the music and class can discuss/evaluate the effectiveness.
- ◆ Using musical instruments — real or virtual — including voice, learners experiment as with the previous exercise but this time with rhythm, timbre and texture.
- ◆ Video and real-life master classes by established composers could be included in the teaching programme to encourage and inspire learners and to show them what can be achieved.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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In Outcome 3, learners produce a critical evaluation which gives reasons for selecting the chosen compositional tools and justifies the choice of musical material in relation to the chosen piece of visual art in the form of a programme note. Learners should reflect on the environment for delivery of their music and critically evaluate the effectiveness of their work.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

This unit should be delivered using a learner-centred approach. For Outcomes 1 and 2, delivery should be sufficiently flexible to allow learners to select a preferred visual art stimulus and choose compositional tools relevant to the medium. Tutors will facilitate, observe and support learner progress. The unit is sufficiently flexible to allow learners to work with any preferred musical genre.

Outcome 1 requires three musical sketches to be retained on a high quality format.

Outcome 2 requires audio evidence to be retained in a high quality format and a musical score of the finished piece. Musical score can be produced in a variety of ways including the use of score editing software or hand written score. If the score has been auto-generated, for example, by capturing MIDI information using a digital audio workstation and converting to score then this score will be acceptable if musically correct and is able to be read and performed by a musician. It is common when creating a score in this way that unrealistic durations of notes and rests may be created, that were not intended by the composer or that inappropriate note ranges may be created with ledger lines outside a range considered realistic for a musician to read and perform. In this case it would be expected that some pre-processing would be undertaken to produce readable score. In the example described, it would be appropriate to quantise manually entered information and make appropriate use of the *octave* direction.

Outcome 3 requires learners to complete a written assignment or to deliver an oral presentation that demonstrates critical evaluation of their work in the form of a programme note.

Centres must take steps to ensure the authenticity of learners' work.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

During this unit, there will be opportunities for learners to develop Core and essential skills such as *Communication*, *Working with Others*, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Problem Solving*. In addition, broader skills such as critical listening skills, employability, enterprise and sustainable development may be developed throughout this unit.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when learners achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 embedded.	31/08/18

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General information for learners

Unit title: Music for the Visual Arts (SCQF level 8)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This unit is designed to give you the opportunity to develop your composition skills with particular focus on composing music for the visual arts. The term 'visual art' encompasses a wide range of media including moving image, electronic games, still images, sculpture, dance and theatre.

You can choose any visual art of your preference and compose music in any style you wish.

There are three outcomes in this unit:

- 1 Describe visual stimuli and create initial musical response.
- 2 Compose and notate music in response to visual art.
- 3 Critically evaluate musical response to visual art.

Outcome 1 offers you the chance to explore your responses to a range of visual arts. You will be encouraged to look at and experiment with a variety of visual arts and not just film, television and gaming. You will then produce three musical sketches based as a response to a chosen piece of visual art.

In Outcome 2, you will make use of the skills you have developed in Outcome 1 to produce a musical composition in response to a piece of visual art. The finished piece in Outcome 2 can be a development of the sketches from Outcome 1, but it is not a requirement.

Musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, structure, texture and timbre will be used effectively. This means that:

- 1 The use of each of these musical tools will be demonstrated within the music.
- 2 Their use will be connected to the visual art in some way.

Outcome 3 involves critical evaluation of your own work. You will create a programme note that explains your response to a piece of visual art and reflects on the environment for delivery of their music, in case it is not immediately obvious what the connections are to the piece of visual art.

During this unit, there will be opportunities for you to develop Core and essential skills such as *Communication*, *Working with Others*, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Problem Solving*. In addition, broader skills such as critical listening skills, employability, enterprise and sustainable development may be developed throughout this unit.

You are encouraged to employ the terminology, musical features and devices studied in the *Music Theory* (SCQF level 7) and *Music Theory* (SCQF level 8) unit which provide underpinning knowledge for this unit.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when you achieve the Unit, your Core Skills profile will also be updated to show you have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6.