



National Units, Higher National, and Graded Units

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2018

Music Business

Introduction

External verification activity took place in Music Business across National Units, Higher National Units and Graded Units. Based on the sample selected for this session's verification visits, the standard has remained consistent with the initial outcome of most visits being successful.

All centres in the verification sample delivering the Higher National (HN) in Music Business and National Qualifications (NQ) in Music Business are providing engaging, realistic assessment activity for candidates, and candidates have access to significant industry expertise while undertaking their qualification. In many cases, assessors and tutors delivering the qualifications are creating opportunities and access to contacts above and beyond the scope of the qualification.

Across all centres verified, there were robust recruitment and support measures in place with staff going to considerable lengths to ensure that the course is suitable for candidates, and then providing support for candidates while undertaking the qualifications. In most centres visited, internal assessment and verification is being implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment. In most centres visited, it was clear that valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair assessments are being used, and candidates' work is being judged consistently against SQA's requirements. In all centres, evidence is being retained in line with SQA requirements, and the outcome of the verification visits are being disseminated to staff to inform future assessment practice. Where issues were found on verification visits, the issues were addressed for the return visit.

The units verified this session were:

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| FT2D 12 | Intellectual Property |
| F8LG 12 | Music: Management in the Music Industry |
| F8LF 12 | Music: Promotion in the Music Industry |
| DR34 35 | Music Business: Graded Unit 2 |
| DJ2P 34 | Music Industry Marketing 1 |
| DR15 35 | Music Industry Stage Management |
| DJ2V 34 | Music Law 1 |

Category 2: Resources

Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.

In the verification sample, in most centres there were effective initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning, and assessment materials. This was reflected in a diverse range of engaging, realistic assessments provided for candidates undertaking the NQ and the HN in Music Business, and in some cases the opportunity, facilitated through careful planning, to interact with musicians and sound production students while undertaking assessed activities. Centres used a range of review methods, with most employing regular minuted meetings discussing resources for assessment. In some cases, much of the review was undertaken during an annual review meeting.

There was a recommendation that where online assessments are used, pre-delivery reviews should review the effectiveness of the online delivery of this unit.

Category 3: Candidate support

Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.

Across all centres verified, candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) were matched against the requirements of the award. All centres verified were consistently thorough and went beyond what was expected to ensure appropriate candidates were recruited for the award. Most centres allocated considerable time to interview candidates for the award.

There were no recommendations or actions relating to this criterion.

Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.

In most centres in the verification sample, candidates had regular scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise plans accordingly. In most centres, feedback was thorough, precisely targeted to the requirements of the qualification and candidate development and this feedback was formalised. In all centres there was evidence of a range of suitable feedback to candidates — delivered orally and in writing, in person and online.

Good practice was observed in some centres where feedback was detailed, comprehensive, and where the feedback had been documented.

In a few cases, there was a recommendation to record that the candidate had received the feedback, and there was also a reminder that it is worth including encouraging feedback when the candidate has met all requirements.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.

In most centres, assessors and verifiers were implementing their centre procedures to ensure standardisation of assessment. Where assessors and verifiers were fully implementing their centre assessment and verification procedures, there were no issues identified on the verification visit. It is worth reminding centres that robust internal verification usually results in successful initial outcomes from external verification.

There were a few instances of good practice observed in the implementation of internal assessment and verification. Good practice was observed in Music Business: Graded Unit 2, with evidence being cross-marked to ensure that marking and grading was consistent.

There were a few recommendations that comments made by internal verifiers could be more focussed on the unit requirements and the extent to which assessment materials and evidence meets these requirements, rather than general positive and negative expressions. Comments by internal verifiers that directly address the extent to which the standard has been met will support to make more accurate assessment judgements.

It is worth reminding centres to revisit centre-devised assessment guidelines and check these are aligned with the unit specification — particularly when there have been any updates to the unit specification, although again, there were very few visits in the verification sample that required this recommendation.

Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

On most visits, centres demonstrated the effective selection and use of assessment methods and instruments to ensure validity, equitability, and fairness in assessment.

In all of the verification samples, where SQA-devised assessment support packs (ASPs) are in place, these were being used effectively, ensuring that national standards were being met. In cases where there were no SQA-devised assessment materials available, in most of the samples for verification, suitable centre-devised materials had been created. Across the units sampled, a diverse range of engaging assessment materials had been devised, creating opportunities for creating promotional materials for an artist, staging, and promoting events in collaboration with musical artists and sound engineers. Through assessment for Music Business: Graded Unit 2, opportunity has been created for candidates to match their skills to a particular area of the music business, in preparation for employment.

There were more than a few recommendations relating to assessment instruments and methods, and their selection and use. In Music Business: Graded Unit 2, it was recommended that a greater degree of standardisation could be achieved in the interview by using a pre-prepared pool of questions for each brief. It was also recommended that in units such as Music Industry Marketing 1 (DJ2P 34) where candidates must create materials in response to a brief,

that providing candidates with a choice of projects may result in evidence that is easier to authenticate and which more succinctly meets SQA requirements. It was also recommended that, where possible, the same assessment instrument be used cross campus — this may help with standardisation.

Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate’s own work, generated under SQA’s required conditions.

In most centres verified, the centre processes and procedures for ensuring authenticity were being observed. In most of the verification samples, assessors and verifiers were proactively taking steps to ensure the authenticity of the candidate evidence presented. Some centres had a robust range of measures in place for ensuring authenticity: from candidate declarations for independently generated work through to using online plagiarism detection software. Much of the evidence contributing to the qualification is highly personal to the candidate, and further, is often generated while being mentored by the assessor, so it is straightforward to ensure that this work is the candidate’s own.

There were more than a few recommendations relating to authenticity and these recommendations centred on two pieces of advice. The first was that if candidate declarations are used, this actively encourages the candidate to consider the authenticity of their work and take responsibility. The second was that, although performing internet searches can detect issues with authenticity, plagiarism detection software can detect similarities between class groups or across year groups — this is much more effective and less time-consuming for assessors.

In addition to this, it is worth reminding centres that when using online assessments, care must be taken to ensure that robust measures are in place to ensure that suitable conditions, in line with SQA requirements, are adhered to.

Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates’ work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA’s requirements.

On most verification visits, centres were found to have made accurate and consistent assessment judgements, ensuring the integrity of the qualification. Some high-quality work was observed in the Music Business: Graded Unit 2 evidence presented, with candidates displaying sophisticated application of skills and knowledge gained through undertaking the HN in Music Business. It is clear that work being produced in support of the qualification is also developing candidate skills and materials to help access higher education and employment.

Further evidence of good practice was observed on Music Business: Graded Unit 2 verification visits, where, in addition to cross-marking of the graded unit, the centre had captured the marking/grading discussion for future use and as evidence of accurate and consistent judging of candidate evidence. This also provided the external verifier with clear justification of all marks allocated.

In Music Business Graded Unit 2 there were recommendations to focus on the interview and the presentation as the output of the graded unit, rather than the project undertaken that the

materials presented come from. There were further recommendations to use specific job briefs/opportunities for the candidates to respond to, rather than generic roles as this will allow candidates the opportunity to select and apply specific knowledge from their course in context. It was recommended that Gantt charts, or equivalent, be used to represent timescales in the graded units for the HN in Music Business to reflect business practice.

When creating marking guidelines for centre-devised assessments, it was recommended not to use actual candidate submissions unless these are annotated to show how they have met the standard.

Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.

On all verification visits, centres had retained candidate work and all requested evidence in line with SQA requirements. On almost all visits, evidence was well-organised, clearly laid out and easy to navigate — this clearly reflected the organised approach to delivery and assessment, and it is recognised that additional work is required by centres to logically present work for external verification. There was a recommendation that should there be any difficulty in providing work requested, that this is identified beforehand.

Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

In all centres in the verification sample, centres were effectively disseminating the feedback from qualification verifiers to affirm what is being done well and to address any issues or highlight areas to be improved. All centres had clear processes for this, and on most visits it was possible to observe that previous recommendations had been acted upon.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following examples of good practice were reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ use of high-quality resources and industry experienced staff in most centres
- ◆ significant time was devoted to candidate recruitment by staff
- ◆ cases of detailed, highly accurate, targeted candidate feedback
- ◆ cross-marking of Music Business: Graded Unit 2 to ensure consistency
- ◆ professional dialogue and marking/grading decisions in graded unit were captured
- ◆ highly engaging assessment materials and activity
- ◆ high quality candidate work in some instances of Music Business: Graded Unit 2

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ consistency of feedback to candidates and tracking of feedback
- ◆ ensuring online assessment has robust measures are in place to ensure suitable conditions of assessment
- ◆ consistent use of assessment guidelines — SQA-published ASPs for the new HN qualification will support this
- ◆ ensuring that internal verification focuses on the extent to which the national standard is being met
- ◆ use of plagiarism-detection software and candidate declarations for independent work
- ◆ a greater focus on creating job briefs/opportunities for the candidates to respond to in graded units, rather than generic roles, which will allow candidates a maximum opportunity to select and apply specific knowledge from their course in context