



Questions & Answers

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music Overview of course assessment

1 Assignment

Can candidates use sample rhythm banks provided by a teacher?

For teaching and learning purposes only, it is acceptable for teachers to provide candidates with, for example, accompaniment patterns, bass lines or rhythm banks. However, as the assignment is an assessment and not a learning and teaching exercise, candidates should then create their own individual compositions.

Candidates should not select, copy and paste musical ideas provided by their teacher or lecturer into their composition. There is information in the newly updated teachers and lecturers' section of the coursework assessment task documents which details this.

Is it appropriate for an Advanced Higher candidate to compose for a single line instrument for example, an Impressionist solo flute piece?

No, this would not be appropriate as it would not meet the requirements to include harmony at Advanced Higher or Higher. Implied harmony is not sufficient.

If a candidate further develops a composition that they created for a previous level is this classed as an arrangement?

This approach would not be classed as an arrangement.

Although not recommended practice, a candidate could use a previous assignment submission as a starting point or stimulus, but they must rework it. It is not possible to submit the same assignment. This is the same policy for all subjects with coursework. It is also important to note that there are distinct differences in terms of challenge and difficulty between SCQF levels.

A candidate's coursework will be assessed against the criteria for the level that they are being presented for. For example, for Higher Music, compositions must use harmony.

Using a previous assignment submission as a starting point may also limit creativity for candidates. For example, if progressing from National 5 to Higher Music, it is hoped that candidates will have acquired new skills as part of learning and teaching at the start of their Higher course that they can deploy in the composing assignment.

Will there be an option to upload the assignment and related documents this year?

Work is currently underway to explore the possibility of this. At this time, it is not possible to confirm this for this session. If this system becomes available, centres will be notified. SQA are aware of the advantages for centres of making this service available for the Music assignment.

2 Advanced Higher Portfolio

If an Advanced Higher candidate wishes to submit a composition portfolio in place of performing on a second instrument, how many compositions should they produce and are there rules around length? Should they contrast in style?

If candidates undertake the portfolio option, they must complete the requirements for the assignment and the portfolio.

For the portfolio, compositions or arrangements may be in any style or genre. The total duration of the portfolio must last a minimum of 6 minutes and a maximum of 8 minutes.

Portfolio candidates must:

- ◆ create a minimum of two complete pieces of music
- ◆ must not submit the same pieces of music for the assignment and the portfolio
- ◆ write a review for each piece
- ◆ must also complete the requirements for the assignment (one composition or arrangement, review, and analysis)

For more information about the assignment and portfolio, please refer to the Advanced Higher Music course specification and course assessment task documents available from the Advanced Higher Music webpage <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/48450.html>

3 Performance

How do you get an enrolment key for the SQA Academy NQ Performance Assessment course?

There is no enrolment key; this is a self-enrolment course.

This course is available from the SQA Academy webpage <https://www.sqaacademy.org.uk>. Select – Centres > National Qualifications > NQ Music Performance Assessment

Does a centre need to notate alternative notes for a verse when the score has first verse and lyrics only?

Centres should annotate the music to reflect what the candidate performs.

For a mixed melodic and chordal guitar programme, must candidates fulfil the chordal requirements for that level?

The full chordal requirements for each level must be in the programme.