



Arrangements for:
**SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical
Theatre**
at SCQF level 7
Group Award Code: GP2P 47

Date of publication: August 2018

Version: 01

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below.

Version number	Description	Date

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

Further information

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Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority
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1 Introduction

This is the arrangements document for the SQA Advanced group award in Musical Theatre. This document includes: background information on the development of the group award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the group award structure, and guidance on delivery.

2 Rationale for the group award

The SQA Advanced Certificate group award in Musical Theatre is designed to equip candidates with the knowledge, understanding and skills required for success in the performing arts and/or to pursue professional qualifications in musical theatre.

2.1 Target groups

The SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre is aimed at those who have some previous experience of theatre arts and performance — perhaps through a lower-level course or interest developed in youth theatre or amateur dramatics — or who show potential, and demonstrate a strong interest in performance and seek to develop their skills in order to progress to higher institutions. Candidates must fulfil the audition criteria of particular centres.

2.2 Relationship to other SQA qualifications

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) has been given all due consideration in the design of this award. This has resulted in the SQA Advanced Certificate being broadly equivalent to the first year of a Scottish degree. All units have been allocated a SCQF level; SQA Advanced Certificate being level 7.

The award allows progression from school or college qualifications equivalent to RQF/CQFW level 3, and can lead to entry to degree courses by audition. For more information, please see the table [comparing RQF/CQFW/SCQF qualification levels](#) on our website.

2.3 Progression routes and onward destinations

The Qualification Design Team has been fully aware of the need for these qualifications to contain relevant technical and transferable skills to enable immediate entry to employment, whilst at the same time allowing articulation to degree courses.

Some of the onward destinations of candidates are:

- ◆ entry to year 3 of degree at Sunderland University
- ◆ entry to year 3 of degree at Hull University
- ◆ entry to year 3 of degree at Doncaster College
- ◆ Arts Educational, London
- ◆ Guildford School of Musical Theatre
- ◆ Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts
- ◆ Royal Academy of Music and Drama, London
- ◆ Central School of Speech and Drama
- ◆ University of Surrey
- ◆ Strathclyde University
- ◆ Glasgow University
- ◆ London School of Musical Theatre
- ◆ Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama
- ◆ Queen Margaret's University College
- ◆ The Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- ◆ Dartington College
- ◆ Vocaltech, London
- ◆ film and TV productions
- ◆ theatre companies
- ◆ commercial and corporate enterprises

Entry to degree and post-graduate level courses in performing arts subjects is usually by audition only, therefore formal articulation routes do not exist.

3 Aims of the group award

3.1 General aims of the group award

The SQA Advanced Certificate has a range of general aims, as well as some specific aims.

The general aims are to:

- ◆ develop communication and interpersonal skills
- ◆ develop candidates' skills as actors and performers
- ◆ develop self-presentation skills
- ◆ develop self-evaluative skills, enabling professional development
- ◆ develop analytical skills
- ◆ develop the ability to work independently
- ◆ develop the confidence to perform to potential
- ◆ develop professional attitudes
- ◆ enhance employment prospects and/or facilitate progression to higher education
- ◆ enable progress within the SCQF

3.2 SQA Advanced Certificate specific aims

The specific aims of the SQA Advanced Certificate are to develop candidates':

- 1 singing, acting, voice, and dance
- 2 ability to integrate these skills in performance
- 3 skills in working with text and music
- 4 innovative and creative approaches to work in rehearsal and performance
- 5 co-operative team working skills
- 6 adaptability
- 7 understanding of theatre practice
- 8 ability to respond to direction
- 9 exploration and development of an awareness of the self

Other key aims are to:

- 10 prepare candidates to audition for employment and places at higher education establishments
- 11 prepare candidates for progression to further study
- 12 develop candidates as performers and to meet the needs of the labour market

3.3 Realisation of aims by unit and award

General aims

Performance skills are developed in the vast majority of individual units, most of which require a final demonstration of skills before the assessor and possibly an appropriate audience. This regular requirement for formal and less formal presentation will develop an awareness of how to improve self-presentation as well as building candidates' confidence.

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Self-evaluative skills are developed through an integrated approach to evaluation. Various SQA Advanced Certificate units require regular entries into a personal progress record, and/or an evaluation report, which will be monitored and assessed on a regular basis. This will provide candidates with the skills and discipline necessary to identify areas of strength and weakness in their performance, and an opportunity to produce strategies and targets for improvement.

We recognise that formal qualifications can be less important than demonstrable talent in the performing arts sector. Moreover, the nature of the employment market is such that performers are very often self-employed, or employed for short periods on specific projects. To gain such employment, the appropriate characteristics and aptitudes must be proven on demand. The courses have therefore been designed to reflect the unusual nature of the jobs market for performers by integrating skills in graded units based on an audition.

SQA Advanced Certificate specific aims

The specific aims for the SQA Advanced Certificate are numbered 1–12 above (3.2). The table below shows how each of the units meets the specific aims of the group award.

Unit/Aim	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Acting 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Singing Skills 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vocal Techniques 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Performance 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dance units	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Graded Unit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4 Access to the group award

As with all SQA qualifications, access will be at the discretion of the centre and the following recommendations are for guidance only.

Potential candidates may demonstrate suitability for the group award by possessing any of the following:

- ◆ a lower-level qualification in drama, dance or music
- ◆ relevant industrial experience
- ◆ evidence of appropriate practical skills at audition

Formal academic achievements will not, in themselves, represent adequate course entry criteria. A more accurate prediction of candidate attainment may be achieved through appraisal, which includes an element of guidance. This will include a formal audition, in which interviewees offer prepared speeches/monologues, songs, participation in a dance workshop or evidence of relevant experience. This sort of contact will enable an appropriately subtle and realistic assessment of suitability for the course.

Academic staff with experience in course tutorship, student counselling, advice and guidance, work placement, and post-qualification career monitoring may also conduct a pre-entry guidance interview.

This informally structured, adaptive interview process will allow the prospective student to form a realistic perception of the course and its demands in terms of workload, content, and assessment methods. This will improve retention and allow for earlier career planning and development.

5 Group award structure

SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre — 12 mandatory credits.

5.1 Framework

SQA Advanced Certificate mandatory units

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1	J1C8 47	8	7	1
Singing Skills for Musical Theatre 1	J1C6 47	24	7	3
Acting 1: Developing Skills	J1C5 47	16	7	2
Performance 1: Developing Skills for Musical Theatre	J1C7 47	24	7	3
Ballet for Musical Theatre	J1C9 47	8	7	1
Jazz Dance for Musical Theatre	J1CA 47	8	7	1
Musical Theatre: Graded Unit 1	J1CB 47	8	7	1

5.2 Graded units

The purpose of the graded unit is to assess the candidates' ability to retain and integrate the knowledge and/or skills gained in the units, to demonstrate they have achieved the principal aims of the group award, and to grade candidate achievement.

Candidates will undertake one graded unit at level 7 for the SQA Advanced Certificate.

The SQA Advanced Certificate Graded Unit will be a project in the form of a practical assignment. Candidates will prepare and present an audition consisting of a monologue and a song with movement in order to synthesise knowledge and skills acquired throughout the SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre.

Centres should have assessment materials verified prior to assessment dates.

5.3 Rationale for graded unit assessments

The most common method of gaining employment as a performer is through audition and interview. This is also the case in progressing on to higher education in the field of performing arts.

The graded units will provide an ideal opportunity for candidates to integrate the knowledge and skills gained in the mandatory units in the form of an audition, and prepare them for a professional audition.

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5.4 Core skills

The importance of the core skills has been recognised and these are developed throughout the award. It should be noted that, although there is mandatory entry on exit levels, the recommended core skills would be as detailed in the following table.

Core skills — SQA Advanced Certificate

Core skill	Recommended entry level	Recommended exit level
Written Communication	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Oral Communication	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Numeracy	None specified	None specified
ICT	None specified	None specified
Problem Solving	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Working with Others	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5

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SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre core skills development

Title	Code	Problem solving	Working with others	Communication	Numeracy	ICT
Vocal Techniques 1	J1C8 47	✓		✓		
Singing Skills for Musical Theatre 1	J1C6 47	✓		✓		
Acting 1: Developing Skills	J1C5 47	✓	✓	✓		✓
Performance 1: Developing Skills for Musical Theatre	J1C7 47	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ballet for Musical Theatre 1	J1C9 47	✓	✓			
Jazz Dance for Musical Theatre 1	J1CA 47	✓	✓			
Musical Theatre: Graded Unit 1	J1CB 47	✓		✓		✓

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

6.1 Content and context

The SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre is a specialised award, which allows candidates to gain skills and knowledge in the core performance areas of singing, acting, voice and dance, and to integrate these in performance. The award is aimed at those who wish to embark on a career as a musical theatre performer and who wish to develop the necessary skills to progress to further training or employment.

The SQA Advanced Certificate in Musical Theatre allows candidates to progress to a range of study options, including higher education.

Although units are designed to be delivered as part of the group award it is possible for them to be delivered as standalone qualifications.

6.2 Delivery and assessment

The curriculum has been designed to provide a balance between awareness and understanding of the musical theatre profession, and the role and application of performance skills within the context of integrated productions.

Centres can choose the order in which to teach the units within the award, however it is essential that singing, acting, voice, and dance skills are embarked upon before production is delivered. In all cases it is important that the mandatory units have been delivered before the graded units are assessed, although in some centres some elements of the mandatory units may be delivered concurrently with the graded units. A more holistic approach to assessment is encouraged.

There is opportunity to integrate some assessments across units — particularly in performance elements of singing, voice, acting, and dancing, which may be integrated in performance. The logistics of this will depend on the programme in individual centres.

Unit specifications detail exactly the evidence requirements and assessment guidelines for each assessment event. Should centres wish to use a different mode of assessment from the recommendation they should seek prior verification from SQA. No exemplar assessment instruments will be produced at present for this award.

6.3 Open learning

Opportunities for distance learning are highlighted within the unit specifications in which they are feasible for some outcomes. The majority of outcomes rely, however, on developing performance skills in the presence of a lecturer and/or other candidates. Group work and workshop activities underpin much of the learning, and so the opportunities for distance learning are very limited. Centres may, however, find it possible to develop solutions for all or parts of some units, provided all unit evidence requirements and verification requirements are met in full. Technological advances may make the possibility of such creative solutions more widespread in the future.

Because of the intensive nature of the training and the rehearsal requirements for many units, part-time provision would be most unusual and difficult to achieve.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have 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.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this group award should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in SQA's *Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk).

8 General information for candidates

This award has been designed to help candidates progress to higher education or to prepare them for a career in the performing arts industry. Former candidates have progressed to a wide range of advanced courses at both degree and post-graduate level in the fields of musical theatre, acting, and dance. Candidates will be able to investigate career opportunities in musical theatre, cruise ships, cabaret, summer seasons, pantomime, theatre, and within the popular music industry.

The course will allow candidates to develop:

- ◆ skills in singing, acting, voice, and dance
- ◆ the ability to integrate these skills in performance
- ◆ an innovative and creative approach to work in rehearsal and performance
- ◆ an understanding of theatre practice
- ◆ audition skills either for employment or for places at higher education establishments

The award places great emphasis on the development of practical skills and the ability to apply these skills to performance. There is also opportunity for candidates to develop personal and interpersonal skills through both individual and group rehearsal and assessment.