



# **Arrangements for: HNC Technical Theatre**

**Group Award Code: G8Y4 15**

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## **Acknowledgement**

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

## 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
05	<b>Revision of Unit:</b> H1FS 34 Manage Operational Resources (finish date 31/07/2021) has been replaced by J1BY 34 Manage Operational Resources (start date 01/08/2018)	31/08/18
04	Revision of Unit: DV0M 34 Work Experience has been replaced by HJ4W 34 Work Placement and will finish on 31/07/19 for HNC Framework only.	30/03/17
03	Changes to codes: <i>Digital Audio Workstations 1</i> from DJ23 34 (lapse date 31/07/2012, finish date 31/07/2014) to H1M4 34*. <i>Sound Production: Sound Reinforcement 1</i> from DJ38 34 (lapse date 31/07/2012, finish date 31/07/2014) to H1LY 34*. <i>Manage Operational Resources</i> from DV7X 34 (lapse date 31/07/2013, finish date 31/07/2015) to H1F5 34*.	07/08/12
02	New Arrangements Document shell.	21/10/11

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# 1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the revised HNC in Technical Theatre, which was validated in March 2008. 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 revision of the Group Award

The revised HNC in Technical Theatre (G8Y4 15) replaces a previous Award, namely HNC Production and Technical Theatre (G1B9 15).

The HNC was revised for the following reasons:

- ◆ to improve possible approaches to learning and teaching, including better opportunities for integration and project work
- ◆ to ensure consistency of approach and parity of demand and across all mandatory and optional Units
- ◆ new Units and radical reworking of old Units were identified, as needed, to reflect current industrial practice and new technologies
- ◆ the need to rationalise the award to avoid repetition and over-assessment

### 2.1 Market research

Since HNCs in this area have been offered since 1990, these have grown in popularity. It is envisaged that the revised Group Award will be delivered by a number of education colleges across Scotland, covering a wide geographical area. It has been well established in the national press and via the professional industry that there is a major shortage of theatrical technicians. As a result of questionnaires and discussions with professional organisations and individuals, this revised HNC has addressed what is required by the industry

#### **Number of candidate entries per year.**

Each delivering college admitted approximately 18 candidates per year onto the previous HNC. The same number was also admitted onto NQ courses in a similar area (which progressed on to the HNC). There was an increase in the number of colleges offering the Group Award, from one college in the early 1990s, to five colleges offering the Group Award from 2006.

Extensive consultation was carried out at all stages of the review process to ascertain the relevance of the framework and the individual Units. The findings were then considered during the subsequent development of the framework and Unit structure and content.

The consultation involved:

- ◆ centres offering the previous HNC Production and Technical Theatre Group Award
- ◆ employers and industry bodies in the field of performing arts and technical theatre
- ◆ candidates who had recently completed the previous award
- ◆ higher education institutions to which successful candidates could articulate
- ◆ current candidates on the previous Group Award
- ◆ current candidates articulating from the previous Group Award

The consultation confirmed the usefulness of the HNC to candidates entering the profession or higher education. Employers also recognised the multi skilled aspects of the award.

Some weaknesses were highlighted in aspects of the previous Group Award, and these have been addressed in the revised framework. For example, it was decided that the predecessor Group Award was out of date in many areas including:  
techniques, equipment detail and emphasis.

Successful elements of the previous Group Award have been retained, whilst opportunities have been provided to reflect the demands of employers and users of the revised HNC. The revised Group Award reflects the skills most in demand for technical theatre practitioners in the theatre/performance industry today.

The revised HNC framework has 10 mandatory SQA credits, 2 optional. The mandatory credits represent the importance of an overall general knowledge in established technical theatre practises, relevant to gaining employment as a theatre technician. An emphasis has been placed on practical, group and project work to reflect the needs of the industry.

A range of new Unit specifications have also been developed for the revised Group Award. New Units have also been created to allow the introduction of the 'digital element' being introduced into theatre (ie sound and video). A lot of important technical theatre protocol has now been grouped together and written into a new Stage Management Unit, entitled *Stage Management* F389 34 and subjects such as set construction and painting have been re-defined and given a new slant on practical skills. Other new Units have been created within an optional category which allows delivering colleges' flexibility to suit their own, and their candidates' needs.

The structure of the revised HNC will allow the delivering college flexibility and choice of what it can, and should deliver. It was also decided to include some specialist Units within the structure to allow each college to retain current 'specialist areas' if need be. This will allow centres to specialise in particular areas like stage design, theatrical multimedia and film or props and costume design, as some colleges have done in the past, and may continue to do.

### **3 Aims of the Group Award**

#### **3.1 General aims of the Group Award**

The HNC award has a range of general aims and specific aims. The general aims are:

- 1 To develop communication and interpersonal skills.
- 2 To develop candidates' team work skills.
- 3 To develop self-presentation skills.
- 4 To develop self-evaluative skills, enabling professional development.
- 5 To develop research and analytical skills.
- 6 To develop adaptability.
- 7 To develop the ability and confidence to work independently.
- 8 To develop professional attitudes.
- 9 To enhance employment prospects and/or facilitate progression to Higher Education.
- 10 To enable progress within the SCQF.
- 11 To develop Core Skills.

#### **3.2 Specific aims of the Group Award**

To develop the following areas of knowledge and skills:

- 12 Stage management, lighting, sound and set construction.
- 13 The ability to integrate these skills.
- 14 Working with tools and manual handling.
- 15 Working with electricity.
- 16 Understanding and analysis of relevant health and safety procedures.
- 17 An innovative and creative approach to work in the technical theatre areas.
- 18 An understanding of theatre practice.
- 19 The ability to respond to direction.
- 20 To develop candidates as technicians to meet the needs of the labour market and prepare them for employment in the industry.

#### **3.3 Target groups**

The revised Group Award is designed for those who wish to pursue a career in Technical Theatre and seek the relevant training within the industry field. The HNC is aimed to attract the following candidates:

- ◆ those who have completed an NC or NPA in technical theatre
- ◆ those with previous experience of technical theatre who require a formal qualification
- ◆ those with a lower level course or interest, developed through amateur dramatics or youth theatre
- ◆ those who show potential and demonstrate a strong interest in technical theatre
- ◆ those who want to increase their qualifications and progress onto Higher Education or employment

All candidates must fulfil the entrance criteria of particular delivering centres.

### 3.4 Employment opportunities

In designing the award, the QDT have been fully aware of the need for the qualification to contain relevant technical and transferable skills to enable immediate entry to employment whilst at the same time allowing articulation to degree courses. Successful candidates would be expected to gain employment opportunities as theatre lighting and sound technicians, stage managers, and general theatre technicians.

## 4 Access to 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 HNC Technical Theatre by possessing any of the following:

- ◆ relevant Units from an appropriate programme of study
- ◆ two Highers
- ◆ relevant industrial experience

Formal academic achievements may 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 is very likely to include a formal interview, in which interviewees show relevant experience and enthusiasm for the subject areas. This sort of contact should enable an appropriately subtle and realistic assessment of suitability for the course and allow candidates with relevant work experience the chance to gain a place on the course.

An additional guidance interview may also be conducted by academic staff with experience in course tutorship, candidate counseling, advice and guidance, work placement and post-qualification career monitoring.

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

The recommended Core Skills entry levels (shown in the table below) are SCQF level 4 for all five Core Skills, namely *Communication*, *Numeracy*, *IT*, *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*.

Core Skill	Recommended Entry level
Communication	SCQF level 4
Numeracy	SCQF level 4
IT	SCQF level 4
Problem Solving	SCQF level 4
Working with Others	SCQF level 4



## 5 Group Award structure

### 5.1 Framework

For a candidate to achieve the HNC Technical Theatre, they must attain all of the Mandatory Units (10 Unit credits/80 SCQF credit points), including one Graded Unit at SCQF level 7, and optional Units worth 2 Unit credits/16 SCQF credit points.

#### HNC Mandatory Units

Unit title	Code	SQA credit value	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
Stage Management	F389 34	3	24	7
Stage Lighting: Rigging, Focusing and Operation	F388 34	2	16	7
Technical Theatre: Sound	F38E 34	2	16	7
Technical Theatre: Set Construction and Painting	F38D 34	2	16	7
Technical Theatre: Graded Unit 1	F3NN 34	1	8	7

#### HNC Optional Units

Unit title	Code	SQA credit value	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
Technical Theatre: Lighting Design for Performance	F38A 35	2	16	8
Technical Theatre: Props for Theatre Production	F38B 34	1	8	7
Technical Theatre: Score Reading	F38C 34	1	8	7
Technical Theatre: Stage Design	F386 34	2	16	7
Performance Costume: An Introduction	F18Y 34	1	8	7
Performance Costume: Advanced	F190 35	2	16	8
Live Performance Administration	DG43 34	1	8	7
Digital Audio Workstations 1	H1M4 34*	2	16	7
Music and Image - Graphics	DJ2G 34	1	8	7
Manage Operational Resources	J1BY 34*	2	16	7
Sound Production: Sound Reinforcement 1	H1LY 34*	2	16	7
Sound Production Practice 1	DJ36 34	1	8	7
Work Placement	HJ4W 34*	1	8	7
Personal Development Planning	DE3R 34	1	8	7
Audio Visual Technologies for Performance	F387 34	2	16	7

\*Refer to History of Changes for revision changes.

## Graded Unit

Candidates will undertake one Graded Unit at SCQF level 7 for the HNC award. This Graded Unit is a Project-based Practical Assignment. This particular type of Graded Unit was chosen because the most common method of gaining employment as a technical theatre employee is through a demonstration of work/experience. This is also the case when progressing on to Higher Education in the field of technical theatre

## Core Skills

Development of all five Core Skills is integrated across the Group Award, within the various Units. The Core Skills within Units is detailed in the mapping given over the page, while recommended entry/exit levels are shown in the table below.

<b>Core Skill</b>	<b>Recommended Entry level</b>	<b>Recommended Exit level</b>
Communication	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Numeracy	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
IT	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Problem Solving	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5
Working with Others	SCQF level 4	SCQF level 5

Unit code	Unit name	Communication		Numeracy		Information Technology	Problem Solving			Working with Others
		Oral	Written	Using Graphical Information	Using Number		Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	
F389 34	Stage Management	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	6 S
F388 34	Stage Lighting: Rigging, Focusing and Operation	5 S	5 S		5 S	5 S	5 S			5 S
F38E 34	Technical Theatre: Sound	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S
F38D 34	Technical Theatre: Set Construction and Painting	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S
F3NN 34	Technical Theatre: Graded Unit 1	5 S	5 S			5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	
F38A 34	Lighting Design for Performance	6 S	6 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	
F38B 34	Technical Theatre: Props for Production	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S
F38C 34	Technical Theatre: Score Reading	5 S	5 S			5 S				5 S
F386 34	Technical Theatre: Stage Design	5 S	5 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S
F18Y 34	Performance Costume: An Introduction	5 S	5 S				5 S			
F190 35	Performance Costume: Advanced	6 S	6 S				6 S			
DG43 34	Live Performance Administration		5 S				5 S	5 S	5 S	
H1M4 34	Digital Audio Workstations 1	5 S	5 S							
DJ2G 34	Music and Image - Graphics	5 S	5 S			5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	
H1F5 34	Manage Operational Resources	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	6 S	
H1LY 34	Sound Production: Sound Reinforcement 1	5 S	5 S		5 S		5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S
DJ36 34	Sound Production Practice 1						5 S	5 S	5 S	
DV0M 34	Work Experience						6 C	6 C	6 C	
DE3R 34	Personal Development Planning	5 S	5 S				5 S	5 S	5 S	
F387 34	Audio Visual Technologies for Performance	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S	5 S

**S = Signposted Core Skills**

**C = Certificated Core Skills**

## 5.2 Mapping information

The table below shows how each of the Units meets the general and specific aims of the Group Award. At the time of writing this course there were no listed National Occupational Standards in the technical theatre area, however, guide lines have been taken from industry professionals and other relevant National Occupational Standards such as Media (where relevant).

Unit/Aim	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Stage Management F389 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stage Lighting: Rigging, Focusing and Operation F388 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Theatre: Sound F38E 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Theatre: Set Construction and Painting F38D 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Theatre: Graded Unit 1 F3NN 34	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

### 5.3.1 Articulation

This new award was designed in consultation with further education organisations, and representatives from these organizations were also on the validation panel. It was recognised that there is excellent articulation from the new HNC in technical theatre onto relevant degree programs. The industrial representatives also acknowledged that this award is relevant and important for the technical theatre business.

## 6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

### 6.1 Content and context

The HNC Technical Theatre is a specialised award, which allows candidates to gain skills and knowledge in the core technical areas of Stage Management, Lighting, Sound and Set Construction. The award is aimed at those who wish to embark on a career as a theatrical technician and who wish to develop the necessary skills to progress to further training or employment.

The HNC Technical Theatre award allows candidates to progress to a range of study options, ie Higher Education.

Although Units are designed to be delivered as part of the Group Award it is possible for them to be delivered as stand-alone qualifications.

## **6.2 Delivery and assessment**

In the revised HNC the aim of the curriculum design is to provide a balance between awareness, understanding and professional practice in the application of technical skills within the context of integrated projects.

This balance is intended to develop candidates' ability to identify and apply individual skills and facilitating abilities in their specialisation within the technical theatre, thereby enhancing future employability.

Although centres can choose in what order to teach the Units within the awards, it is envisaged that the key skills of stage management, lighting, sound and set construction will be employed throughout the duration of the course. In all cases it is important that the mandatory Units have been delivered before the Graded Unit is assessed, although in some centres some elements of the mandatory Units may be delivered concurrently with the Graded Unit.

The assessment strategy of the Design Principles, ie to encourage a more holistic approach to assessment, has been adopted in this award. The new HN Unit specification places the emphasis on reducing the assessment load for both candidates and centres by devising assessments, which assess the entire Unit or join the assessments of Outcomes together.

There is opportunity to integrate some assessments across Units and this should be encouraged by all delivering centres. Assessment through projects and practical tasks is encouraged.

Unit specifications detail exactly the Evidence Requirements and assessment procedures for each assessment event. An exemplar assessment instrument will be produced for the Graded Unit, which indicates to centres what is required.

Should centres wish to use a different instrument of assessment from the recommendation they should seek prior verification from SQA.

## **6.3 Open Learning**

Distance learning may be feasible for some Outcomes within some Units in this award. These opportunities are highlighted within the Unit specifications. The great majority of Outcomes rely, however, on developing practical skills in the presence of a lecturer and/or fellow 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 and moderation 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 practical requirements for many Units, distance learning provision would be most unusual and difficult to achieve.

## 7 General information for centres

### Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

### Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(s) 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## 8 General information for candidates

The aim of the revised HNC Technical Theatre course is to develop your skills and knowledge as a theatre technician. The HNC will give you a firm grounding in the mandatory subject areas of Stage Management, Lighting, Sound and Set Construction.

You would be expected to have prior knowledge or experience in the technical theatre area. The course is aimed at those who wish to pursue a career in technical theatre.

During your studies you will be taught the primary skills needed to work within technical theatre. Some design elements are incorporated into this course, principally in the optional Units which will allow you to gain a further understanding of specialist areas (eg Lighting Design for Performance).

The HNC in Technical Theatre has been designed to allow you to be assessed as practically as possible, however, there is in some cases the need for additional methods of assessment eg supporting documentation. Assessment is ongoing throughout the year. The Graded Unit will be started at a point when the delivering centre feels enough work on the mandatory Units has been completed (approximately halfway through the course).

You must achieve the ten mandatory credits (80 SCQF credit points), including the Graded Unit and two credits (16 SCQF credit points) from the optional list, which may be decided in consultation with your tutor. The Graded Unit will be a project in the form of a Practical Assignment. On successful achievement of the Graded Unit you will be graded A, B or C.

On completion of the HNC Technical Theatre, successful candidates can progress on to similar HND/degree programmes (at the discretion of the receiving institution).

The HNC Technical Theatre provides a basic grounding for those who are interested in working in the theatre industry. The qualification will give you the skills to help you gain employment in the technical theatre environment or to work as a freelance agent.

## 9 Glossary of terms

**SCQF:** This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

**SCQF credit points:** One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

**SCQF levels:** The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

**Subject Unit:** Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

**Graded Unit:** Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

**Dedicated Core Skill Unit:** This is a Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills, eg HN Units in Information Technology or Communications.

**Embedded Core Skills:** This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

**Signposted Core Skills:** This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

**Qualification Design Team:** The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/D from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

**Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs** are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

**Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs** are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.