

Next Generation Higher National Educator Guide

Higher National Diploma Radio and Podcasting

Qualification code: GV7Y 48

**This qualification is available in a restricted
delivery model from academic session 2025**

This guide provides information about the Higher National Diploma (HND) to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It is for lecturers and assessors, and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the HND.

You must read it alongside the Grading Pack.

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Purpose of the qualification

Higher National Diploma (HND) Radio and Podcasting is a practice-based qualification that gives learners a practical understanding of the key technical, organisational and creative aspects of the radio production process, including podcasting and multi-platform content. The principal aim is to develop learners' knowledge and experience of the roles, working practices and professional behaviours required in the radio and associated industries.

Structure

Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) are at SCQF level 8 and are made up of 120 SCQF credit points (15 SQA credits). HNDs must incorporate at least 80 credit points (10 SQA credits) at SCQF level 8.

You can integrate and deliver the mandatory units and selected optional units through practical project briefs. The structure allows for flexible and multi-disciplinary learning opportunities.

The large mandatory units support a project-based approach, allowing learners to take on a variety of roles as they develop the relevant skills, knowledge and experience.

The projects your centre sets may vary in number and size, depending on local needs and selected optional units.

Framework

The HND is made up of mandatory and optional units. Learners must complete all the mandatory units and 5 SQA credits from the optional units.

Mandatory units

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J8RL 48	Radio and Podcast Production	3	24	8
J6DX 48	Content Creation	5	40	8
J6DW 48	Working in the Radio and Audio Industry	2	16	8

Optional units

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credits	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J6FN 48	Radio Branding and Imaging	1	8	8
J6FM 48	Advanced Radio Presentation	1	8	8
J6FP 48	Digital Audio Workstation	2	16	8
J6FL 48	Podcasting	1	8	8
J7N3 47	Work-based Learning	1	8	7
J75E 47	Communication: Practical Skills	1	8	7

Aims of the qualification

General aims

1. Enhance learners' employment prospects.
2. Support learners' continuing professional and career development.
3. Enable progression within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).
4. Develop learning and transferable skills
5. Provide academic stimulus and challenge, and foster an enjoyment of the subject.
6. Develop meta-skills that complement technical and professional knowledge and skills.
7. Develop Learning for Sustainability skills, knowledge, understanding and values.

Specific aims

1. Develop and add to the knowledge and skills gained in radio and podcasting.
2. Prepare learners for a wide range of multi-skilled employment in related radio and podcasting occupations at an appropriate level.
3. Develop specialist technical and production skills relating to the roles and responsibilities of radio and podcasting.
4. Develop a practical skillset for meeting professional standards and competence in the radio and podcasting sectors.
5. Develop a deeper knowledge of self-employment, business and management issues in the radio and podcasting sector.

Who is this qualification for?

This full-time qualification is suitable for learners interested in pursuing a career in radio and podcasting and associated industries, and who wish to develop the knowledge and creative and technical skills required for this industry.

Entry to this qualification is at your centre's discretion. However, we recommend that learners have one or more of the following:

- Higher National Certificate (HNC) Radio or other equivalent qualification at SCQF level 7
- different combinations of relevant National Qualifications (Vocational Qualifications from other awarding bodies at SCQF level 7 or equivalent)
- suitable industry experience. The enrolling centre may require learners to submit relevant content and interview tasks

Recognising prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. Formal learning is learning certificated by a recognised awarding or professional body. Non-formal learning includes learning such as employers' in-house training courses. Informal learning is learning based on experience from a variety of environments that is not formally assessed.

It is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full HND.

You can find more information and guidance about the [recognition of prior learning on SQA's website](#).

Articulation and progression

Learners who complete this qualification could go on to:

- other qualifications in radio or related areas
- further study, employment and/or training

Learners who successfully complete HND Radio and Podcasting could progress to the first or second year of relevant degree programmes, including:

- BA (Hons) TV, Radio and Podcast Production at the University of the West of Scotland
- BA (Hons) Media Production at the University of Sunderland
- BA (Hons) Media Production at Bournemouth University

Employment opportunities in the radio and podcasting industry include:

- Broadcast Assistant
- Production Assistant
- Content Creator
- Presenter
- Podcast Producer
- Sound Assistant
- Sports Assistant
- Studio Assistant
- Researcher
- Imaging Producer
- Music Scheduling Assistant
- Podcast Marketing Assistant

Credit transfer arrangements

Centres can make decisions about transferring credit. They can transfer credit if the subject-related content of the units is broadly equivalent. Centres should consider the currency of a learner's achievement before transferring credit.

Recommended Core Skills entry profile

Learners should have the following Core Skills at the stated SCQF levels before starting this qualification. This information can help identify learners who may need additional support.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile
Communication	Level 6
Numeracy	Level 6
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	Level 6
Problem Solving	Level 6
Working with Others	Level 6

How the qualification meets employer and higher education institution needs

This qualification is designed in collaboration with employers, higher education institutions (HEIs), practitioners and professional bodies to meet the sector need.

The following tables show how the qualification can benefit employers and HEIs by equipping learners with the necessary skill set:

- Table 1 shows how units map to the aims of the qualification.
- Table 2 shows how the units map to National Occupational Standards (NOS).
- Table 3 shows the assessment strategy for the qualification.

Table 1: mapping qualification aims to units

General aims

Key: aim is directly relevant to unit (X), aim is optional in this unit (O), aim is not applicable to this unit (N/A)

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7
J8RL 48	Radio and Podcast Production	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6DX 48	Content Creation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J6DW 48	Working in the Radio and Audio Industry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Specific aims

Key: aim is directly relevant to unit (X), aim is optional in this unit (O), aim is not applicable to this unit (N/A)

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5
J8RL 48	Radio and Podcast Production	X	X	X	X	X
J6DX 48	Content Creation	X	X	X	X	N/A
J6DW 48	Working in the Radio and Audio Industry	X	X	X	X	X

Table 2: mapping National Occupational Standards (NOS) to units

Unit code	Unit title	NOS codes
J8RL 48	Radio and Podcast Production	SKSRAC1, SKSRAC31, SKSRAC32, SKSRAC9, SKSRAC11, SKSRAC16, SKSRAC18, SKSRAC19, SKSRAC26, SKSRAC34, SKSRACC11, SKSRACC12, SKSRACC13
J6DX 48	Content Creation	SKSRAC1, SKSRAC31, SKSRAC32, SKSRAC7, SKSRAC6, SKSRAC8, SKSRAC9, SKSRAC11, SKSRAC12, SKSRAC15, SKSRAC18, SKSRAC21, SKSRAC24, SKSRAC34, SKSRAC27, SKSRAC14, SKSRACC1, SKSRACC12, SKSRACC13, SKSRACC18, SKSRACC2, SKSRACC21, SKSRACC24, SKSRACC29, SKSRACC3, SKSRACC30, SKSRACC4, SKSRACC5, SKSRACC6, SKSRACC7, SKSRACC8
J6DW 48	Working in the Radio and Audio Industry	SKSRAC1, SKSRAC31, SKSRAC32, SKSRAC3, SKSRAC9, SKSRAC26, SKSRACC23, SKSRACC9

Screenskills have developed a wide range of NOS for all occupations across the creative industries. These standards define the skills, knowledge and experience required to work in the various sectors of the creative industries, including radio and podcasting. The table shows the relationship between the units of the HND Radio and Podcasting and the relevant NOS. The HN units provide underpinning knowledge and skills, however they do not cover all aspects of the NOS. The Radio and Audio Content Creation NOS were last reviewed in March 2024.

Table 3: assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment methods
J8RL 48	Radio and Podcast Production	Project (open-book)
J6DX 48	Content Creation	Project (open-book)
J6DW 48	Working in the Radio and Audio Industry	Project (open-book)

Meta-skills

Ever NextGen: HN Qualification gives learners the opportunity to develop meta-skills.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help people to adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation. Each of these is made up of four meta-skills and a number of sub-skills.

- Self-management — focusing, integrity, adapting, initiative
- Social intelligence — communicating, feeling, collaborating, leading
- Innovation — curiosity, creativity, sense-making, critical thinking

From early in the qualification, we want learners to identify and understand the meta-skills they can develop, and to appreciate the personal and professional value of these skills. We want to support learners to continue to articulate, use and build on them long after they have achieved their qualification. In this way, we help learners to develop broad skills profiles, enabling them to thrive in a changing world.

Every NextGen: HN unit signposts opportunities for learners to develop meta-skills, and there is an assessed outcome in one of the mandatory units. When you make your whole-qualification grade decisions, you consider learners' commitment to engaging with meta-skills development.

You do not assess learners on their competence or progress in individual meta-skills. Instead, you assess them on evidence that they have engaged with a personal process of development. Meta-skills development is founded on a clear process of self-assessment, goal setting, action planning and reflective practice.

You can find meta-skills teaching, learning and assessment resources on [SQA's meta-skills web page](#).

Meta-skills in HND Radio and Podcasting

Radio industry-specific professional skills and personal behaviours (meta-skills) include:

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- focusing:
 - keeping to a project over a long-term period
- adapting:
 - forward planning
 - timekeeping
 - keeping regular records
 - coping with changing situations
 - learning about working on content alone and in small groups
- initiative:
 - generating content
 - improving ideas
- integrity:
 - creating compliant work
 - safe and ethical working practices

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- collaborating
 - working in a team
 - directing colleagues
 - working with contributors
 - working with advertisers
- communicating:
 - storytelling through audio
 - working to a brief
- feeling:
 - being receptive to feedback
 - understanding changes in both audience and technology

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- creativity:
 - generating ideas
 - creating a finished product
- sense-making:
 - researching
 - prioritising tasks
 - scripting and storytelling
 - scheduling

- curiosity:
 - learning about new roles and areas in radio and audio
 - listening to new and challenging content
- critical thinking:
 - analysing future tasks
 - evaluating completed tasks and considering improvements

Learning for Sustainability

Context

The United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UK in 2015, has shaped the development of Scottish, national and international sustainability policy. It sets out the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), which are central to the Scottish Government's [National Performance Framework](#). Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is a commitment to embedding the SDGs in Scottish education.

LfS embraces global citizenship, sustainable development, social justice, human rights, climate change, biodiversity loss, equality and inclusion. Learners develop their capacity to deal with the unpredictable social, economic and environmental challenges facing our rapidly changing world.

LfS combines:

- education for sustainable development (ESD)
- global citizenship
- outdoor learning

ESD is the internationally used term for sustainability education. Although LfS has a broader remit, the terms are largely interchangeable. Colleges and universities tend to use ESD, while schools usually use LfS. Both focus on a broad range of social, economic and environmental themes and approaches across all levels of education. SQA uses LfS as an umbrella term.

Learning for Sustainability in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Sustainability is a core component in this qualification.

Learners who complete this qualification should have:

- a general understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- a general understanding of the SDGs
- a deeper understanding of subject-specific sustainability
- the confidence to apply the skills, knowledge, understanding and values they develop in the next stage of their life

Sustainability is embedded as an outcome in the Content Creation unit.

Learners who complete this outcome can:

- assess their own knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
- review unit content against the SDGs to identify a sustainability-related issue
- apply knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs to propose improvements

Learners must provide evidence of their knowledge and skills by:

- identifying and describing sustainability in the context of the SDGs
- implementing sustainable practice in project plans or processes to meet the aims of at least two SDGs

You can cover any of the SDGs that are relevant to the subject area.

Find out more about SQA's approach on the [NextGen: HN Learning for Sustainability web page](#). There is an LfS reflective template available in the resources section. You may find it helpful as a starting point for considering how the SDGs are, or could be, embedded in a qualification, unit or assessment.

Grading

Please see the Grading Pack for this qualification for more information on making grade judgements.

Grading in NextGen: HN Qualifications produces a valid and reliable record of a learner's level of achievement across the breadth of the qualification content.

As well as grading the whole qualification, you assess individual units on a pass or fail basis. Each unit has evidence requirements that learners must achieve before you can consider them for whole-qualification grading.

Whole-qualification grade outcomes

Learners who pass NextGen: HN Qualifications receive one of the following grade outcomes for the qualification as a whole:

- Achieved with Distinction
- Achieved with Merit
- Achieved

To determine a learner's whole-qualification grade, you use the grading matrix provided in the Grading Pack to assess and judge their performance across the key aspects of the HND. You must align your judgements with the following whole-qualification grade descriptors.

Whole-qualification grade descriptors

Achieved with Distinction

The learner has achieved an excellent standard across the course content, going significantly beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete high-quality work. They engaged significantly with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Achieved with Merit

The learner has achieved a very good standard across the course content, going beyond meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a very good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and consistently used them to apply skills to complete work of a standard above that expected for an Achieved grade. They actively engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Achieved

The learner has achieved a good standard across the course content, credibly meeting the qualification requirements. They showed a good knowledge and understanding of course concepts and principles, and used them to apply skills to complete work of the required standard. They engaged with the process of developing their meta-skills in the context of their HN Qualification.

Approaches to delivery and assessment

Sequencing or integrating units

The mandatory units and selected optional units are designed to be integrated and delivered through practical project briefs. The structure allows for flexible and multi-disciplinary learning opportunities.

The large mandatory units support a project-based approach, allowing learners to take on a variety of roles as they develop the relevant skills, knowledge and experience.

Centres set their own projects and these may vary in number and size, depending on local needs and selected optional units.

Additional guidance on integrated or holistic assessment

Holistic or integrated assessment focuses on assessing a number of outcomes in a unit together, or in some cases, assessing the unit as a whole, rather than by outcome. When assessing a unit of competence holistically, the assessment activities integrate a number of aspects of the competence. Holistic or integrated assessment can reduce the time spent on assessment and can promote greater equity in the assessment process.

When developing or revising a NextGen: HN Qualification, SQA works with a development team to devise an appropriate assessment strategy that accommodates holistic or integrated assessment. However, the practice of integrating units for the purposes of learning and teaching is a centre-led activity.

Units are designed to facilitate holistic or integrated assessment approaches that prevent large, unwieldy assessments. Sometimes more than one piece of evidence is needed for a unit. For example, if a unit is about producing a podcast, a learner would need to produce evidence of performance (the process of planning and producing the podcast) and product (the podcast).

Evidence requirements must do what they say: specify requirements for evidence of learner competence in the unit. The evidence must be of sufficient quality for an assessor or verifier to judge that the learner has achieved the unit.

Opportunities for e-assessment

Assessment that is supported by information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software, may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit.

If you want to use e-assessment, you must ensure that you apply the national standard to all evidence and that conditions of assessment (as specified in the evidence requirements) are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence.

The units are particularly suitable for learning and teaching approaches that make it possible for learners to document and present suitable assessment evidence as they work. For example, you could encourage learners to create an e-portfolio, write a blog or maintain a learning journal. As an integral part of the learning and teaching process, you could give them guidance on how to structure and organise their material so that they can easily present it for assessment purposes.

Learners can generate evidence for assessment in many ways, including:

- using e-portfolios:
 - embedding or linking media-rich work, such as audio, video and images
 - encouraging peer review and feedback conversations
 - opening online platform debate and discussion
 - documenting projects
 - keeping learning journals, research diaries and reading logs
 - self-reflection

- using blogs:
 - embedding or linking media-rich work, such as audio, video and images
 - documenting projects
 - keeping learning journals and research diaries
 - online presentations
- using virtual learning environments (VLEs) as collaborative assignment hubs:
 - documenting project research
 - managing events
 - reflecting on work experience
 - collaborating in forums
- using social media as interactive assignment hubs:
 - documenting projects
 - keeping research diaries
 - managing events
 - reflecting on work experience
 - collaborating in forums

Remediation and re-assessment in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learners' responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, the assessor must formally note such instances, in writing or as a recording, and make them available to the internal and external verifier.

Remediation is not permitted for closed-book assessments.

The size and structure of the larger NextGen: HN units should mean that the assessor or lecturer is close enough to ongoing assessment activity in project-based units to identify the requirement for remediation as it occurs.

Re-assessment

We must give learners who fail the unit a re-assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. Where we have introduced larger units to the framework, we expect instances of re-assessment to be minimal, due to the approach to assessment and remediation. Where re-assessment is required in a project-based unit, a substantially different project must be used.

Resource requirements

Resource requirements must meet current industry practice. You should maintain and exemplify standards regarding equipment, learning spaces, learning materials and your approach to delivery.

Information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The units in this HND are designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should consider the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and those with additional support needs is available on the [assessment arrangements web page](#).

Internal and external verification

You must make sure all instruments of assessment you use in this qualification are internally verified according to your centre's policies and SQA's guidelines.

SQA carries out external verification to ensure that internal assessment meets the national guidelines for this qualification.

More information on internal and external verification is available in SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#) and in [Next Generation: Higher National Quality Assurance — Guidance for Centres](#).

Glossary

SQA credits: 1 SQA credit equals 8 SCQF credit points.

SQA credit value indicates the contribution the unit makes to an SQA qualification. An SQA credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is Scotland's national framework for describing qualifications. We use SCQF terminology in this guide to refer to credits and levels. [For more information on the SCQF, visit the SCQF website.](#)

SCQF credit points indicate the amount of learning required to complete a qualification. NextGen HNCs and HNDs are worth 120 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels indicate how hard the qualification is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. NextGen HNCs are at SCQF level 7 and NextGen HNDs are at SCQF level 8.

Information for learners

HND Radio and Podcasting

This information explains:

- what the qualification is about
- what you should know or be able to do before you start
- what you need to do during the qualification
- opportunities for further learning and employment

Qualification information

Higher National Diploma (HND) Radio and Podcasting can help you succeed in the fast-moving world of radio and audio production. You gain general knowledge of the context, working practices and organisation of the radio and podcasting industries while you develop specialist technical and production skills relevant to different radio and podcasting production roles.

You develop a range of creative and specialist skills, building professional practice through working on long-running regular radio shows or podcasts. You gain the workplace skills and experience you need to work as an employee or freelancer in the radio or podcasting industry and you develop academic skills in research, analysis, reflective practice and evaluation.

You are assessed through projects that are based on real-life radio and podcasting practice. The roles you take on and the projects you create throughout the academic year inform your final grade. You are graded across three competencies: sector-specific, academic and professional behaviours.

You work like a professional, making live or 'as-live' programmes, and you learn to respond quickly and effectively to problems as they come up while you are on air. How well you respond to difficult live situations tests you and demonstrates, to you and others, how well you can do the job.

Your programme content is in line with radio and podcasting industry standards.

When you've researched, pitched and produced it, you evaluate it like a professional — what worked, went well, or didn't go well, and most important of all, why? Would you do anything differently next time? What would you keep the same? Would you change your approach completely or just give it a tweak here and there?

You develop the meta-skills of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, and they help you to respond to professional challenges and opportunities by reflecting on, developing, applying and adapting your industry skills and sector knowledge.

HND Radio and Podcasting prepares you for employment or freelance work at an introductory level in various radio and podcasting occupations or for further study in higher education.

Employment opportunities in all sectors of the radio and podcasting industry include:

- Broadcast Assistant
- Production Assistant
- Content Creator
- Presenter
- Podcast Producer
- Sound Assistant
- Sports Assistant
- Studio Assistant
- Researcher
- Imaging Producer
- Music Scheduling Assistant
- Podcast Marketing Assistant

Appendix: support materials

Useful links

At the time of writing, the links in this section can provide a useful addition to your course support materials.

General

- [Radio Academy job profiles](#)
- [Audio UK](#)
- [Learning resources for journalism students — BBC Academy](#)
- [Making podcasts: a mini masterclass](#)

X (formerly Twitter)

- [The Radio Academy](#)
- [Multitrack](#)

Facebook groups

- [Sound Women Network](#)
- [The Entry Level Audio Network](#)

Freelance work and working in radio and audio

- [Working for yourself](#)
- [Freelance toolkit](#)
- [BBC Academy](#)
- [Freelance contacts](#)

Radio jobs

- [Radio today](#)

Audiences

- [Radio Joint Audience Research \(RAJAR\)](#)

Regulatory guidelines

- [Ofcom](#)
- [Broadcasting codes for TV and radio](#)

Health and safety, and risk assessments

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

- [HSE](#)
- [Health and safety in the film, theatre and broadcasting industries](#)

Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union (BECTU)

- [Working environment](#)
- [Health and safety law](#)

Work experience

- [Risk assessment guidance](#)

Copyright and intellectual property

- [Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988](#)

Sustainability

- [BBC Radio commissioning: Sustainability](#)

Meta-skills

YouTube videos:

- [Growth mindset versus fixed mindset](#)
- [Mindset by Carol Dweck](#)
- [Carol Dweck: developing a growth mindset](#)

CV of failures

- [CV of failures: Princeton professor publishes résumé of his career lows](#)
- [A CV of failures: Melanie Stefan](#)

FutureLearn courses

These are all free but for a limited time only. Here are some useful examples:

- [Developing a creative mindset](#)
- [Studying and reflecting](#)
- [Professional resilience](#)

Reflective practice and journals advice

- [Barbara Bassot books](#)

Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

- [Meta-skills toolkit](#)

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

- [NextGen: HN — Meta-skills](#)
- [NextGen: HN — Meta-skills for practitioners](#)

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Please check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this unit.

If a unit is revised:

- no new centres can be approved to offer the previous version of the unit
- centres should only enter learners for the previous version of the unit if they can complete it before its finish date

For more information on NextGen: HN Qualifications please visit the [NextGen: HN web page](#).

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