



# NQ Music Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25

## Section 1: verification group information

<b>Verification group name:</b>	Music
<b>Verification activity:</b>	Event
<b>Round:</b>	1
<b>Date published:</b>	August 2025

## National Units verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H240 73	National 3	Music: Performing Skills
H23V 73	National 3	Music: Composing Skills
H23X 73	National 3	Understanding Music
H240 74	National 4	Music: Performing Skills
H23V 74	National 4	Music: Composing Skills
H23X 74	National 4	Understanding Music
J2AK 75	SCQF level 5	Music: Performing Skills
J2AF 75	SCQF level 5	Music: Composing Skills
J2AH 75	SCQF level 5	Understanding Music
J2AL 76	SCQF level 6	Music: Performing Skills
J2AG 76	SCQF level 6	Music: Composing Skills

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
J2AJ 76	SCQF level 6	Understanding Music
J2AM 77	SCQF level 7	Music: Performing Skills
J2B5 77	SCQF level 7	Music: Composing Skills
J2B4 77	SCQF level 7	Understanding and Analysing Music

## Section 2: comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

In most cases, centres' approaches to assessment were considered and informed, and this enabled candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in music. Most centres used the approach contained within the SQA unit assessment support pack, package 1 (unit-by-unit) to allow candidates to demonstrate the requirements of the units.

#### Music: performing skills

Copies of music are a requirement for verification, and we remind centres to include these for all candidates. Centres must ensure that the music submitted reflects what a candidate is performing, for example in terms of repeats, cuts and fades.

## **Understanding (and analysing) music**

A question-paper style assessment does not support candidates to achieve assessment standard 1.2. This is due to the requirements that candidates must:

- demonstrate a basic understanding of the factors that influence the distinctive sounds of music styles (National 3)
- identify the social and cultural influences which have helped to shape the distinctive sounds of specific music styles (National 4)

Centres should submit marking instructions for any centre-devised assessments along with candidate evidence to inform the verification process.

## **Music: composing skills**

Centres are developing a number of ways for candidates to explore and develop their composing skills. A good range of personalisation and choice was evidenced, which has allowed candidates to develop their composing skills in a genre that they enjoy. Centres should ensure that candidates have enough opportunities to experiment and develop compositional skills. The use of composing templates can limit this creativity, and centres should use these cautiously.

Centres should ensure that candidate evidence is mapped against the assessment standards and not using the approach for external assessment for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher assignments. This approach does not always demonstrate that a candidate has met all four assessment standards for the Music: Composing Skills units.

## **Assessment judgements**

Centres must clearly indicate 'pass' or 'fail' and show which assessment standard(s) the assessment judgement applies to. Centres should refer to the recording documentation and the candidate assessment record provided in the unit assessment support packs for guidance on how to record this.

When submitting interim evidence, there is no requirement for centres to make an assessment judgement on assessment standards where evidence is not submitted for verification.

### **Music: performing skills**

We remind centres that assessment standards in units are judged on a pass or fail basis; therefore, centres should avoid awarding marks for unit assessment purposes. Centres should refer to the judging evidence tables in the unit assessment support packs for the Music: Performing Skills units. Assessment judgements and comments should relate to, and be mapped against, the assessment standards.

### **Understanding music**

If a piece of candidate evidence covers a range of assessment standards, the evidence should be annotated to show where each assessment standard is being assessed.

We remind centres that a copy of the marking instructions should accompany the candidate evidence submitted for verification.

## Section 3: general comments

It is essential that:

- centres clearly identify which assessment standards they are submitting evidence for
- assessor comments detail how the assessment judgements were made

Centres have adapted very strong approaches to gathering evidence and this was shown through the wide variety of approaches to assessment supported by high quality audio and video footage.

When submitting interim evidence, centres should make an assessment judgement against each assessment standard that is being submitted for verification, rather than one holistic assessment judgement for the entire unit (which is incomplete at this stage). It is possible for a candidate to achieve an interim pass, indicating that the evidence submitted meets the minimum standard required for the relevant assessment standard but that the candidate has not yet met the requirements of the full unit.

If a candidate has not produced any evidence that can be submitted for verification, centres should contact [NQ verification](#).



# NQ Music Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25

## Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	Music
Verification activity:	Event
Round:	2
Date published:	August 2025

## National Unit verified

Unit code	Unit level	Unit title
H242 74	National 4	Music Performance

## Section 2: comments on assessment

### Assessment approaches

In most cases, centres' approaches to assessment were considered and informed, and this enabled candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in music.

Some centres submitted candidate evidence for verification that had not produced any evidence against the assessment standards. If most candidates do not have evidence to submit for verification, centres should contact [NQ Verification](#).

Candidates must provide evidence for assessment standard 1.1. This could be in a brief statement, mind map or an audio recording of the candidate detailing their reasons for their choice of music.

### **Assessment standards 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4**

We remind centres that candidates must perform for a minimum of 8 minutes.

Candidates must perform at least two pieces on each instrument or one instrument and voice. When cuts or changes are made to the performed music, centres should amend and/or annotate scores accordingly.

The performance must be completed in no more than two assessment events for both instruments or one instrument and voice.

For the National 4 Music performance, it is not acceptable to:

- provide interim evidence
- collate evidence on a piece by piece basis throughout the session

Candidates should only attempt the assessment when they are ready and have prepared 8 minutes of music to perform.

### **Assessment judgements**

Centres must clearly indicate 'pass' or 'fail' and show which assessment standard(s) the assessment judgement applies to. Centres should refer to the recording documentation in the unit assessment support packs for guidance on how to record this.

When submitting evidence for SQA verification, centres should only award an assessment judgement to candidates who have attempted the assessment. We remind centres that a holistic judgement should be made for each instrument in the

assessment. Assessors should take account of the quality of all of the evidence available for each instrument or voice across the full programme of music. In this unit, assessment standards 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 assess candidate performance on each instrument or one instrument and voice.

If candidates do not perform for 8 minutes, they cannot pass assessment standards 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. Performances that are less than 8 minutes do not meet the minimum requirements.

Some centres used the external course assessment criteria for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher performance to award marks. This is following the process for course assessment, which is not appropriate for unit assessment. Centres should not award marks for unit assessment. They must use the information in the judging evidence tables in the unit assessment support pack and make assessment judgements on a pass or fail basis.

## **Section 3: general comments**

It is essential that:

- centres clearly identify which assessment standards they are submitting evidence for
- centres only award assessment judgements when the candidate has attempted the assessment task
- assessor comments detail how assessment judgements were made