

Technical consultation on proposed further modifications to National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music performance for session 2020–21



November 2020

We recognise the impact that COVID-19 has had, and will continue to have, on learning and teaching. To address this, we are proposing further modifications for the National 4 added value unit, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music performance. The modifications aim to support greater opportunities for learning and teaching, while maintaining the validity of these qualifications.

Ongoing restrictions in schools, especially for brass, woodwind, and voice candidates, have led to consideration of further modifications being required in addition to those published at the start of October for Higher and Advanced Higher Music. The proposals outlined in this document will also consider National 5 and the evidence centres will require when establishing candidate estimates. The proposals also consider the requirements of the National 4 Music Performance added value unit. The modifications attempt to ensure that the qualifications are as accessible as possible despite the current restrictions.

To ensure parity, there can be only one approach to course assessment for Music. There cannot be one approach for brass, woodwind and voice candidates, and a different one for candidates presenting other instruments.

Candidates' performances are normally assessed by an SQA visiting assessor who attends the school or college in person. However, given current public health advice and the protective measures that are in place across the country, it will not be possible for visiting assessment to take place as normal this session.

For session 2020-21, teachers and lecturers will be required to internally assess the Higher and Advanced Higher Music performances, in line with SQA marking instructions. This will be supported by external quality assurance from SQA. If your centre is selected for verification, you will be asked to provide SQA with audio or video recordings of candidates' performances to enable us to quality assure the marking.

The purpose of this technical consultation is to gather feedback from practitioners on the proposed modifications and to determine how they might work in practice. In the interests of openness and transparency we welcome responses from a wide range of stakeholders.

We will consider the responses we receive when we make decisions about further modifications to assessment in 2021. After the consultation, we will publish:

- ◆ a revised modification summary document for Higher and Advanced Higher Music for session 2020–21
- ◆ revised guidance on gathering key evidence for producing estimates in session 2020–21 for National 5 Music
- ◆ revised arrangements for National 4 Music in session 2020–21.

The consultation should take no more than 5 minutes to complete and will close on 3 December 2020.

Proposal

It is proposed that candidates have the option of performing on **either**:

- ◆ two instruments or one instrument and voice
- or**
- ◆ one instrument or voice.

At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, regardless of whether a candidate performs on one or two instruments, there will be one performing component worth 60 marks (60% of the course). The question paper would be worth 40 marks (40% of the course).

The table below shows the modified performance timings for session 2020–21.

Requirement	National 4 Added Value Unit	National 5	Higher	Advanced Higher
Minimum duration across either two instruments (or one instrument and voice) or one instrument or voice	6 minutes	6 minutes	10 minutes	15 minutes
Maximum duration across either two instruments (or one instrument and voice) or one instrument or voice	6 minutes 30 seconds	6 minutes 30 seconds	11 minutes	17 minutes

Candidates may make carefully timed cuts to music to keep within the time requirements, but you should ensure that the sections of music performed are appropriately challenging for the level of the course.

If a candidate chooses to perform on two instruments, or one instrument and voice:

- ◆ there is no minimum time requirement for any instrument or voice.
- ◆ they could perform only one piece on an instrument or voice.

Alternatively, a candidate can choose to perform the full performance timing on only one of their instruments or voice.

While there is no minimum time requirement for drum kit candidates, the required number of styles would remain the same as in the modifications and arrangements documents published in October 2020.

Requirement	National 4 Added Value Unit	National 5	Higher	Advanced Higher
Minimum number of drum kit styles	two styles	three styles	four styles	five styles

Advanced Higher bagpipe players must include a piobaireachd. Candidates may not be able to perform an entire piobaireachd within the chosen time allocation. Where they perform sections of a piobaireachd, they must include the crunluath. They must also perform a minimum of two other styles chosen from a march, Strathspey and reel. Candidates may miss out repeats in the march, Strathspey and reel to accommodate their chosen time allocation on the instrument.

The following requirements remain unchanged at Advanced Higher:

- ◆ Keyboard candidates must play fully fingered chords throughout their keyboard programme.
- ◆ Recorder candidates must present a programme that includes performances on both C and F recorders.

All other performing requirements remain unchanged at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, including:

- ◆ Candidates must choose their drum kit styles from banks 1 to 9 in the style bank published in the course specification. Each style must come from a different bank.
- ◆ All drum kit pieces must demonstrate four-way independence and have four different fills.
- ◆ In a drum kit programme, one piece only could include two styles and, in this case, candidates do not have to double the number of fills in this piece.
- ◆ There are no changes to the requirements for chordal guitar and chordal ukulele.

Accompaniment

For most instruments and voice, accompaniment of performances would not be mandatory for session 2020–21. However, centres may wish to provide accompaniments to support candidates with intonation and maintaining the tempo and flow. Accompaniments can be live or pre-recorded.

However, chordal guitar and chordal ukulele **must** have a relevant melodic and/or harmonic background to allow you to assess the performance in context.

Drum kit players also require to be accompanied. However, candidates can perform one unaccompanied piece within a programme.

Assessment of performance

Performance must be a single assessment event. This means that for the final assessment of the full performance on one instrument or voice, you must gather evidence in one sitting. This replicates the SQA visiting assessment conditions where candidates perform all of their pieces in succession, for each instrument or voice. For candidates who choose to perform on two instruments, or one instrument and voice, the assessments do not need to take place on the same day. However, a candidate must not perform on each of their two instruments, or one instrument or voice, over an extended period, for example weeks apart.

If it is not possible for assessment to take place in centres, brass, woodwind and voice candidates will require to record themselves performing all selected pieces for an instrument or voice in one sitting, at home. The video recordings would then be shared with their teacher or lecturer, who will then mark them.

As part of the learning and teaching process, candidates may share recordings of individual pieces with their teacher and lecturer for feedback. However, for the final assessment on each instrument or voice, all pieces in their programme must be recorded in one sitting.

Implications of further modifications for candidates and teachers

Candidates who choose to perform on only one instrument or voice will need to play more pieces on that selected instrument or voice. However, there is more time for Higher candidates (see below) to learn additional pieces.

Brass, woodwind and voice candidates, who are unable to be supported by face to face learning and teaching leading up to their assessment, might wish to consider the option of learning a different instrument. This instrument could be closely related to an instrument that they play. For example, a guitar candidate could consider the option of learning a bass guitar piece (or pieces). A keyboard player could consider the option of learning a tuned percussion piece (or pieces). Individual candidates and their teachers and lecturers should carefully consider the candidate's strengths and abilities when deciding whether to pursue this option or not.

If recording at home, candidates would require access to devices to record, and play an accompaniment, if required. Centres would be required to support candidates with this.

It is acknowledged that there are workload issues for teachers, for example to record accompaniments for candidates to use at home, and supporting candidates with the recording process and sharing of audio files for feedback.

Further information

The logistics of centres submitting marks following internal assessment of performances are being worked through. The earliest that marks would have to be submitted would be the end of April for both Higher and Advanced Higher.

There are no changes to the modifications around the performing component in the Advanced Higher Music portfolio.

Scottish Government and Education Scotland guidance about brass, woodwind and voice may change before assessments are due to take place. It is intended that the modifications outlined in this document would stand with no further changes implemented for session 2020–21.

Consultation

This consultation will be open from 26 November 2020 and will close on 3 December 2020. Ideally, a consultation period would run for several weeks. However, it is of the utmost importance that practitioners are provided with the necessary finalised information as soon as possible to continue to prepare candidates for assessment.

The survey to allow you to provide feedback on this consultation document can be accessed [here](#).