



Questions & Answers

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music Technology Overview of course assessment – October 2024

1 National 5 assignment

Is chorus an acceptable time domain effect alongside reverb and delay?

For National 5, minimum requirements would be met if a candidate used chorus and reverb or chorus and delay. A candidate could use chorus, reverb and delay.

2 Higher assignment

Can a live recording of a saxophone quartet be classed as multiple inputs for Higher?

Assuming there is a separate microphone for each saxophone, this would be acceptable.

Regarding the 10 part minimum requirement. Is this in the final project (so multitrack would be 1 part) or does each context require 10 separate parts before they are combined?

A minimum of 10 parts must be included across the whole assignment. Candidates often exceed this to help demonstrate all of the requirements and creativity.

Would the music outline plan need to be more detailed if a pupil is recording a song, for example a performance plan or example of chords/melody used?

For stage 1(a), an outline of all of the music within the whole assignment is needed, for example the name of the song would be sufficient here, along with a list of the other music heard - eg, radio beds.

For stage 1(b), a performance plan for the musical elements is needed, so this is normally where the chords and melody charts would be found. To help a candidate achieve 10 marks in stage 1(b), a performance plan could include information about how the features of the music, and, how it develops to help the candidate focus on specific areas during mixing. This information is not mandatory.

To what extent are MIDI loops acceptable for Higher level electronic multi-track requirements?

It is recommended to use downloaded MIDI files as the candidates would still be able to satisfy the requirement to select and manipulate virtual/MIDI instruments without having to program MIDI information, as this can be time consuming and does not attract marks.

What's the difference between send and insert effects, and grouping and bussing?

Send and inserts refer to the way that tracks can have processing and effects applied. As an example, different parts can be sent to one reverb channel. The dry part is still in the mix and can still be manipulated separately.

Grouping and bussing is how tracks are linked to make mixing easier, for example a bass, snare and overhead can be grouped and sent to one bus to make it easier to mix. EQ and compression can then be applied to that bus; however, you can still go back and adjust levels of each part if need be.

3 Higher question paper

Where can I find information regarding the technology development question?

Examples of expected responses and additional guidance are provided in the marking instructions. The marking instructions include the level of detail that is required to achieve marks. Please refer to the 2024, 2019 and specimen question papers.

Appendix 2 of the Higher Music Technology course specification document also has a list of online resources that could be referred to.

4 Advanced Higher project-research

Can an example be provided of what would be considered a suitable musical analysis for a recording based research project?

Candidates have had success with researching microphone techniques related to guitar amp mic'ing and drum kit mic'ing techniques. Providing candidates are clear about the particular techniques from the outset and develop a throughline in their investigation and analysis, experimentation and synthesis these contexts can be successful.

You might find it useful to refer to the research project and commentary published in 2023 for candidate 4. This is available from the SQA secure site.

5 General

For the assignments and projects, is it preferable to collate planning, implementation and evaluation as separate PowerPoint or documents?

It is preferable to have one file with all documentation.