



Advanced Higher
Coursework
Assessment Task



Advanced Higher Music

Assignment

Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It **must** be read in conjunction with the course specification.

Valid from session 2024-25 and until further notice.

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Introduction

This document contains instructions for teachers, lecturers and candidates for the Advanced Higher Music assignment. You must read it in conjunction with the course specification.

This assignment is worth 20 marks. This is 15% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This assignment has three parts:

Part one 'composing or arranging one piece of music' has 10 marks.

Part two 'reviewing the creative process of the composition or arrangement' has 5 marks.

Part three 'analysing a chosen piece of music' has 5 marks.

Instructions for teachers and lecturers

For candidates to demonstrate creativity, teachers and lecturers should avoid structured template approaches to composition. For example, they must not set some or all of the following features in a template:

- ◆ number of instruments
- ◆ instrumentation
- ◆ prescribed harmonies in certain bars
- ◆ changes of time signature in certain bars
- ◆ prescribed rhythmic, melodic or structural features in certain bars

This restrictive template would go beyond the acceptable amount of reasonable assistance.

Candidates are required to explore and develop musical ideas to create an original piece of music for their assignment. For teaching and learning purposes only, it is acceptable to provide candidates with, for example, accompaniment patterns, bass lines or rhythm banks. However, as the assignment is an assessment and not a learning and teaching exercise, candidates should then create their own individual composition. Candidates should not select, copy and paste musical ideas provided by their teacher or lecturer into their composition.

Teachers and lecturers should not give candidates composing review templates with, for example, pre-populated phrases that only require candidates to insert one or two words into the text at designated places.

Marking instructions

The marking instructions for the Advanced Higher Music assignment are in the course specification.

Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the assignment for Advanced Higher Music.

This assignment is worth 20 marks. This is 15% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ planning and reviewing your own music
- ◆ exploring and developing your musical ideas
- ◆ creating music that is original to you
- ◆ analysing a chosen piece of music

This assignment has three parts:

Part one 'composing or arranging one piece of music' has 10 marks.

Part two 'reviewing the creative process of your composition or arrangement' has 5 marks.

Part three 'analysing your chosen piece of music' has 5 marks.

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know if there are any specific conditions for doing this assessment.

Composing or arranging one piece of music

In this part of the assessment, you have to:

- ◆ plan your composition or arrangement
- ◆ explore and develop your musical ideas using **all** of the following elements:
 - melody
 - harmony
 - rhythm
 - structure
 - timbre
- ◆ create one complete piece of music

Your composition or arrangement can be in any style or genre and must last a minimum of **1 minute** and a maximum of **4 minutes and 30 seconds**.

For serial compositions, you must annotate your score showing where and how you have used your note row. You should refer to this in your review. When writing a review for a serial piece, it is good practice to describe how you have explored and developed the note row.

Your teacher or lecturer may check your work before you move on to the next part of the assessment.

Reviewing the creative process of your composition or arrangement

In this part of the assessment, you have to write a review of your creative process.

You must refer to the compositional methods you used and include clear details of:

- ◆ your main decisions
- ◆ how you explored and developed your musical ideas
- ◆ your strengths and/or areas for improvement

You can present your review in prose or in bullet points. It should be approximately 200 to 350 words.

You must use the SQA review of the creative process template, which is restricted to one page. You must submit only one composing review document. Your teacher or lecturer will give you this.

Analysing your chosen piece of music

In this part of the assessment, you have to:

- ◆ choose a piece of music by a composer
- ◆ analyse the key features of your chosen piece by referring to compositional methods and music concepts
- ◆ refer to **at least five** of the elements below:
 - style
 - melody
 - harmony
 - rhythm and tempo
 - texture
 - structure and/or form
 - timbre and dynamics
- ◆ provide an audio recording of your chosen piece
- ◆ include audio time codes to reference the key features you identify

You can include sections of a score or a guide to the music, referencing the key features you identify.

You must present your analysis in prose. It should be approximately 600 to 800 words.

You must use the SQA analysis template. Your teacher or lecturer will give you this.

Your completed assignment

Your completed assignment must include:

- ◆ an audio recording of your composition or arrangement
- ◆ a score or performance plan of your composition or arrangement
- ◆ a copy of the original music, including any harmonies where available (if you are submitting an arrangement)
- ◆ your review of your creative process for your composition or arrangement
- ◆ your analysis of your chosen piece of music, including reference to audio time codes
- ◆ an audio recording (for example an audio file or a web link) of your chosen piece of music

Advice for candidates

Composing or arranging and reviewing the creative process

Choose instruments that you are familiar with. Your composition should be appropriate for the instrument(s) and/or voices you have chosen.

Think about the style that you want to write in and why.

If you are arranging a piece of music, think carefully about the source material you want to arrange. If you choose a simple piece of music, you are more likely to be able to creatively rework it using **all** of the musical elements:

- ◆ melody
- ◆ harmony
- ◆ rhythm
- ◆ structure
- ◆ timbre

As you are composing or arranging, note the decisions you make. This will help you to write your review of your creative process.

Reflect as you experiment. Which of your musical ideas are most effective and why? Which of your ideas do not work as well?

Consider which of your musical ideas work best. Think about how you can develop these ideas.

Analysing your chosen piece of music

Think about your choice of music for your analysis. You must have access to an audio file or web link of your chosen piece. You may find it helpful to have access to a score or guide to the music.

You may want to choose a piece of music that contains instruments and/or voices that you are familiar with. This might help you to write about timbre, including instrumental and/or vocal techniques.

Your chosen piece of music must allow you to analyse key features by referring to **at least five** of the elements below:

- ◆ style
- ◆ melody
- ◆ harmony
- ◆ rhythm and tempo
- ◆ texture
- ◆ structure and/or form
- ◆ timbre and dynamics

You can analyse one movement from a larger work. A very short piece of music, however, may not provide you with enough material to analyse sufficient key features.

Check over your work to make sure you have completed all parts of the assignment and that you have collected all of the required evidence.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	'Instructions for teachers and lecturers' section added. In 'Instructions for candidates', guidance on annotation of note rows in serial compositions added on page 4. Amendments made to page 5 to clarify that one page must be submitted for the review of the creative process.	September 2024

Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

Security and confidentiality

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