

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance



Specification

First teaching from September 2018

First certification from 2019

Issue 3

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Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

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This specification is Issue 3. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on our website.

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Welcome

With a track record built over 30 years of learner success, BTEC Nationals are widely recognised by industry and higher education as the signature vocational qualification at Level 3. They provide progression to the workplace either directly or via study at a higher level. Proof comes from YouGov research, which shows that 62 per cent of large companies have recruited employees with BTEC qualifications. What's more, well over 100,000 BTEC students apply to UK universities every year and their BTEC Nationals are accepted by over 150 UK universities and higher education institutes for relevant degree programmes either on their own or in combination with A Levels.

Why are BTECs so successful?

BTECs embody a fundamentally learner-centred approach to the curriculum, with a flexible, unit-based structure and knowledge applied in project-based assessments. They focus on the holistic development of the practical, interpersonal and thinking skills required to be able to succeed in employment and higher education.

When creating the BTEC Nationals in this suite, we worked with many employers, higher education providers, colleges and schools to ensure that their needs are met. Employers are looking for recruits with a thorough grounding in the latest industry requirements and work-ready skills such as teamwork. Higher education needs students who have experience of research, extended writing and meeting deadlines.

We have addressed these requirements with:

- a range of BTEC sizes, each with a clear purpose, so there is something to suit each learner's choice of study programme and progression plans
- refreshed content that is closely aligned with employers' and higher education needs for a skilled future workforce
- assessments and projects chosen to help learners progress to the next stage. This means some are set by you to meet local needs, while others are set and marked by Pearson so that there is a core of skills and understanding that is common to all learners. For example, a written test can be used to check that learners are confident in using technical knowledge to carry out a certain job.

We provide a wealth of support, both resources and people, to ensure that learners and their teachers have the best possible experience during their course. See *Section 10* for details of the support we offer.

A word to learners

Today's BTEC Nationals are demanding, as you would expect of the most respected applied learning qualification in the UK. You will have to choose and complete a range of units, be organised, take some assessments that we will set and mark and keep a portfolio of your assignments. But you can feel proud to achieve a BTEC because, whatever your plans in life – whether you decide to study further, go on to work or an Apprenticeship, or set up your own business – your BTEC National will be your passport to success in the next stage of your life.

Good luck, and we hope you enjoy your course.

Collaborative development

Learners completing their BTEC Nationals in Music Performance will be aiming to go on to employment, often via the stepping stone of higher education. It was, therefore, essential that we developed these qualifications in close collaboration with experts from professional bodies, businesses and universities, and with the providers who will be delivering the qualifications. To ensure that the content meets providers' needs and provides high-quality preparation for progression, we engaged experts. We are very grateful to all the university and further education lecturers, teachers, employers, professional body representatives and other individuals who have generously shared their time and expertise to help us develop these new qualifications. In addition, universities, professional bodies and businesses have provided letters of support confirming that these qualifications meet their entry requirements. These letters can be viewed on our website.

Summary of Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance specification Issue 3 changes

Summary of changes made between the previous issue and this current issue	Page number
The last paragraph of the <i>Qualification and unit content</i> section has been amended to allow centres delivering the qualification above to alter the content to reflect the context of the country where it is being delivered.	Page 5

If you need further information on these changes or what they mean, contact us via our website at: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html.

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Introduction to BTEC National qualifications for the music performance sector

This specification contains the information you need to deliver the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance. The specification signposts you to additional handbooks and policies. It includes all the units for this qualification.

This qualification is part of the suite of music performance qualifications offered by Pearson. In the suite there are qualifications that focus on different progression routes, allowing learners to choose the one best suited to their aspirations.

All qualifications in the suite share some common units and assessments, allowing learners some flexibility in moving between sizes. The qualification titles are given below.

Some BTEC National qualifications provide a broad introduction that gives learners transferable knowledge and skills. These qualifications are for post-16 learners who want to continue their education through applied learning. The qualifications prepare learners for a range of higher education courses and job roles related to a particular sector. They provide progression either by meeting entry requirements in their own right or by being accepted alongside other qualifications at the same level and adding value to them.

In music performance, these qualifications are:

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Music Performance (180 GLH) 603/3027/2

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance (360 GLH) 601/7090/6.

This specification signposts all the other essential documents and support that you need as a centre in order to deliver, assess and administer the qualification, including the staff development required. A summary of all essential documents is given in *Section 7*. Information on how we can support you with this qualification is given in *Section 10*.

The information in this specification is correct at the time of publication.

Total Qualification Time

For all regulated qualifications, Pearson specifies a total number of hours that it is estimated learners will require to complete and show achievement for the qualification: this is the Total Qualification Time (TQT). Within TQT, Pearson identifies the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) that we estimate a centre delivering the qualification might provide. Guided learning means activities, such as lessons, tutorials, online instruction, supervised study and giving feedback on performance, that directly involve teachers and assessors in teaching, supervising and invigilating learners. Guided learning includes the time required for learners to complete external assessment under examination or supervised conditions.

In addition to guided learning, other required learning directed by teachers or assessors will include private study, preparation for assessment and undertaking assessment when not under supervision, such as preparatory reading, revision and independent research.

BTEC Nationals have been designed around the number of hours of guided learning expected. Each unit in the qualification has a GLH value of 60, 90 or 120. There is then a total GLH value for the qualification.

Each qualification has a TQT value. This may vary within sectors and across the suite, depending on the nature of the units in each qualification and the expected time for other required learning. The following table shows all the qualifications in this sector and their GLH and TQT values.

Qualifications, sizes and purposes at a glance

Title	Size and structure	Summary purpose
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Music Performance	180 GLH (260 TQT) Equivalent in size to half an A Level. Two units, of which one is mandatory and external. Mandatory content (66%). External assessment (66%).	Designed to support progression to higher education when taken as part of a programme of study that includes other appropriate BTEC Nationals or A Levels. The programme gives an introduction to the sector, with a focus on performance.
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance	360 GLH (495 TQT) Equivalent in size to one A Level. Four units, of which three are mandatory and two are external. Mandatory content (83%). External assessment (58%).	Designed to support progression to higher education when taken as part of a programme of study that includes other appropriate BTEC Nationals or A Levels. The programme gives a broad overview of the sector, with a focus on performance, including musical skills development and professional practice.

Structures of the qualifications at a glance

This table shows all the units and the qualifications to which they contribute. The full structure for this Pearson BTEC Level 3 National in Music Performance is shown in *Section 2*. **You must refer to the full structure to select units and plan your programme.**

Key

Unit assessed externally	M	Mandatory units	O	Optional units
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Unit (number and title)	Unit size (GLH)	Certificate (180 GLH)	Extended Certificate (360 GLH)
1 Practical Music Theory and Harmony	90		M
2 Professional Practice in the Music Industry	90		M
3 Ensemble Music Performance	120	M	M
4 Composing Music	60	O	O
5 Music Performance Session Styles	60	O	O
6 Solo Performance	60	O	O
7 Improvising Music	60	O	O

Qualification and unit content

Pearson has developed the content of the new BTEC Nationals in collaboration with employers and representatives from higher education and relevant professional bodies. In this way, we have ensured that content is up to date and that it includes the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes required in the sector.

Each qualification in the suite has its own purpose. The mandatory and optional content provides a balance of breadth and depth, while retaining a degree of choice for individual learners to study content relevant to their own interests and progression choices. Also, the content may be applied during delivery in a way that is relevant to local employment needs.

The proportion of mandatory content ensures that all learners are following a coherent programme of study and acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills that will be recognised and valued. Learners are expected to show achievement across mandatory units as detailed in *Section 2*.

BTEC Nationals have always required applied learning that brings together knowledge and understanding (the cognitive domain) with practical and technical skills (the psychomotor domain). This is achieved through learners performing vocational tasks that encourage the development of appropriate vocational behaviours (the affective domain) and transferable skills. Transferable skills are those such as communication, teamwork and research and analysis, which are valued in both higher education and the workplace.

Our approach provides rigour and balance, and promotes the ability to apply learning immediately in new contexts. Further details can be found in *Section 2*.

Centres should ensure that delivery of content is kept up to date. Some of the units within the specification may contain references to legislation, policies, regulations and organisations, which may not be applicable in the country you deliver this qualification in (if teaching outside of England), or which may have gone out-of-date during the lifespan of the specification. In these instances, it is possible to substitute such references with ones that are current and applicable in the country you deliver subject to confirmation by your Standards Verifier.

Assessment

Assessment is specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. It includes a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications in the sector. There are three main forms of assessment that you need to be aware of: external, internal and synoptic.

Externally-assessed units

Each external assessment for a BTEC National is linked to a specific unit. All of the units developed for external assessment are of 90 or 120 GLH to allow learners to demonstrate breadth and depth of achievement. Each assessment is taken under specified conditions, then marked by Pearson and a grade awarded. Learners are permitted to resit external assessments during their programme. You should refer to our website for current policy information on permitted retakes.

The styles of external assessment used for qualifications in the music performance suite are:

- performance – learners prepare for assessment over an extended window and demonstrate skills that generate some non-written evidence
- set tasks – learners take the assessment during a defined window and demonstrate understanding through completion of a vocational task.

Some external assessments include a period of preparation using set information. External assessments are available once or twice a year. For detailed information on the external assessments please see the table in *Section 2*. For further information on preparing for external assessment, see *Section 5*.

Internally-assessed units

Most units in the sector are internally assessed and subject to external standards verification. This means that you set and assess the assignments that provide the final summative assessment of each unit, using the examples and support that Pearson provides. Before you assess you will need to become an approved centre, if you are not one already. You will need to prepare to assess using the guidance in *Section 6*.

In line with the requirements and guidance for internal assessment, you select the most appropriate assessment styles according to the learning set out in the unit. This ensures that learners are assessed using a variety of styles to help them develop a broad range of transferable skills. Learners could be given opportunities to:

- write up the findings of their own research
- use case studies to explore complex or unfamiliar situations
- carry out projects for which they have choice over the direction and outcomes
- demonstrate practical and technical skills using appropriate instruments and techniques.

You will make grading decisions based on the requirements and supporting guidance given in the units. Learners may not make repeated submissions of assignment evidence. For further information, see *Section 6*.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole sector as relevant to a key task. BTEC learning has always encouraged learners to apply their learning in realistic contexts using scenarios and realistic activities that will permit learners to draw on and apply their learning. For these qualifications we have formally identified units that contain a synoptic assessment task. Synoptic assessment must take place after the teaching and learning of other mandatory units in order for learners to be able to draw from the full range of content. The synoptic assessment gives learners an opportunity to independently select and apply learning from across their programmes in the completion of a vocational task. Synoptic tasks may be in internally- or externally-assessed units. The particular unit that contains the synoptic tasks for this qualification is shown in the structure in *Section 2*.

Language of assessment

Assessment of the internal and external units for these qualifications will be available in English. All learner work must be in English. A learner taking the qualifications may be assessed in British or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted for the purpose of reasonable adjustment. For information on reasonable adjustments see *Section 7*.

Grading for units and qualifications

Achievement in the qualification requires a demonstration of depth of study in each unit, assured acquisition of a range of practical skills required for employment or progression to higher education, and successful development of transferable skills. Learners achieving a qualification will have achieved across mandatory units, including external and synoptic assessment.

Units are assessed using a grading scale of Distinction (D), Merit (M), Pass (P), Near Pass (N) and Unclassified (U). The grade of Near Pass is used for externally-assessed units only. All mandatory and optional units contribute proportionately to the overall qualification grade, for example a unit of 120 GLH will contribute double that of a 60 GLH unit.

Qualifications in the suite are graded using a scale of P to D*, **or** PP to D*D*, **or** PPP to D*D*D*. Please see *Section 9* for more details. The relationship between qualification grading scales and unit grades will be subject to regular review as part of Pearson's standards monitoring processes on the basis of learner performance and in consultation with key users of the qualification.

UCAS Tariff points

The BTEC Nationals attract UCAS points. Please go to the UCAS website for full details of the points allocated.

1 Qualification purpose

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance

In this section, you will find information on the purpose of this qualification and how its design meets that purpose through the qualification objective and structure. We publish a full 'Statement of Purpose' for each qualification on our website. These statements are designed to guide you and potential learners to make the most appropriate choice about the size of qualification suitable at recruitment.

Who is this qualification for?

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance is intended to be an Applied General qualification. It is for post-16 learners who want to continue their education through applied learning and who aim to progress to higher education and ultimately to employment, possibly in the music sector or the creative sector as a whole. The qualification is equivalent in size to one A Level and aims to provide a coherent course of study covering both performance and the music industry. It is designed to be taken alongside other Level 3 qualifications. No prior study of the sector is needed, but learners should normally have a range of achievement at level 2, in GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

What does this qualification cover?

The content of this qualification has been developed in consultation with academics to ensure that it supports progression to higher education. Employers and professional bodies have also been involved and consulted to confirm that the content is appropriate and consistent with current practice for learners planning to enter employment directly in the music sector.

Learners taking this qualification will study three mandatory units:

- Unit 1: Practical Music Theory and Harmony
- Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry
- Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance.

Learners choose one optional unit. These have been designed to support progression to more specialist music courses in higher education and to link with relevant occupational areas, such as:

- composing music
- improvising music
- solo performance.

What could this qualification lead to?

In addition to the music sector-specific content outlined above, this qualification gives learners transferable and higher-order skills that are valued by higher education providers and employers, for example performance techniques, communication skills, team working. It also gives learners an opportunity to focus on their personal vocal/instrumental technique.

The qualification is intended to carry UCAS points and is recognised by higher education providers as contributing to meeting admission requirements for many courses, if it is taken alongside other qualifications as part of a two-year programme of learning, and it combines well with a large number of subjects. It will support entry to higher education courses in a wide range of disciplines, depending on the subjects taken alongside it.

For learners who wish to study an aspect of music in higher education, opportunities include:

- BA (Hons) in Performing Arts, if taken alongside an A Level in English Literature and a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts
- BA (Hons) in Music Industry Management, if taken alongside a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Business
- BA (Hons) in Music Business and Arts Management, if taken alongside a Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Business and an A Level in Art.

Learners should always check the entry requirements for degree programmes with specific higher education providers.

How does the qualification provide employability skills?

In the BTEC National units, there are opportunities during the teaching and learning phase to give learners practice in developing employability skills. Where employability skills are referred to in this specification, we are generally referring to skills in the following three main categories:

- **cognitive and problem-solving skills:** using critical thinking, approaching non-routine problems by applying expert and creative solutions, using systems and technology
- **interpersonal skills:** communicating, working collaboratively, negotiating and influencing, self-presentation
- **intrapersonal skills:** self-management, adaptability and resilience, self-monitoring and development.

There are also specific requirements in some units for assessment of these skills where relevant, for example where learners are required to undertake real or simulated activities.

How does the qualification provide transferable knowledge and skills for higher education?

All BTEC Nationals provide transferable knowledge and skills that prepare learners for progression to university. The transferable skills that universities value include:

- the ability to learn independently
- the ability to research actively and methodically
- the ability to give presentations and be active group members.

BTEC learners can also benefit from opportunities for deep learning where they are able to make connections among units and select areas of interest for detailed study. BTEC Nationals provide a vocational context in which learners can develop the knowledge and skills required for particular degree courses, including:

- effective writing
- analytical skills
- creative development and performance skills
- preparation for assessment methods used in degrees.

2 Structure

Qualification structure

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance

Mandatory units

There are three mandatory units, one internal and two external. Learners must complete and achieve at Near Pass grade or above in all mandatory external units and achieve a Pass or above in all mandatory internal units.

Optional units

Learners must complete at least one optional unit.

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance				
Unit number	Unit title	GLH	Type	How assessed
Mandatory units – learners complete and achieve all units				
1	Practical Music Theory and Harmony	90	Mandatory	Internal
2	Professional Practice in the Music Industry	90	Mandatory	External
3	Ensemble Music Performance	120	Mandatory Synoptic	External
Optional units – learners complete at least one unit				
4	Composing Music	60	Optional	Internal
5	Music Performance Session Styles	60	Optional	Internal
6	Solo Performance	60	Optional	Internal
7	Improvising Music	60	Optional	Internal

External assessment

This is a summary of the type and availability of external assessment, which is of units making up 58 per cent of the total qualification GLH. See *Section 5* and the units and sample assessment materials for more information.

Unit	Type	Availability
Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A task set and marked by Pearson and completed under supervised conditions in a two-week period timetabled by Pearson. • The supervised assessment period is five hours. • Written submission. • 70 marks. 	January and May/June from May/June 2019 onwards
Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A task set and marked by Pearson and completed under supervised conditions in a period timetabled by Pearson. • The supervised assessment period is two hours for the written activity. In addition, there is performance evidence that totals between approximately half an hour and three-quarters of an hour. • Written submission and video evidence. • 80 marks. 	May/June from 2019 onwards

Synoptic assessment

The mandatory synoptic assessment requires learners to apply learning from across the qualification to the completion of a defined vocational task. In *Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance*, learners will be expected to use the music skills and knowledge developed in their studies throughout the qualification to prepare material and perform as a musical group. They demonstrate an understanding of music theory and stylistic techniques through a presentation and review. Learners select and apply musical skills in a performance situation so will have to draw on knowledge from across the qualification around how musical skills work in application, stylistic considerations and industry expectations. They will have the opportunity to self-manage themselves in order to choose appropriate, learn and develop appropriate material for a vocational context. Learners complete the tasks using knowledge and understanding from their studies of the sector and apply both transferable and specialist knowledge and skills.

In delivering the unit, you need to encourage learners to draw on their broader learning so they will be prepared for the assessment.

Employer involvement in assessment and delivery

You are encouraged to give learners opportunities to be involved with employers. See *Section 4* for more information.

3 Units

Understanding your units

The units in this specification set out our expectations of assessment in a way that helps you to prepare your learners for assessment. The units help you to undertake assessment and quality assurance effectively.

Each unit in the specification is set out in a similar way. There are two types of unit format:

- internal units
- external units.

This section explains how the units work. It is important that all teachers, assessors, internal verifiers and other staff responsible for the programme review this section.

Internal units

Section	Explanation
Unit number	The number is in a sequence in the sector. Numbers may not be sequential for an individual qualification.
Unit title	This is the formal title that we always use and it appears on certificates.
Level	All units are at Level 3 on the national framework.
Unit type	This shows if the unit is internal or external only. See structure information in <i>Section 2</i> for full details.
GLH	Units may have a GLH value of 120, 90 or 60. This indicates the numbers of hours of teaching, directed activity and assessment expected. It also shows the weighting of the unit in the final qualification grade.
Unit in brief	A brief formal statement on the content of the unit that is helpful in understanding its role in the qualification. You can use this in summary documents, brochures etc.
Unit introduction	This is designed with learners in mind. It indicates why the unit is important, how learning is structured, and how learning might be applied when progressing to employment or higher education.
Learning aims	These help to define the scope, style and depth of learning of the unit. You can see where learners should be learning standard requirements ('understand') or where they should be actively researching ('investigate'). You can find out more about the verbs we use in learning aims in <i>Appendix 2</i> .
Summary of unit	This new section helps teachers to see at a glance the main content areas against the learning aims and the structure of the assessment. The content areas and structure of assessment are required. The forms of evidence given are suitable to fulfil the requirements.
Content	This section sets out the required teaching content of the unit. Content is compulsory except when shown as 'e.g.'. Learners should be asked to complete summative assessment only after the teaching content for the unit or learning aim(s) has been covered.

Section	Explanation
Assessment criteria	<p>Each learning aim has Pass and Merit criteria. Each assignment has at least one Distinction criterion.</p> <p>A full glossary of terms used is given in <i>Appendix 2</i>. All assessors need to understand our expectations of the terms used.</p> <p>Distinction criteria represent outstanding performance in the unit. Some criteria require learners to draw together learning from across the learning aims.</p>
Essential information for assignments	<p>This shows the maximum number of assignments that may be used for the unit to allow for effective summative assessment, and how the assessment criteria should be used to assess performance.</p>
Further information for teachers and assessors	<p>The section gives you information to support the implementation of assessment. It is important that this is used carefully alongside the assessment criteria.</p>
Resource requirements	<p>Any specific resources that you need to be able to teach and assess are listed in this section. For information on support resources see <i>Section 10</i>.</p>
Essential information for assessment decisions	<p>This information gives guidance for each learning aim or assignment of the expectations for Pass, Merit and Distinction standard. This section contains examples and essential clarification.</p>
Links to other units	<p>This section shows you the main relationship among units. This section can help you to structure your programme and make best use of materials and resources.</p>
Employer involvement	<p>This section gives you information on the units that can be used to give learners involvement with employers. It will help you to identify the kind of involvement that is likely to be successful.</p>

External units

Section	Explanation
Unit number	The number is in a sequence in the sector. Numbers may not be sequential for an individual qualification.
Unit title	This is the formal title that we always use and it appears on certificates.
Level	All units are at Level 3 on the national framework.
Unit type	This shows if the unit is internal or external only. See structure information in <i>Section 2</i> for full details.
GLH	Units may have a GLH value of 120, 90 or 60 GLH. This indicates the numbers of hours of teaching, directed activity and assessment expected. It also shows the weighting of the unit in the final qualification grade.
Unit in brief	A brief formal statement on the content of the unit.
Unit introduction	This is designed with learners in mind. It indicates why the unit is important, how learning is structured, and how learning might be applied when progressing to employment or higher education.
Summary of assessment	This sets out the type of external assessment used and the way in which it is used to assess achievement.
Assessment outcomes	These show the hierarchy of knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours that are assessed. Includes information on how this hierarchy relates to command terms in sample assessment materials (SAMs).
Essential content	For external units all the content is obligatory, the depth of content is indicated in the assessment outcomes and sample assessment materials (SAMs). The content will be sampled through the external assessment over time, using the variety of questions or tasks shown.
Grade descriptors	We use grading descriptors when making judgements on grade boundaries. You can use them to understand what we expect to see from learners at particular grades.
Key terms typically used in assessment	These definitions will help you analyse requirements and prepare learners for assessment.
Resources	Any specific resources that you need to be able to teach and assess are listed in this section. For information on support resources see <i>Section 10</i> .
Links to other units	This section shows the main relationship among units. This section can help you to structure your programme and make best use of materials and resources.
Employer involvement	This section gives you information on the units that can be used to give learners involvement with employers. It will help you to identify the kind of involvement that is likely to be successful.

Index of units

This section contains all the units developed for this qualification. Please refer to *page 4* to check which units are available in all qualifications in the music sector.

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Unit 1: Practical Music Theory and Harmony

Level: **3**

Unit type: **Internal**

Guided learning hours: **90**

Unit in brief

Learners develop knowledge and understanding of music theory and harmony, and apply their understanding in practical scenarios.

Unit introduction

Music theory and harmony relates to all forms of music. It is about how the music we make and listen to is constructed and how it works. This unit will develop your knowledge and understanding of fundamental musical theory and how it's applied in practical musical activities. You will develop and apply theoretical knowledge in a relevant, useful and meaningful way.

In this unit, you will develop an understanding of the signs and symbols associated with the notation of pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and expression. You will learn how to interpret both traditional and alternate forms of notation with a high degree of accuracy. You will learn how scales are constructed and apply them to compose melodies, and how to use chords and progressions in different ways when making music. You will learn to select and deploy various devices to create melodic lines that are creative and convincing. Through a composition or arrangement, you will gain a secure and thorough understanding of a variety of types of chords and learn to apply them with high levels of skill and proficiency in the use of harmony. You will use this learning to produce a piece of musical notation that fully articulates your intentions so that they can be efficiently realised and interpreted in a performance situation.

This unit will give you a working knowledge of musical theory and harmony, and the fundamental skills essential for progression to higher education courses, including degrees in music and music for media. It will also prepare you for a variety of careers in the music and media industries.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Examine the signs and symbols used in musical notation
- B** Explore the application of melodic composition based on musical elements
- C** Explore the application of chords and cadences for composition or arrangement
- D** Produce correct musical notation for performance.

Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Examine the signs and symbols used in musical notation	A1 Rhythm and pitch in staff notation A2 Rhythm and pitch in alternative forms of notation A3 How tempo, dynamics and expression can be notated	A report, video tutorial or presentation to demonstrate and explain the signs and symbols used in various examples of notated music.
B Explore the application of melodic composition based on musical elements	B1 Constructing scales B2 Melodic construction and development B3 Rhythmic devices B4 Application of melodic compositional skills	A practical or recorded demonstration of the creation of melodies, in response to chosen or given harmonic starting points.
C Explore the application of chords and cadences for composition or arrangement	C1 Application of chordal harmony C2 Application of chord progressions	A practical or recorded demonstration of the harmonisation of melody with chords, in response to chosen or given melodies.
D Produce correct musical notation for performance	D1 Appropriate forms of notation for the context D2 Transposition D3 Production of notation	A set of parts for an arrangement or composition that are appropriate for the performers and context.

Content

Learning aim A: Examine the signs and symbols used in musical notation

Interpretation of signs and symbols by selecting and demonstrating examples using pieces of music.

A1 Rhythm and pitch in staff notation

- Clefs – treble, bass.
- Names and positions of notes on the staff, including ledger lines.
- Accidentals.
- Intervals (up to one octave) – major, perfect, minor, diminished, augmented.
- Note and rest values (up to hemidemisemiquavers/64th notes).
- Bars and bar lines.
- Time signatures – simple, compound, complex.
- Key signatures.

A2 Rhythm and pitch in alternative forms of notation

- Guitar tablature.
- Tonic sol-fa.
- Graphic scores.
- Drum notation.
- Chord chart.
- Lead sheet.

A3 How tempo, dynamics and expression can be notated

- Metronome markings.
- Expressions for tempo and tempo changes.
- Expressions for dynamics and dynamic changes.
- Articulation markings.
- Instrumental and vocal techniques such as breathing, glissando, trills, pedal marks etc.

Learning aim B: Explore the application of melodic composition based on musical elements

Methods and techniques of composing melodies and their application in a practical context.

B1 Constructing scales

- Major scale.
- Harmonic, melodic and natural minor scales.
- Major and minor pentatonic.
- Blues scale.
- Whole-tone scale.
- Modes.

B2 Melodic construction and development

- Conjunct and disjunct.
- Diatonic.
- Chromatic.
- Arpeggios.
- Sequences.
- Imitation.
- Inversion.
- Anticipation.
- Melodic augmentation and diminution.
- Call and response.

B3 Rhythmic devices

- Dotted notes.
- Syncopation.
- Augmentation and diminution.
- Triplets, duplets, quintuplets, sextuplets.
- Riff/ostinato.
- Accents.

B4 Application of melodic compositional skills

- Writing melody for specific instruments and lyrics.
- Developing phrases and motifs.
- Using counterpoint/counter melody.
- Harmonising melodies for ensembles such as string quartet, brass section, backing vocals.

Learning aim C: Explore the application of chords and cadences for composition or arrangement

Construction and sound of chords and progressions and their application in practical contexts.

C1 Application of chordal harmony

- Triads.
- Primary chords.
- Secondary chords.
- Seventh chords.
- Augmented chords.
- Diminished chords.
- Extended chords.
- Chromatic chords.

C2 Application of chord progressions

- Three-chord progressions.
- 12-bar blues.
- Circle of fifths progressions.
- Turnaround progressions.
- Minor progressions.
- Secondary progressions.
- Cadences:
 - perfect (V-I, V7-I)
 - plagal (IV-I)
 - imperfect (I-V)
 - interrupted (V-VI).

Learning aim D: Produce correct musical notation for performance

Production of musical notation that is appropriate for particular instruments or musical style.

D1 Appropriate forms of notation for the context

- Appropriate notation for the performer, e.g. staff notation, graphic notation, tablature, lead sheet, chord chart.
- Appropriate notation for the style of music, e.g. classical, jazz, pop, metal.
- Appropriate notation for the instrument/voice.

D2 Transposition

- Transposing for voice and instruments.
- Transposing with and without key signatures using accidentals.
- Transposing chord progressions.

D3 Production of notation

- Fitness for purpose.
- Accuracy of notation.
- Legibility of notation.
- Feedback from musicians and performers.

Assessment criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A: Examine the signs and symbols used in musical notation		A.D1 Assess signs, symbols and markings used in traditional and alternative forms of musical notation with detailed theoretical understanding.
A.P1 Explain signs and symbols used to notate pitch and rhythm in different forms of musical notation. A.P2 Explain tempo, dynamics and expression markings used in musical notation.	A.M1 Analyse signs, symbols and markings used in traditional and alternative forms of musical notation with confidence and accuracy.	
Learning aim B: Explore the application of melodic composition based on musical elements		B.D2 Compose melodies by the assured selection and deployment of melodic and rhythmic devices, demonstrating a detailed understanding of scales and keys. C.D3 Apply chords and cadences in the harmonisation of melody, showing proficiency and detailed theoretical understanding.
B.P3 Compose melodies by selecting and deploying appropriate melodic and rhythmic devices. B.P4 Demonstrate clear understanding of scales and keys.	B.M2 Compose melodies by the assured selection and deployment of melodic and rhythmic devices, demonstrating a competent understanding of scales and keys.	
Learning aim C: Explore the application of chords and cadences for composition or arrangement		D.D4 Produce accurate and accomplished musical notation for performance in different keys, selecting the most suitable systems to enable proficiency and achieve high-quality outcomes.
C.P5 Apply appropriate chords in the harmonisation of melody. C.P6 Apply appropriate cadences in the harmonisation of melody.	C.M3 Apply appropriate chords and cadences in the harmonisation of melody with competent theoretical understanding.	
Learning aim D: Produce correct musical notation for performance		
D.P7 Produce musical notation for use in performance that is fit for purpose. D.P8 Demonstrate the mostly accurate transposition of a piece of musical notation into different keys.	D.M4 Produce accurate and effective musical notation for performance in different keys, selecting suitable systems to achieve planned outcomes.	

Essential information for assignments

The recommended structure of assessment is shown in the unit summary along with suitable forms of evidence. *Section 6* gives information on setting assignments and there is further information on our website.

There is a maximum number of four summative assignments for this unit. The relationship of the learning aims and criteria is:

Learning aim: A (A.P1, A.P2, A.M1, A.D1)

Learning aims: B and C (B.P3, B.P4, C.P5, C.P6, B.M2, C.M3, B.D2, C.D3)

Learning aim: D (D.P7, D.P8, D.M4, D.D4)

Further information for teachers and assessors

Resource requirements

For this unit, learners must have access to:

- a range of notated pieces of music, including traditional and alternative forms
- instruments such as guitars and keyboards
- compositional software.

Essential information for assessment decisions

Learners will show their understanding of different forms of notation using practical examples, which can be recordings or demonstrated using instruments. This can be in the form of their choice, for example a presentation, a report, a video blog.

Learning aim A

For distinction standard, learners will display an adept and exact understanding of the signs and symbols associated with the notation of pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and expression. They will interpret both traditional and alternate forms of notation with a high degree of accuracy and make clear connections between the signs, symbols and aural examples. They will demonstrate detailed links between the symbols and other elements of musical theory and harmony, such as the link between chord symbols, scales and key signatures, and how this can be used by musicians in different scenarios.

For merit standard, learners will display a confident and competent understanding of the signs and symbols associated with the notation of pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and expression. They will analyse both traditional and alternate forms of notation with accuracy and understanding, using relevant, detailed aural examples as to how the signs and symbols are used by musicians for composition or performance.

For pass standard, learners will display generally secure knowledge and understanding of the signs and symbols associated with the notation of pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and expression. They will be generally correct in their understanding of traditional and alternate notation.

Learning aims B and C

Learners will provide evidence of their ability to compose melody using a given chord sequence. They can provide recordings, practical demonstration or notation as evidence. This can be a portfolio of shorter examples or one more substantial piece of work.

Learners will provide evidence of their ability to harmonise a given melody using chords, made either by a single instrument or harmonising lines. They can provide recordings, practical demonstration or notation as evidence. This can be a portfolio of shorter examples or one more substantial piece of work.

For distinction standard, learners will compose a melody that has a clear and coherent phrase structure and style. They will display imagination in their sense of shape and direction and fully exploit the chord progression used. They will select and deploy various devices to create melodic lines that are creative and convincing. Their melodic writing will show a proficient handling and understanding of scales and keys. They will show a creative and appropriate use of tonality, mood and expression.

Learners will apply secure and thorough knowledge and understanding of a variety of types of chords, using a composition or arrangement. They will apply chords in a manner that shows a high level of skill and proficiency in the use of harmony. They will enhance and reflect the original melody in their use of progression and choice of chord positions and extensions. They will demonstrate imagination, creativity and adept use of cadence.

For merit standard, learners will compose a melody that has some shape and direction and a reasonable sense of phrase structure and style that suits the chord progression used. They will deploy various melodic devices competently. The melodic writing will show a broadly assured handling and understanding of scales and keys. Learners will apply thorough knowledge and understanding of a variety of types of chords, using a composition or arrangement. They will apply chords and progressions to suitably reflect the original melody. They will demonstrate the ability to harmonise melody, displaying a capable use of cadence.

For pass standard, learners will compose a melody that has some phrase structure and style and which is broadly appropriate for the chord sequence used. Some melodic devices will be deployed. The melodic writing will show some awareness of how to handle scales and keys. Learners will apply their knowledge and understanding of chordal harmony and cadence in a fitting manner when harmonising melody, using a composition or arrangement. They will demonstrate a generally secure knowledge and understanding of primary and secondary chords but this may not have been applied consistently and as a result the handling of the harmony may be predictable and formulaic.

Learning aim D

Learners can supply any form of notation that is suitable for the instrumentation or style of the chosen piece. This may include traditional score, guitar tab, drum notations or other appropriate forms.

For distinction standard, learners will transpose harmonised arrangements with consistent accuracy into a variety of different keys. They will present parts in a manner that is completely fit for purpose.

When transcribing parts for others to play, they will select the most appropriate notation systems for the performers and resources being used. They will produce parts that demonstrate attention to detail and fully articulate their intentions so that they can be efficiently realised and interpreted in a performance situation.

For merit standard, learners will transpose harmonised arrangements into a variety of different keys competently and with a high degree of accuracy. There may be some inconsistency evident in the transpositions.

When transcribing parts for others to play, they will select appropriate notation systems for the performers and resources being used. They will produce parts that are well presented, clear and accurate. In an actual performance situation, other performers will interpret these parts with ease and learners' intentions will be clear.

For pass standard, learners will transpose single melodic lines and chord sequences into various keys but they may not always be entirely accurate when doing so. When transcribing parts for others to play, they will select appropriate notation systems for the performers and resources being used. They will present parts that are legible and accurate enough to be interpreted by another performer in an actual performance situation but there may be some aspects that are unclear or unconventional.

Links to other units

This unit links to:

- Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance
- Unit 4: Composing Music
- Unit 5: Music Performance Session Styles
- Unit 7: Improvising Music
- Unit 8: Arranging Music
- Unit 9: Composing Music.

Employer involvement

Centres can involve employers in the delivery of this unit if there are local opportunities to do so. There is no specific guidance related to this unit.

Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry

Level: **3**

Unit type: **External**

Guided learning hours: **90**

Unit in brief

Learners explore what it is that makes someone a professional in the music industry and how to put forward a bid for work.

Unit introduction

This unit considers the importance of professional practice in the music industry and is designed to enable you to develop the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding needed. Behind the bright lights, costumes, gigs, sessions and festivals, the music industry is run by people who are measured by how professional they are in their behaviour. Being professional is not optional in the music industry – it is key – and the industry treats it as highly important. Being professional is something that you have to learn very quickly as judgements are made early and building and maintaining your reputation is important when you are self-employed and freelance.

In this unit, you will gain an understanding of what is meant by the term 'professional practice' as well as what it means to be a freelancer working in the music industry. You will understand the professional skills that are important in the industry and learn the importance of financial management, effective interpersonal skills and working with others.

The unit emphasises the importance of continual self-development in a rapidly-changing sector and how essential it is to communicate clearly to give you the best chance when competing for roles in the industry. Taking a professional approach to working in the industry is as essential as having a good product to market. This unit outlines the qualities that industry professionals expect of people working with them in order to progress, whether to employment or higher education.

Summary of assessment

This unit is assessed under supervised conditions.

Learners must be given the task and allowed three hours to carry out research under monitored conditions. Learners then must be given five hours to complete the task under supervised conditions. Both monitored preparation and supervised assessment can be arranged over a number of sessions during the two-week period timetabled by Pearson.

During the supervised assessment period, learners will be asked to create a project plan, budget, rationale and presentation in response to music industry scenarios which musicians might reasonably find themselves bidding for. These scenarios will vary each series and be taken from the range of freelance opportunities available within the music industry, for example, performance events, community projects and creative enterprises.

Pearson sets and marks the task.

The assessment availability is January and May/June.

The number of marks for the unit is 70.

Assessment outcomes

AO1 Understand the importance of professional practice in the music industry

AO2 Understand operational requirements relevant to specific music industry organisations and practices

AO3 Demonstrate the ability to apply the skills required for working in the music industry

AO4 Demonstrate the requirements for professional presentation of ideas

AO5 Evaluate the skills and knowledge needed for professional roles in the music industry

Essential content

The essential content is set out under content areas. Learners must cover all specified content before the assessment.

A Professional practice for industry success

A1 Professional behaviours

- Being prepared, reliable and committed.
- Being organised, planning using prioritisation skills.
- Communication skills, awareness of others.
- Punctuality, meeting deadlines, scheduling.
- Teamwork, when to take the lead and when to delegate, outcomes and making decisions.

A2 Project planning

- Gathering information:
 - organisations that commission work – arts agencies, arts bodies, councils, charities, commercial organisations such as record companies, festival organisers
 - individuals – entrepreneurs and contacts within your network who may commission work.
- Short-, medium- and long-term plans.
 - Documentation and presentation of plans, schedules, action plans, priorities and lists.
 - Being able to set a realistic and achievable project plan for the immediate project.
 - Daily scheduling when necessary, action plans for self and others when working as part of a team.
 - Planning for other constraints and costs involved in putting on events or releasing product.
- Prioritising actions and how priorities are worked out.
- Contingency and mitigation:
 - carefully generating contingency plans for outcomes other than that expected
 - exploring mitigation, solutions and resolutions to identified and unexpected risks.
- Creative vision:
 - exploring creative ideas in the context of a bid for work
 - creative problem solving.

A3 Legal requirements

- Copyright and the issues surrounding the distribution of media and digital rights management:
 - intellectual property rights
 - the rights of the copyright owner, licensing, fair dealing and fair usage
 - duration of copyright
 - obtaining permissions and how copyright and internet support/conflict each other.
- Copyrighting your work:
 - the role of music licensing organisations, PRS for Music.
- Licensing:
 - PPL, PRS for Music.
- Formation of a contract:
 - types of contracts – performance contracts, booking contracts, manager contracts, recording contracts, producer and remix contracts
 - assistance and services supplied by professional unions and trade bodies within the music and entertainment industries.
- Insurance:
 - types of insurance – public liability, personal and equipment insurance.

A4 Health and safety

- Health and safety regulations/responsibilities of venues, individuals and organisations.
- Risk assessment and management.
- Set-up of staging and musical equipment, e.g. knowing who sets up and manages equipment and how their safety and wellbeing is ensured; working at heights; equipment and environmental hazards.
- Principles of lifting heavy objects.
- Electrical safety.
- How loudness should be approached and managed.
- Lifestyle and pressures that could be damaging to health and wellbeing.

B Music industry roles, organisations and requirements

B1 Working with others in music industry organisations

Working with others in music industry organisations

- Venues and live performance:
 - roles – front of house, liaison manager, stage production, merchandising roles, technical and management roles, event co-ordinator
 - equipment hire companies and artist-booking agencies
 - small-, medium- and large venues locally, regionally and nationally.
- Production, record labels, film and television:
 - roles – artist and repertoire, bookers/agency, songwriter, composer, artist manager, music blogger, music journalist and producer
 - small, medium and large production companies.
- Marketing and promotion, advertising and marketing, social media:
 - roles – promoter, booking agent, plugger, designer and digital co-ordinator
 - merchandising and agencies.
- Roles involved in live performance and recording:
 - roles – session musician, recording engineer, studio manager, live sound engineer
 - recording studio, providers of resources and logistics for the performance of live music and events, service companies
 - music producer, musical director, conductor.

B2 Financial requirements

Personal and organisational financial processes, requirements and procedures.

- Producing a budget:
 - projecting income and calculating costs
 - workable budgets balanced against projected income from sales such as tickets, programmes and merchandise, set against expenditure
 - calculating fees
 - documenting budgets and the variety of formats in which budgetary information can be communicated – spreadsheets, charts, balance sheets and cash flows
 - clarity of expectations when negotiating contracts and fees.
- Business finances:
 - financial considerations, including business plans, funding, profit and loss, cash flow, invoices, bookkeeping
 - running your own business, tax, invoices, self-management.
- Present findings for defined audiences:
 - simple breakdown of costs, production of a budget, where headline figures can be used and when precise costs should be provided
 - using figures to support proposals, data predictions, capturing how investment will develop opportunity in the future.

- Spreadsheets, charts:
 - presenting financial information in a professional manner, templates, layout
 - labelling and clarity of the information being presented.
- Personal finances:
 - personal taxation and National Insurance contributions, pensions, pay and expenses, paying bills and subscriptions on time
 - personal budgets and cash flow, how cash flow can be prioritised.

C Skills for working in the music sector

C1 Communication skills

- Communicating and developing negotiation skills; networking:
 - making contacts and meeting people with skills who can offer services and help with your business
 - gain work experience, internship opportunities
 - maintaining your network, collecting data, using technology to maintain contacts and promote yourself
 - sharing information and working with others to make sure a project is deliverable, sharing responsibility and costs
 - creating an online presence.

C2 Working on a freelance basis

- Self-employment:
 - advantages and disadvantages of being self-employed, work/life balance, setting targets.
- Funding sources:
 - banks and business advice centres, chamber of commerce, Young Enterprise schemes, agencies and social enterprises that support business start-ups and the arts.
- Clients:
 - finding clients, maintaining relationships, networking
 - marketing and promotion, professional approach at all times, flexibility, using social networks, business cards.
- Quality:
 - professional quality criteria, how others judge your work, setting standards
 - being aware of the expectations of others
 - the importance of self-management and planning, making realistic goals and taking responsibility.
- The importance of persistence, resilience and learning from experience:
 - listening carefully and responding to feedback
 - developing reflective practice skills
 - evaluating experiences and making recommendations for further developments.

D Presenting ideas to others

D1 Preparing ideas

Exploring ideas and opportunities:

- carrying out appropriate research
- using a creative approach
- responding to a given brief
- being aware of the audience in planning
- time management and meeting deadlines.

D2 Presenting ideas

Putting your ideas forward:

- forms of presenting, the bidding process, supporting statements, personal profile and justifying your ideas
- applying research to given scenarios
- ability to explain and justify ideas in a rationale
- demonstrating professional practice.

Grade descriptors

To achieve a grade learners are expected to demonstrate the following attributes across the essential content of the unit. The principle of best fit will apply in awarding grades.

Level 3 Pass

Learners are able to devise documentation that demonstrates a basic knowledge and understanding of the music industry, with some reference to the scenario. Learners are able to make suggestions, recommending the resources necessary to complete activities in the context of the music industry and the possibilities of the budget. Learners will show limited skills in demonstrating awareness of industry expectations.

Research on the set scenario will be carried out. Learners will be able to propose recommendations and demonstrate an understanding of the challenge. They may address the requirements of the scenario but the rationale will be limited and there will be no evidence of innovation in presenting suggestions and recommendations. There will be limited knowledge shown of the requirements of industry-specific roles.

Level 3 Distinction

Learners are able to produce a set of professional, accurate documents that demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the music industry in the context of the scenario. Learners are able to support their suggestions with justification and informed evidence that is meaningful and relevant in the wider commercial and business world. Research will be appropriately used in the set task and evaluative judgements will be present in learners' responses, indicating that alternatives and contingencies have been considered, relevant to the context.

Learners are able to recommend and justify activities, resources and recommendations that are specific and relevant, demonstrating a thorough understanding of interrelationships between all elements in the rationale. Learners are able to show an entrepreneurial approach, demonstrating initiative in suggestions made, and presenting sustained lines of argument, leading to a set of responses entirely relevant in the context of the scenario, the possibilities of the budget and the logistical constraints.

Key words typically used in assessment

The following table shows the key words that will be used consistently by Pearson in our assessments to ensure that learners are rewarded for demonstrating the necessary skills.

Please note: the list below will not necessarily be used in every assessment and is provided for guidance only.

Command or term	Definition
Bid	Submit an application for a specific project and for a stated price.
Budget	An estimate of income and expenditure for a given project.
Describe	Learners' work gives a clear, objective account in their own words, showing recall and, in some cases, application of the relevant features and information about a subject.
Justify	Learners give reasons or evidence to support an opinion or course of action.
Present	To submit something for observation and/or consideration by others.
Professional practice	Understanding the behaviours required in order to fulfil roles in the specific sector.
Project plan	Learners present resources and timelines in order to complete a task, or series of tasks, to achieve specific requirements or objectives, showing progress from start to finish.
Rationale	A set of reasons or a logical basis for a course of action.

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit from employer involvement in the form of:

- guest speakers from music businesses
- work experience
- own music materials as exemplars
- support from local music related business staff as mentors.

Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance

Level: **3**

Unit type: **External**

Guided learning hours: **120**

Unit in brief

Learners work as part of a musical ensemble and develop their skills and techniques in rehearsal and performance.

Unit introduction

Live performance in front of an audience is an important part of the music industry that has become a growth area with an increasing use of technology. Musicians rarely work in isolation and the ability to perform as part of an ensemble is an essential skill for any musician, regardless of style. Whether you are part of a pop group or a large symphony orchestra, the skills of teamwork and communication are vital.

In this unit, you will become part of a musical group and will develop your ensemble skills by taking part in rehearsals. As an ensemble, you will be given a list of songs from which you must choose three. You will then learn, rehearse and perform these songs to an audience. You will also provide a presentation on how you used different techniques, stylistic and musical elements in the musical parts you performed. To complete the assessment task within this unit, you will need to select and apply learning from across your programme. It is suggested that you complete the assessment towards the end of the course after you have completed learning from the other units.

This unit will help learners to progress to higher education where there are often situations when ensemble skills are required. This unit can also help learners to progress to employment opportunities in music.

Summary of assessment

This mandatory unit will be assessed through a task completed under supervised conditions. The supervised assessment period will be completed in two hours for a written activity plus the time stipulated for performance evidence (which totals approximately half an hour to three-quarters of an hour). Centres are free to arrange the supervised assessment period how they wish, provided they take place during period timetabled by Pearson.

For assessment, learners will be given list of songs from which they will choose three for a performance. In ensembles that consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of eight members, learners will respond to the choice of repertoire and develop the performance for an audience.

Each learner will submit a clearly labelled digital folder completed at four milestone stages during the process, responding to prompts provided by Pearson. This will include a video recording of the final group performance, between 6 and 15 minutes in duration.

The assessment availability is May/June only.

Sample assessment materials will be available to help centres prepare learners for assessment.

The number of the marks for the unit is 80.

Assessment outcomes

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills needed for rehearsals and ensemble performance

AO2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to interpret an original musical piece

AO3 Apply skills and techniques when contributing to an ensemble during rehearsal and performance

AO4 Be able to contribute towards a performance as part of an ensemble

AO5 Be able to reflect and make connections between responding, planning, rehearsal and performance

Essential content

The essential content is set out under content areas. Learners must cover all specified content before the assessment.

A Explore ensemble skills and techniques

Learners will explore a variety of skills and techniques involved in working as part of a musical ensemble.

A1 Personal ensemble management skills

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Personal organisation of instruments, equipment and music.
- Awareness of health and safety issues.
- Learning material.
- Personal practice between rehearsals.
- Encouragement and positive feedback.
- Rehearsal etiquette.

A2 Ensemble performance skills

- Listening to others.
- Accuracy of rhythm and pitch.
- Playing in time.
- Playing in tune.
- Adjusting to other members of the ensemble.
- Following direction.
- Balancing own part in the ensemble.
- Awareness of own part in the ensemble.
- Reading music.

A3 Teamwork and collaboration

- Giving and taking instruction and direction.
- Trust and co-operation.
- Contributing ideas and problem solving.
- Receptiveness and responsiveness to the ideas of others.
- The impact of unprofessional behaviour.

B Response and planning

B1 Initial response

- Choosing pieces:
 - awareness of instrumental resources
 - awareness of relative skill levels.
- Sourcing and writing parts:
 - listening
 - transcribing
 - transposing.
- Trying out parts and arrangements/styles.
- Agreeing on structure and version.

B2 Planning individual process

- Agreeing on a practice regime:
 - personal practice needs
 - ensemble practice needs.
- Selection and use of performance skills – when to solo and when not to.
- Analysing progress, identifying problems and solutions to inform progression.
- Sharing performance work with peers and responding to feedback.
- Memorising, learning and perfecting material.
- Managing available time to meet deadlines.
- Choosing and making best use of available physical resources.

C Rehearsal

Learners must take part in rehearsals both as part of an ensemble and individually to learn own parts.

C1 Planning rehearsals for ensembles

- Selecting and booking rehearsal space.
- Selecting and booking required equipment.
- Setting up rehearsal space.
- Selecting appropriate repertoire for skill set of ensemble.
- Preparing and learning individual parts.
- Knowledge of music.
- Target setting for rehearsal sessions.

C2 Participating in rehearsals for ensembles

- Warm-up and tuning up.
- Team-building exercises.
- Communication within the ensemble:
 - verbal
 - non-verbal.
- Leading and taking on the role of musical director.
- Taking direction.
- Giving and accepting constructive criticism.
- Maintaining concentration and focus.
- Supporting others.
- Listening and knowing when not to play.
- Conducting, marking time, maintaining tempo.

C3 Responding to musical developments

- Demonstrating/vocalising parts.
- Identifying problems and inaccuracies while maintaining own part.
- Advising of phrasing, articulation, balance and dynamics.
- Suggestions for arrangement.
- Monitoring progress and planning next session.

C4 Reflecting on a rehearsal

- Analysing decisions made.
- Justifying methods and actions.
- Identifying personal and group strengths and weaknesses.
- Identifying areas to improve.
- Setting targets and goals for subsequent sessions.
- Evaluating personal effectiveness.

D Performance skills as part of an ensemble

D1 Musical performance skills for an ensemble

- Intonation.
- Instrumental tuning.
- Pitching during performance.
- Tightness.
- Tempo.
- Handling of section changes, beginnings and endings.
- Technical proficiency.
- Musical expression.
- Critical listening and response to requirements.
- Interpretation, balance, phrasing and dynamics.
- Fitting individual role in ensemble.
- Adapting to mistakes and unexpected occurrences.
- Volume level and blend.
- Maintaining stage discipline.

D2 Physical performance and presentation skills for an ensemble

- Selection of other material.
- Stage set-up and layout.
- Set list/programme of pieces.
- Self-presentation:
 - image, costume
 - make-up if appropriate.
- Physical co-ordination.
- On stage movement.
- Entrance and exit from the stage.
- Confidence and dealing with nerves.
- Microphone or instrumental technique for stage.

D3 Communication skills for ensemble performance

- Verbal communication with audience and ensemble.
- Physical communication with audience and ensemble.
- On stage discretion and appropriate tone.
- Improvisation and responsiveness to situation.

E Critical review of process and performance

E1 Review and reflect on the use of musical elements and techniques

- How musical elements are applied within a piece (as applicable):
 - timbre
 - rhythm
 - melody
 - harmony
 - form
 - texture
 - dynamics.
- How the characteristics of a musical style are applied.
- How instrumental or vocal techniques are applied.

E2 Review and reflect on the effectiveness of the process

- Individual process for learning parts.
- Individual contribution to rehearsal.
- Management of time, tasks and available resources.
- Suitability of arrangements and parts.
- Execution of group rehearsal skills.

E3 Review and reflect on the effectiveness of the performance

- Execution of group performance skills.
- Clarity of interpretation.
- Creativity and imagination displayed.
- Production values.
- Identification of strengths and areas for development.
- Review of performance against original plan.
- Audience response and feedback.

Grade descriptors

To achieve a grade learners are expected to demonstrate these attributes across the essential content of the unit. The principle of best fit will apply in awarding grades.

Level 3 Pass

Learners will demonstrate a range of skills and techniques when contributing to the rehearsal to bring about improvements. Their approach will be generally appropriate for the needs of the music and the ensemble, showing sufficient contribution during the rehearsals. Learners will deal with challenges that arise in a proficient manner, effectively working in collaboration with the group and maintaining a focus on the targets for the session. They will debrief the rehearsal session, communicating their actions and decisions for improving targets and goals.

Learners will demonstrate an awareness of the key stylistic features of the selected genre. Learners will explain their musical intentions and their manipulation of stylistic features, instrumental or vocal technique and musical elements but the explanation will be superficial and lacking in critical analysis and illustration.

In performing to an audience, learners will show a range of individual and ensemble skills and collaboration and communication with the group. Learners' individual performance may have some inaccuracy but this will not detract from the overall group performance. Learners will reflect on rehearsals and performance, discussing decisions regarding the planning, rehearsal process and performance. They may communicate areas for improvement but will lack clear targets and goals.

Level 3 Distinction

Learners will demonstrate a comprehensive range of skills and techniques when contributing to the rehearsal to bring about effective improvements. Their approach will be highly appropriate for the needs of the music and the ensemble, showing sustained and accomplished contribution during the rehearsals. Learners will deal with challenges that arise in a proficient manner, effectively working in collaboration with the group and maintaining a focus on the targets for the session. They will debrief the rehearsal session, giving comprehensive understanding of their actions and decisions for improvement of targets and goals supported by coherent justified examples.

Learners will demonstrate a sophisticated practical awareness of the stylistic features of the selected genre. They will systematically critically analyse their musical intentions and their manipulation of stylistic features, instrumental or vocal technique and musical elements, referring in detail to specific ideas, techniques and effects to illustrate and elaborate their analysis.

In performing to an audience, learners will perform in an assured way with fluency and complete accuracy. They will show a high level of musical proficiency and expression and will display confidence and command of their individual role throughout the performance. They will communicate with the ensemble and the audience, both verbally and non-verbally, in a manner that fully fits the occasion and venue. Learners will reflect sensitively on the whole process from choosing a piece to performing it. They will show a comprehensive understanding of areas of strength and areas for improvement, giving clear examples to support their conclusions. They will produce sensible and realistic suggestions of how improvements could be made.

Key words typically used in assessment

The following table shows the key words that will be used consistently by Pearson in our assessments to ensure learners are rewarded for demonstrating the necessary skills.

Please note: the list below will not necessarily be used in every paper/session and is provided for guidance only.

Command or term	Definition
Arrange (individual)	To take existing musical material and transpose it to a specific instrument, making use of the idiomatic strengths of that instrument.
Arrange (group)	To take an existing piece of music and develop and adapt the original approach to the musical elements to create a new and personalised version. The new versions may differ in instrumentation, structure, tempo and harmony.
Communicate	Learners are able to convey ideas or information to others.
Debrief	Learners review a session or process on completion.
Describe	Learners' work gives a clear, objective account in their own words, showing recall and, in some cases, application of the relevant features and information about a subject.
Evaluate	Drawing on varied information, themes or concepts to consider aspects such as strengths, weaknesses, alternative actions, relevance or significance. Inquiries lead to a supported judgement showing relationship to its context, often in a conclusion.
Musical direction	The act of leading an ensemble through a piece of music to fulfil the composer's/arranger's intention; and offering creative suggestions when developing pieces in rehearsals.
Musical expression	The playing or singing of a piece of music with emotional connection by using musical elements (e.g. dynamics, timbre, intensity, articulation).
Part	A single instrumental aspect of a full group arrangement, e.g. a bass line or vocal.
Professional	Understanding the behaviours expected in the commercial musical environment.
Stylistic interpretation	The playing of music in a manner that is accurate and suitable in terms of the chosen style.
Technical proficiency	The application of technical instrumental or vocal skills to achieve desired outcomes.

Links to other units

This unit is synoptic and is designed to draw on knowledge, skills and techniques from across the qualification.

Employer involvement

Centres can involve employers in the delivery of this unit if there are local opportunities to do so. There is no specific guidance related to this unit.

Unit 4: Composing Music

Level: **3**

Unit type: **Internal**

Guided learning hours: **60**

Unit in brief

Learners explore composing music from the initial stages to the final product, developing skills for composition in a variety of styles.

Unit introduction

Composing music originates from the desire to create an artistic product, capturing emotions and expressing feelings to others through sound. Music composing needs the acquisition of theory, creative and practical skills to advance understanding. This, in turn, helps develop the ability to compose different styles and genres of music. A proficient composer will be able to produce music responding to a brief while acknowledging the compositional conventions and techniques used to extend, develop and manipulate this art form.

In this unit, you will look at how composers work, using the same fundamental building blocks across all styles and genres. You will explore musical material, developing your ideas into a final composition using acoustic or electronic instruments.

This unit gives you a good foundation in composition techniques, giving you the skills you need to be able to study in higher education or to seek employment as a freelance composer in a competitive industry.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Examine compositional techniques
- B** Explore original musical material
- C** Develop an original composition.

Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Examine compositional techniques	<p>A1 Traditional elements of composition</p> <p>A2 Analysis of conventions in composition from the history of music repertoire and current music</p>	<p>A log report focusing on composing techniques.</p> <p>A review of works by composers/artists studied during the course, with annotated score drafts and/or performance critic, illustrating the impact on learners' work.</p>
B Explore original musical material	<p>B1 Composition – ideas and resourcing</p> <p>B2 Manipulation and extension of musical content</p>	A portfolio of different compositional ideas.
C Develop an original composition	<p>C1 How to present a composition using a selected style or genre</p> <p>C2 How to present a composition using or combining appropriate notation or recording software</p>	A portfolio of compositions in a format of the learner's choice.

Content

Learning aim A: Examine compositional techniques

A1 Traditional elements of composition

- Melodic construction:
 - development of themes and motifs – creating melodic material from a starting point, the ‘germination’ processes – applying coherency to initial ideas, applying scale theory to melody
 - choosing resources appropriately including, but not limited to, instrumental expressive timbre characteristics and individual instrumental techniques: pizzicato/arco, tongued/legato, muted/distortion or harmonics, acquiring the desired compositional effect through the use of resources including live or sequenced production using synth sounds
 - melodic structure, e.g. melody in step or leap, use of pitch, diatonic/non-diatonic, duration of melody and range, question and answer, e.g. balancing melodic material to create a conversational element and adding an overall arch to the melodic shape
 - countermelody, e.g. combining melodies for impact
 - improvisation in context, score, recording, commentary.
- Harmonic construction:
 - major and minor harmonic systems, understanding key signatures, intervals and chord progressions – riffs and hooks
 - consonant and dissonant harmony, e.g. clashing chords, bitonal, atonal
 - bass line construction against melody, coherency and appropriate format
 - modal harmony
 - using scales to support harmonic construction, e.g. pentatonic scale.
- Rhythm:
 - time signatures and understanding simple, duple, triple and compound metres
 - applying rhythmic features to melody and harmony, e.g. working with the infinite number of rhythmic combinations against melodic and harmonic patterns
 - investigating rhythmic complexity, e.g. cross-rhythms, syncopation, displacement, polyrhythm, stop-time, pauses, ritardando, rallentando, accelerando
 - exploring rhythmic patterns and conventions.
- Texture:
 - monophonic, homophonic and polyphonic textures
 - unison, stereophonic and antiphony – blending resources effectively
 - experimenting with soundscapes – creating a ‘warm’ sound or ‘thin’ sound to support desired outcome and effect
 - word painting.
- Form and structure:
 - understanding the key forms used throughout the music industry – verse/chorus, 32-bar song form, binary, ternary (including ternary), variations, rondo, 12-bar blues
 - structural components – intro, bridge, verse, chorus
 - applying the appropriate structure for desired composition effect.

A2 Analysis of conventions in composition from the history of music repertoire and current music

- Explore a wide range of music examples.
- Analyse compositions from different styles and genres.
- Compare composition techniques across repertoire.

Learning aim B: Explore original musical material

B1 Composition – ideas and resourcing

Use melody, harmony, rhythm, texture or structure as a starting point to create ideas.

- Nucleus:
 - practical activity to compose the material from which the rest of the piece of music will grow
 - developing theme(s) – applying elements of composition to assist process
 - exploring contrasts in pitch, dynamics, tempo, mood, forces.

B2 Manipulation and extension of musical content

Extending and developing material:

- repetition and sequence – applying appropriate use, e.g. canon, matching the effectiveness and quality against musical impact
- thematic development
- variation – develop thematic material through subtle changes and alterations to melody/harmony/rhythm/structure of theme
- musical decoration and ornamentation, including trills, turns, grace notes, pitch bending, glissando, mordents
- manipulating musical material using melodic, harmonic and rhythmic devices to extend composition, including imitation, inversion, retrograde, augmentation, diminution, ostinato, syncopation, transposition and rhythmic displacement
- working with a variety of layers as a developmental and manipulative tool
- melodic layers – multiple melodies, fugue, countermelody and constructing bass lines from melodic material
- harmonic layers – building up of triads, use of 7th/9th/11th/13th chords
- modulation and key changes
- manage formal music structure systems appropriately to ensure continuity, change and contrast
- new unexpected material – create the suspension of anticipation.

Learning aim C: Develop an original composition

C1 How to present a composition using a selected style or genre

- Demonstrate composing skill by presenting work in a selected style or genre using compositional ideas and extended techniques.

C2 How to present a composition using or combining appropriate notation or recording software

- Appropriate presentation methods – conventions of particular styles/genres and situations, CD and DVD, MIDI and audio files.
- Types of scores – staff notation, graphic, guitar or drum tablature, lead sheet, sleeve notes, chord chart, prose scores, flexible scoring, effective and relevant computer software:
 - using and presenting resources
 - recording or sequencing with MIDI
 - range of format, types of score
 - supporting material construction – critical commentary and log reports
 - timings.

Assessment criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A: Examine compositional techniques		A.D1 Evaluate and compare the use of compositional techniques to produce different pieces of music.
A.P1 Identify elements of composition in a music repertoire. A.P2 Explain how compositional techniques are used by composers to produce different musical material.	A.M1 Analyse elements of composition in a music repertoire accurately. A.M2 Analyse the use of compositional techniques to produce different pieces of music.	
Learning aim B: Explore original musical material		B.D2 Demonstrate complex and contrasting extended composition ideas using extended techniques in an appropriate format.
B.P3 Demonstrate compositional ideas and present them in an appropriate format. B.P4 Identify techniques used to extend, develop and manipulate different musical material.	B.M3 Demonstrate contrasting and extended compositional ideas in an appropriate format.	
Learning aim C: Develop an original composition		C.D3 Demonstrate ability to create original compositions for a personal portfolio, showing understanding of context, extended and comprehensive compositional techniques, codes and conventions.
C.P5 Demonstrate ability to create original compositions for a personal portfolio. C.P6 Demonstrate use of conventions and software in the creation of compositions.	C.M4 Demonstrate ability to create original compositions for a personal portfolio, showing use of codes and conventions.	

Essential information for assignments

The recommended structure of assessment is shown in the unit summary along with suitable forms of evidence. *Section 6* gives information on setting assignments and there is further information on our website.

There is a maximum number of three summative assignments for this unit. The relationship of the learning aims and criteria is:

Learning aim: A (A.P1, A.P2, A.M1, A.M2, A.D1)

Learning aim: B (B.P3, B.P4, B.M3, B.D2)

Learning aim: C (C.P5, C.P6, C.M4, C.D3)

Further information for teachers and assessors

Resource requirements

For this unit, learners must have access to:

- a wide range of repertoire recordings of different music
- a range of scores, including staff notation, guitar and drum tablature, graphic and annotated scores
- space to work and rehearse in groups, as appropriate
- instruments (where possible), notably keyboards to be used as tools to underpin theoretical concepts.

Essential information for assessment decisions

Learning aim A

For distinction standard, learners will show a secure and detailed understanding of examples of highlighted composers' techniques in their reports. Learners will explain the results of employing specific techniques.

For merit standard, learners will provide a description of how composition techniques adopted by composers have been used and they will show a clear and accurate understanding of the application of such techniques.

For pass standard, learners will identify the composition techniques used by composers in their reports, with examples that show an explanation of their application.

Learning aim B

For distinction standard, learners will extend, develop and manipulate a minimum of three ideas imaginatively. They will show competence in experimenting with a variety of ideas from a range of styles. Learners will fully demonstrate the significance and importance of the structural elements of their composition.

For merit standard, learners will develop and manipulate a minimum of three ideas. Learners will be able to appreciate and show the role and importance of the structural elements in composing through demonstration.

For pass standard, learners will show evidence of manipulating a minimum of three musical ideas. The techniques used will be basic and not always musically/stylistically convincing. The structure of the compositions might be lacking coherence/sense of fluency and appropriate use of form.

Learning aim C

Learners must submit a minimum of two pieces in their portfolios.

For distinction standard, learners will show in their portfolios a wide variety of contrasting composing techniques and elements, used correctly and in a structured way with innovation and imagination. They will clearly present their compositions in a suitable format, such as a recording, computer-generated score, lead sheet or graphic score that can be performed by other musicians. The format will be entirely appropriate to the genre presented. Learners' portfolios will provide evidence of their ability to produce fully completed successful pieces of music showing the creative process throughout.

For merit standard, learners will show in their portfolios a variety of contrasting composing techniques and elements used correctly. They will present their compositions in a suitable format. The format will be appropriate to the genre presented. Learners' portfolios will provide evidence of their ability to work through the creative process.

For pass standard, learners will show in their portfolios some contrasting composing techniques and elements. They will present their compositions in a suitable format to the genre presented. Their portfolios will provide some evidence of the creative process.

Links to other units

This unit links to *Unit 5: Music Performance Session Styles*.

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit from employer involvement in the form of:

- guest speakers from music composing and professional organisations
- work experience
- showing music materials as exemplars.

Unit 5: Music Performance Session Styles

Level: **3**

Unit type: **Internal**

Guided learning hours: **60**

Unit in brief

Learners explore the styles of music encountered in the role of a modern session musician.

Unit introduction

Working as a session musician is one of the most exciting and varied careers available to musicians today. From one-off studio sessions with producers to world tours, skilled session musicians are the backbone of the music industry. Session musicians can be required to learn parts quickly so technical musical knowledge is critical, as is the skill to play in different situations.

In this unit, you will explore a range of genres and styles, investigating their scales, tonality, rhythms, riffs and groove. It will give you greater insight into the skills and knowledge needed to be a working session musician. You will develop your own musical skills as well as the skills of collaboration for performance in different settings, such as the recording studio and the stage. This unit examines skills that can be developed and explored for employment in this area of the music industry, while providing skills and knowledge that can be developed further when progressing to higher education.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Explore music genres and styles
- B** Develop skills in music of different genres and styles
- C** Perform music in different genres and styles.

Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Explore music genres and styles	A1 Musical genres from the 1950s onwards A2 Musical style	Presentation or a blog that explores key styles and genres of music, highlighting the historical and theoretical aspects.
B Develop skills in music of different genres and styles	B1 Individual practice and development B2 Rehearsal and development of genres and styles	Evidence documenting a sustained period of developmental practical work, both with peers and individually.
C Perform music in different genres and styles	C1 Performance of different genres and styles C2 Interpretation of musical styles	Audio recordings and video recordings of sessions and performances showing different genres and styles.

Content

Learning aim A: Explore music genres and styles

A1 Musical genres from the 1950s onwards

- Blues, such as:
 - country blues, gospel blues, folk blues, jump blues, Chicago blues, rhythm and blues.
- Country and folk, such as:
 - country and western, bluegrass, Cajun, zydeco, rockabilly, country rock, traditional regional (Irish, English, Scottish, etc.) folk, folk rock.
- Jazz, such as:
 - trad jazz, swing, bebop, cool jazz, Latin jazz, jazz rock, jazz fusion.
- Rock, such as:
 - rock and roll, psychedelic rock, prog rock, classic rock, hard rock, heavy metal, punk, stadium rock, grunge, indie rock.
- Soul, such as:
 - gospel, funk, neo-soul, contemporary R&B.
- Dance, such as:
 - Philly soul, disco, house, garage, techno, electronica, dubstep.
- Rap, such as:
 - hip-hop, rap, gangsta rap, rap rock, UK garage, grime, trap.
- Pop, such as:
 - synthpop, bubblegum pop, traditional pop, boy/girl band.
- Caribbean and Latin, such as:
 - ska, rocksteady, reggae, dancehall, bashment, salsa, samba, soca, reggaeton.

A2 Musical style

- Musical styles:
 - theoretical and historical aspects of the use of – harmony, choice of chord extensions, scales, riffs, melodic conventions, rhythmic conventions, tonality, roles of instruments, textures, lyrics, vocal techniques used and role of improvisation.
- Sonic conventions:
 - theoretical and historical aspects of – instrument type and model, choice of amplifier and settings, use of effects and live processing, pedals, tone, choice of synthesiser model, synthesiser settings, live processing, samplers, choice of samples.
- Stylistic interpretation:
 - theoretical and historical aspects of phrasing, groove, instrumentation, arrangement, performance conventions, instrument-specific techniques.

Learning aim B: Develop skills in music of different genres and styles

B1 Individual practice and development

- Practical preparation, such as:
 - working from lead sheets, tabs, chord charts, notation
 - working out songs by ear from CDs, playlists, MP3s and notating them
 - equipment and voice care, effects and tone
 - choosing material suitable to musicians and technical ability, targeting listening lists, agreeing arrangements.
- Musical preparation, such as:
 - learning stylistically appropriate scales, chords, riffs, rhythms
 - technical exercises to develop accuracy and speed suitable to chosen genres
 - tone production, recording own practice for improvement and checking against original recordings.

- Developing music, such as:
 - working out chords and harmonies from lead sheets, working out chord voicing and voice leading
 - practising improvisation and solos
 - writing parts, lyrics and working out arrangement ideas, rhythms, textural considerations.
- Working with others:
 - being musical director, leading rehearsals or sectionals
 - taking direction, responding to feedback, working with a producer.

B2 Rehearsal and development of genres and styles

Preparation:

- stylistic traits of each genre for all players in an ensemble, shared aims and objectives, listening to each other
- rehearsals, workshops, jam sessions, dress rehearsals and sound checks
- order of solos, cues, running order (for live performance), keys, lyrics, arrangement development, group improvisation.

Learning aim C: Perform music in different genres and styles

C1 Performance of different genres and styles

- Performance situations, such as:
 - joining an established band/group
 - working with a covers band
 - guest performances with a house band
 - providing parts for an electronic dance music (EDM) producer
 - working as a studio musician
 - working with a singer or working with a writer to demo recordings of differing genres and styles
 - providing backing vocals.
- Specific skills, such as:
 - reading from charts or notation, at sight
 - transposing to fit with other musicians, at sight
 - changing feel and groove as requested
 - improvising solos or parts.

C2 Interpretation of musical styles

- Interpretation:
 - instrumental set-ups for each style
 - 'sounds' of styles and genres and how to obtain them
 - idiomatic instrumental techniques and characteristics of styles
 - styles of notable musicians in a genre and key techniques.
- Specific skills:
 - stage presence and performance attitude for different settings
 - responding to cues and other musicians
 - musical communication
 - reading from tabs, charts or notation, improvisation
 - accuracy, timing and feel.

Assessment criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A: Explore music genres and styles		A.D1 Evaluate musical genres and styles, comparing similarities and differences with a coherent and complete overview.
A.P1 Explain differences of musical genres. A.P2 Explain musical styles of different genres.	A.M1 Analyse musical genres and styles, highlighting similarities and differences.	
Learning aim B: Develop skills in music of different genres and styles		B.D2 Practise different genres and styles of music effectively and consistently, showing enhanced technical ability and understanding.
B.P3 Identify different genres and styles to practise. B.P4 Practise different genres and styles for performance, individually or collaboratively.	B.M2 Practise different genres and styles for performance competently, showing progress.	
Learning aim C: Perform music in different genres and styles		C.D3 Perform music of different genres and styles, showing precise and accurate performance with wholly appropriate stylistic interpretation.
C.P5 Demonstrate the performance of different genres and styles of music in performance. C.P6 Demonstrate interpretation of different genres and styles in performance.	C.M3 Perform music of different genres and styles, showing secure performance with appropriate interpretation skills.	

Essential information for assignments

The recommended structure of assessment is shown in the unit summary along with suitable forms of evidence. *Section 6* gives information on setting assignments and there is further information on our website.

There is a maximum number of three summative assignments for this unit. The relationship of the learning aims and criteria is:

Learning aim: A (A.P1, A.P2, A.M1, A.D1)

Learning aim: B (B.P3, B.P4, B.M2, B.D2)

Learning aim: C (C.P5, C.P6, C.M3, C.D3)

Further information for teachers and assessors

Resource requirements

For this unit, learners must have access to:

- a wide range of recorded material from the genres specified in learning aim A
- performance and recording space, in line with learning aim C, and suitable software/hardware to facilitate the production of recordings (simple direct to stereo recording equipment will suffice in the majority of situations)
- video-recording equipment, in particular for performances (simple sound recording devices such as phones are beneficial during preparation stages)
- workshops and masterclasses with genre-specific musicians.

Essential information for assessment decisions

Learning aim A

For distinction standard, learners will express opinion on the stylistic considerations exemplified in musical genres. They will discuss in careful detail the players and creators involved and the musical context, and will draw together their understanding to form a coherent and complete view of the genres and styles.

Learners will draw connections among different genres and identify the influence one has had on another, in addition to how this can be seen through their related uses of certain elements such as harmony. As well as using accurate source material, learners may include themselves performing on their given instrument to help illustrate their point.

For merit standard, learners will consider all the factors concerned in establishing a genre and will explore the ways in which performers employ musical and sonic characteristics. Their evidence will include specific, accurate examples of musicians playing the genre in question, although these examples may be drawn from a limited pool. They will acknowledge the interrelated nature of stylistic elements and how one can influence the sound of another.

For pass standard, learners will produce work that shows consideration of style and genres. They will identify obvious musical and sonic characteristics that differentiate genres, such as choices of instruments, tempo and basic rhythms. They will provide a little exploration of how these characteristics are used and all will be correctly identified as indicative of the given genre.

Learning aim B

For distinction standard, learners will effectively practise and rehearse music, taking apart the genres and styles being explored. Learners will develop performance and listening skills, showing that they have advanced their understanding and technique. They will show evidence of consistent and effective practice techniques, with understanding of the genres demonstrated. Learners will show continuous development in their technical ability and stylistic interpretation through careful practice and rehearsal.

For merit standard, learners will practise and rehearse music, showing understanding of the genres and styles being explored. Learners will develop performance and listening skills, advancing their technique. They will identify genres, demonstrating adequately the musical styles required. Learners will advance their understanding through practice and rehearsal, developing their technical ability and understanding.

For pass standard, learners will practise and rehearse music of a number of different genres and styles. Learners will use performance and listening skills to improve technique. They will show they have practised and rehearsed, developing their technical ability and understanding.

Learning aim C

For distinction standard, learners will perform music, making contributions that fit with the genre and style being played. They will demonstrate wholly appropriate use of idiomatic features and conventions, bringing their own sense of flair and interpretation. Their performances will be sensitive to the genre and, if in an ensemble, they will respond in a musical way to other players. Learners will play with a very high degree of technical and musical skill. In addition to the development evidence, their playing will show the results of practice and preparation, for example stylistically accurate tone and timbre choice.

For merit standard, learners will perform music that is clearly recognisable as in keeping with the genre. Their performance will be appropriate to the genre and, if in an ensemble, learners will communicate consistently with other players. They may take a lead role or play some solos that will be competent and broadly accurate if improvised, and fully accurate if written, showing some musical flair.

For pass standard, learners will perform music showing acknowledgement of the genre with broadly stylistically accurate parts. Their performances will be technically and musically acceptable in the context of the chosen genre and musical style. They will respond to other players if part of an ensemble.

Links to other units

This unit links to:

- Unit 4: Composing Music
- Unit 7: Improvising Music.

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit from employer involvement in the form of:

- guest speakers
- participation in audience assessment of performances
- design/ideas to contribute to unit assignment/case study/project materials
- support from local musicians as mentors.

Unit 6: Solo Performance

Level: **3**

Unit type: **Internal**

Guided learning hours: **60**

Unit in brief

Learners explore the preparation and performance of music as a soloist before performing in front of an audience.

Unit introduction

From recitals and chamber concerts, to open mics and headline shows, solo performances have the potential to captivate and inspire an audience. Being able to perform in front of an audience remains one of the most exciting experiences for a musician, regardless of the genre they work in. Live music represents one of the growth areas of the music industry and it is a genuine opportunity to connect with the public, both artistically and financially.

In this unit, you will explore and practise the specific skills associated with performing as a soloist. These will include: how to engage your audience, stagecraft, as well as musical practice and rehearsal required. There are many hours of preparation and practice involved and you will develop the process – that all successful musicians undertake – of creative reflection in order to improve. This unit prepares you for studying performance as a soloist as well as for performing live.

The skills and knowledge you gain from this unit are invaluable for the music industry and will prepare you well for progression to further musical study.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Explore the skills required for a solo performance
- B** Develop skills for a solo performance
- C** Carry out a solo performance.

Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Explore the skills required for a solo performance	A1 Solo performance skills A2 Technical instrumental or vocal skills	An instructional article, describing the skills needed to perform as a soloist on a chosen instrument and how to acquire and improve them.
B Develop skills for a solo performance	B1 Design an effective practice routine B2 Following a practice routine to improve as a musician and performer	A practice plan, regular recordings of practice sessions, exercises, a diary/blog, observation records and witness statements.
C Carry out a solo performance	C1 Preparation for performance C2 Choice of material C3 Performance	Recordings of final performances, a log of diary entries and preparation material, observation records and witness statements.

Content

Learning aim A: Explore the skills required for a solo performance

A1 Solo performance skills

- What is different about solo performance – awareness of aspects which differentiate it from performing as part of a group.
- Stage presence:
 - audience engagement, confidence and being comfortable in front of other people, ability to play/sing under pressure
 - awareness of other musicians where appropriate, positioning on stage, microphone technique, awareness of monitors
 - selecting music – appropriate standard, length, genre, style, instrument.
- Interpretation:
 - taking material and presenting it in a personal and interesting way, playing with a high degree of accuracy and not just note for note, making a piece your own, appropriate use of dynamics, phrasing and articulation
 - responding to interpretation by other musicians; awareness of their use of dynamics, phrasing, articulation and instrumentation.

A2 Technical instrumental or vocal skills

- Physical warm-up exercises, including:
 - awareness of posture, physical positioning, body alignment for singing, correct grip and instrument hold, etc.
 - stretches and warm-up exercises specific to instrument/voice (e.g. finger and wrist stretches for guitar playing, shoulder and back stretches for drums)
 - appropriate relaxation and concentration exercises before practice/performance.
- Technical exercises, including:
 - to improve tone production, intonation and pitching, scales, harmonies
 - to improve speed, fluency, dexterity and develop muscle memory.
- Musical exercises:
 - to improve accuracy, timing and rhythm (working with a metronome, sight reading, playing with others, and so on)
 - to improve control of dynamics and expression.

Learning aim B: Develop skills for a solo performance

B1 Design an effective practice routine

- Appropriateness:
 - awareness of strengths and weaknesses, division of practice time according to what needs attention, choice of exercises appropriate to musical instrument
 - working with other musicians or an accompanist, leading rehearsals, availability of equipment and space
 - choice of material and practice pieces; breaking pieces into sections
 - integration of instrument/voice lessons.
- Effectiveness:
 - measurable and realistic goals; setting interim targets that are: considered, specific and relevant.
- Structure:
 - week-by-week, day-by-day allocation of time to be spent; choosing pieces and exercises for incremental improvement, planning out sessions.

B2 Following a practice routine to improve as a musician and performer

- Follow a routine:
 - documenting sessions keeping a diary, audio blog or vlog; recording group rehearsals
 - structuring other pressures (other subjects or hobbies for example) around music; making time for practice
 - organising and recording practice performances.
- Reflection:
 - looking at speed of progress over time, listening back to rehearsals and identifying weaknesses, watching/listening back over performances, obtaining meaningful feedback after performances, honest self-reflection
 - adapting and amending existing routines in light of reflection; allocating time differently, demonstrating effectiveness.

Learning aim C: Carry out a solo performance

C1 Preparation for performance

- Collaborative preparation:
 - organising and booking rehearsals with other musicians; providing sheet music/backing tracks, attending sound checks and dress rehearsals, working with sound and lighting technicians (as appropriate)
 - professionalism, time-keeping and punctuality, conduct and communication.
- Personal preparation:
 - vocal care, good health and fitness, warm-up exercises, calming nerves, personal presentation
 - instrument care and maintenance (if appropriate), e.g. sound strings, reeds, drum heads, tuning, clean valves, etc.
 - performance considerations, stage positioning, engaging audience and confidence building exercises
 - personal interpretation of selected material, adding own personality and meaning to chosen piece.

C2 Choice of material

Suitability:

- balancing the technical difficulty with performer ability and available preparation time, allowing for ability and availability of other musicians (if appropriate), performer stamina
- consideration of: venue, audience, overall programme, equipment needed.

C3 Performance

Musical performance skills:

- accuracy and confidence, precision of timing, intonation, notes and tuning
- microphone and instrumental technique, tone production, musical communication with other musicians, interpretation and appropriateness to the style/genre
- stagecraft, to include stage presence, positioning and audience engagement.

Assessment criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A: Explore the skills required for a solo performance		
<p>A.P1 Describe the specific skills for solo performance.</p> <p>A.P2 Identify technical instrumental or vocal skills for a specific solo performance.</p>	<p>A.M1 Explain the use of specific technical, instrumental or vocal skills relevant to a solo performance.</p>	<p>A.D1 Justify the use of specific technical instrumental or vocal skills relevant to a solo performance.</p>
Learning aim B: Develop skills for a solo performance		
<p>B.P3 Produce an appropriate practice routine for solo performance.</p> <p>B.P4 Demonstrate the development of solo performance skills through a practice routine.</p>	<p>B.M2 Demonstrate effective development of solo performance skills through a relevant practice routine.</p>	<p>B.D2 Demonstrate consistent and accomplished development of solo performance skills through a challenging and progressive practice routine.</p>
Learning aim C: Carry out a solo performance		
<p>C.P5 Demonstrate preparation for a solo performance.</p> <p>C.P6 Present a solo performance with appropriate performance skills.</p>	<p>C.M3 Present an engaging solo performance demonstrating effective preparation and performance skills.</p>	<p>C.D3 Present a well-prepared, accomplished solo performance with confident use of performance skills.</p>

Essential information for assignments

The recommended structure of assessment is shown in the unit summary along with suitable forms of evidence. *Section 6* gives information on setting assignments and there is further information on our website.

There is a maximum number of three summative assignments for this unit. The relationship of the learning aims and criteria is:

Learning aim: A (A.P1, A.P2, A.M1, A.D1)

Learning aim: B (B.P3, B.P4, B.M2, B.D2)

Learning aim: C (C.P5, C.P6, C.M3, C.D3)

Further information for teachers and assessors

Resource requirements

For this unit, learners must have access to:

- larger instruments such as drum kits and pianos
- basic sound recording, such as that offered by smartphones, in order to document progress
- instrumental teachers, specialists, masterclasses or workshops to aid with musical techniques.

Essential information for assessment decisions

Learning aim A

For distinction standard, learners will produce a comprehensive and discursive article or presentation. There will be discussion of the skills used in a solo performance, using examples of different practitioners and various stagecraft skills. The technical and vocal exercises given will be evaluated clearly and there will be a justification for favouring one over another, but with an acknowledgement that other exercises are also of benefit in improving the performer.

For merit standard, learners will produce a technically accurate article or presentation on solo performance skills. There will be examples given. There will be an understanding and some explanation of how each exercise works and relates to a skill. These links between exercise and end result will be clearly apparent. Exercises will be correct for the relevant skill but there will be no discussion of why they were chosen over others.

For pass standard, learners will produce a coherent article or presentation that describes skills a performer would use in a solo performance. Learners will produce an article or presentation that correctly identifies skills needed to perform as a soloist. The chosen exercises will be relevant but may not be the most suitable exercises possible and learners may require some support in order to decide on them.

Learning aim B

For distinction standard, learners will design a practice routine that identifies areas for improvement and develops their performance skills. Learners will identify a range of beneficial exercises for their practice routine to assist them in preparing for their solo performance. Learners will have diligently followed their routine and documented the process. Their blog or diary will include a balanced reflection of their improvement during the practice routine.

For merit standard, learners will design a practice routine that will effectively assist their solo performance skills. The evidence for this will be that a clear routine has been followed; this could be in the form of a diary, blog or vlog. There will be a regular monitoring of progress and audio-visual recordings to document this and demonstrating their development of performance skills.

For pass standard, learners will design a practice routine broadly following those set down in textbooks or outlined by teachers with some individual changes. Routines and practice pieces will demonstrate limited opportunity for improvement. Learners will identify a range of exercises, activities and pieces that will lead to a basic improvement in their specific instrumental or vocal ability.

Learning aim C

Learners must perform *at least* three pieces of music or between 7–15 minutes (depending on music genre performed).

For distinction standard, learners will sensitively and eruditely select material to perform. It will demonstrate a clear link to the skills and pieces worked on during the period of practice and their justification for their choices will reflect this. They will perform an accomplished set, clearly demonstrating musical and technical flair, excellent communication with other musicians and obvious stagecraft. They will have a personal sense of interpretation and be able to not just hold an audience's attention but to make them feel truly engaged. They will be completely confident and self-starting during the period of preparation and this will be reflected in their final diary.

For merit standard, learners will select and perform music that is fairly well suited to their abilities, the general programme of the performance and the available backing musicians. They will perform with technical accuracy and demonstrate a good degree of performance considerations effectively, such as stage presence and precision of timing and confidence. Musical communication and awareness will be present and they will perform confidently on stage. During the preparation period they will require some support (for example to aid in final dress rehearsals/technical run-throughs) but will independently liaise with other musicians, organise parts and practice space and time.

For pass standard, learners will select and perform broadly suitable pieces of music but these will be based more on their personal preference than fully considering their ability, the event or the other musicians. They will demonstrate a degree of musicianship and performance consideration, such as timing, microphone techniques, interpretation appropriate to the style/genre and will perform accurately; however, this will not be maintained throughout the performance. The mistakes that are made will not be so many as to detract from the performance as a whole. If they are performing with other musicians on stage there will be some acknowledgement of them but not clear musical communication. There will also be little evidence of audience engagement or interaction. The period of preparation will require some significant support from teachers to organise and possibly lead rehearsals, book spaces and co-ordinate parts. There will be no evidence of reflection on the impact the practice routine has had on the final performance.

Links to other units

This unit links to Unit 7: Improvising Music.

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit from employer involvement in the form of:

- guest speakers
- participation in audience assessment of performances
- design/ideas to contribute to unit assignment/case study/project materials
- support from local musicians as mentors.

Unit 7: Improvising Music

Level: **3**

Unit type: **Internal**

Guided learning hours: **60**

Unit in brief

Learners develop the ability to improvise when performing in a range of musical styles and contexts.

Unit introduction

Most styles of music incorporate some element of improvisation and both professional and amateur musicians are frequently required to be creative and play spontaneously. Some styles, such as jazz, make extensive use of improvisation and musicians who want to perform in these styles must be able to improvise in order to succeed. Improvisation is a musical skill that can be learned, developed and refined. To improvise effectively, musicians need to understand the elements and conventions of the style in which they are working. They also need to be able to hear and respond to musical structures such as chord progressions, riffs, melodies and rhythmic patterns.

In this unit, you will explore and develop improvisational skills and techniques in different styles and musical contexts, ranging from social music making, sometimes called 'jam sessions', to the work of professional musicians. You will experience improvisational music from different cultures and traditions from around the world and be encouraged to respond to a range of stimuli, working both solo and in groups.

The skills developed in this unit will help learners who want to become performers, whether in employment or higher education.

Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Understand elements and conventions of improvisational musical styles
- B** Develop improvisational skills and techniques
- C** Demonstrate improvisation skills for music in performance.

Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Understand elements and conventions of improvisational musical styles	A1 Different improvisational musical styles A2 Facilitation of workshops and activities exploring the elements and conventions of different improvisational musical styles	A report and/or presentation focusing on different improvisational musical styles. Evidence of workshop participation and outcomes, for example video evidence, diary/blog entries, self-, peer-, teacher and/or workshop leader evaluation of workshop participation.
B Develop improvisational skills and techniques	B1 Facilitate learners taking part in regular practice and rehearsal activities designed to develop improvisation skills B2 Experiment with the use of improvisational techniques and devices	Evidence of participation in personal and group practice and rehearsals, for example video evidence, diary/blog entries, target-setting/review documentation, self-, peer- and teacher evaluation of the practice and rehearsal process.
C Demonstrate improvisation skills for music in performance	C1 How to make significant use of improvisation in two or more contrasting musical performances	Evidence, including video, of performances and self-, peer- and teacher evaluation of performance outcomes.

Content

Learning aim A: Understand elements and conventions of improvisational musical styles

A1 Different improvisational musical styles

- Different styles, including British, Irish and North American folk music, blues, jazz and R&B, country and western, rock, metal and punk, gospel and soul, Indian classical music, African music, samba and other Central/South American styles, Western art music styles.

A2 Facilitation of workshops and activities exploring the elements and conventions of different improvisational musical styles

- Practise and develop skills in workshops exploring different styles as listed in A1.

Learning aim B: Develop improvisational skills and techniques

B1 Facilitate learners taking part in regular practice and rehearsal activities designed to develop improvisation skills

- Aural perception.
- Identification of tonality.
- Identification of scales.
- Identification of chords.
- Playing variations based on scales, exercises and existing melodies and chord progressions.
- Improvising melodies or accompaniments based on lead sheets and/or chord charts.

B2 Experiment with the use of improvisational techniques and devices

- Variation of pitch, rhythm, tonality.
- Ornamentation.
- Harmonising against existing melodic material.
- Improvising melodies based on scales and/or chord progressions.
- Responding to musical and non-musical stimuli, e.g. visual, textual, narrative.
- Solo improvisation.
- Ensemble improvisation.

Learning aim C: Demonstrate improvisation skills for music in performance

C1 How to make significant use of improvisation in two or more contrasting musical performances

- Vocal or instrumental.
- Solo or ensemble.
- Learners should demonstrate a range of the skills and techniques listed under learning aim B.
- Performances must be of sufficient length to enable reliable assessment decisions to be made.

Assessment criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A: Understand elements and conventions of improvisational musical styles		A.D1 Evaluate the use of improvisational conventions and techniques of different musical styles, commenting critically using examples.
A.P1 Explain the role of improvisational conventions in different musical styles. A.P2 Explain the improvisational techniques used in different musical styles.	A.M1 Analyse and compare improvisational conventions and techniques in different musical styles, using examples.	
Learning aim B: Develop improvisational skills and techniques		B.D2 Demonstrate contrasting and developed improvisational skills which respond accurately and fluently to stimuli and other musicians. C.D3 Perform, making significant use of improvisation, in contrasting musical styles, demonstrating competence, confidence and appropriate musical imagination.
B.P3 Demonstrate how to develop and improve improvisational skills through practice and rehearsal activities. B.P4 Demonstrate a range of vocal and/or instrument specific improvisational techniques and devices.	B.M2 Demonstrate vocal and/or instrumental improvisational skills which have been developed through practice and respond to stimuli and other musicians.	
Learning aim C: Demonstrate improvisation skills for music in performance		
C.P5 Perform, making use of improvisation, in contrasting improvisational musical styles.	C.M3 Perform, making significant use of improvisation, in contrasting musical styles, demonstrating competence and confidence.	

Essential information for assignments

The recommended structure of assessment is shown in the unit summary along with suitable forms of evidence. *Section 6* gives information on setting assignments and there is further information on our website.

There is a maximum number of two summative assignments for this unit. The relationship of the learning aims and criteria is:

Learning aim: A (A.P1, A.P2, A.M1, A.D1)

Learning aims: B and C (B.P3, B.P4, C.P5, B.M2, C.M3, B.D2, C.D3)

Further information for teachers and assessors

Resource requirements

For this unit, learners must have access to:

- practice and rehearsal facilities, including instruments
- a range of musical examples in audio and video format
- sources of information, such as books, websites
- live performances with, wherever possible, opportunities for workshop, masterclass and/or Q&A sessions with performers.

Essential information for assessment decisions

Learning aim A

Learners will provide evidence combining research and practical workshops on different styles and techniques. This could take the form of a presentation, report or multimedia blog. The examples could be recordings or practical demonstrations.

For distinction standard, learners will combine the findings of their investigations and workshop activities to comment critically on the stylistic elements and conventions of the chosen improvisational musical styles. They will make reasoned judgements supported with specific recorded and practical examples of specific techniques and/or devices. They will fully justify the use of examples and be fully accurate in their use of musical terminology.

For merit standard, learners will draw together the findings of their investigations and workshop activities to analyse the stylistic elements and conventions of the chosen improvisational musical styles. They will illustrate the evidence with specific examples of pieces typical of the styles and demonstrations of improvisational techniques and/or devices specific to them. Work should be factually accurate, using clear and correct musical terminology.

For pass standard, learners will include information on the stylistic elements and conventions of two (or more) improvisational musical styles. Learners will focus on improvisational techniques and/or devices specific to the chosen styles, explaining how they are typical of the musical styles in question. There may be some factual inaccuracies and/or a lack of clarity in terminology.

Learning aims B and C

Learners will provide evidence from rehearsal, workshops and performance settings.

For distinction standard, learners will present portfolio evidence demonstrating their fluent and imaginative use of improvisational skills and techniques in a performance setting. Learners will improvise fluently, developing and sustaining musical ideas, and demonstrating musical imagination in response to the improvisations of other musicians.

For merit standard, learners will present portfolio evidence showing they are able to improvise in response to a range of musical stimuli and to the improvisations of other musicians. Learners will perform with a significant use of improvisational techniques and devices with evidence of ability to respond to the musical contributions of others. Performances at this level will be competent, confident and fluent but there is likely to be some lack of musical imagination.

For pass standard, learners will present portfolio evidence applying processes which develop improvisational skills vocally and/or instrumentally. Learners at this level are likely to lack fluency and imagination in their improvisational work. Learners will perform music from two or more improvisational styles, the length of each performance and the overall duration of performance will be sufficient to enable reliable assessment decisions to be made. Learners will make use of improvisational techniques and devices in performance but this is likely to be lacking in fluency and imagination and there will be little evidence of response to other musicians.

Links to other units

This unit links to:

- Unit 5: Music Performance Session Styles
- Unit 6: Solo Performance.

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit from employer involvement in the form of:

- guest speakers
- participation in audience assessment of performances
- design/ideas to contribute to unit assignment/case study/project materials
- support from local musicians as mentors.

4 Planning your programme

How do I choose the right BTEC National qualification for my learners?

BTEC Nationals come in a range of sizes, each with a specific purpose. You will need to assess learners very carefully to ensure that they start on the right size of qualification to fit into their 16–19 study programme, and that they take the right pathways or optional units that allow them to progress to the next stage.

Some learners may want to take a number of complementary qualifications or keep their progression options open. These learners may be suited to taking a BTEC National Certificate or Extended Certificate. Learners who then decide to continue with a fuller vocational programme can transfer to a BTEC National Diploma or Extended Diploma, for example for their second year.

Some learners are sure of the sector they want to work in and are aiming for progression into that sector via higher education. These learners should be directed to the two-year BTEC National Extended Diploma as the most suitable qualification.

As a centre, you may want to teach learners who are taking different qualifications together. You may also wish to transfer learners between programmes to meet changes in their progression needs. You should check the qualification structures and unit combinations carefully as there is no exact match among the different sizes. You may find that learners need to complete more than the minimum number of units when transferring.

When learners are recruited, you need to give them accurate information on the title and focus of the qualification for which they are studying.

Is there a learner entry requirement?

As a centre it is your responsibility to ensure that learners who are recruited have a reasonable expectation of success on the programme. There are no formal entry requirements but we expect learners to have qualifications at or equivalent to Level 2.

Learners are most likely to succeed if they have:

- five GCSEs at good grades and/or
- BTEC qualification(s) at Level 2
- achievement in English and mathematics through GCSE or Functional Skills.

Learners may demonstrate ability to succeed in various ways. For example, learners may have relevant work experience or specific aptitude shown through diagnostic tests or non-educational experience. It is likely that the majority of learners will be at a reasonable level of musicianship when they enter the course, however, this is not compulsory, and they will learn how to independently develop their skills through autonomous projects, personal practice and reflection.

What is involved in becoming an approved centre?

All centres must be approved before they can offer these qualifications – so that they are ready to assess learners and so that we can provide the support that is needed. Further information is given in *Section 8*.

What level of sector knowledge is needed to teach these qualifications?

We do not set any requirements for teachers but recommend that centres assess the overall skills and knowledge of the teaching team to ensure that they are relevant and up to date. This will give learners a rich programme to prepare them for employment in the sector.

What resources are required to deliver these qualifications?

As part of your centre approval you will need to show that the necessary material resources and work spaces are available to deliver BTEC Nationals. For some units, specific resources are required. This is indicated in the units.

How can myBTEC help with planning for these qualifications?

myBTEC is an online toolkit that supports the delivery, assessment and quality assurance of BTECs in centres. It supports teachers with activities, such as choosing a valid combination of units, creating assignment briefs and creating assessment plans. For further information see *Section 10*.

Which modes of delivery can be used for these qualifications?

You are free to deliver BTEC Nationals using any form of delivery that meets the needs of your learners. We recommend making use of a wide variety of modes, including direct instruction in classrooms or work environments, investigative and practical work, group and peer work, private study and e-learning.

What are the recommendations for employer involvement?

BTEC Nationals are vocational qualifications and, as an approved centre, you are encouraged to work with employers on the design, delivery and assessment of the course to ensure that learners have a programme of study that is engaging and relevant and that equips them for progression. There are suggestions in many of the units about how employers could become involved in delivery and/or assessment but these are not intended to be exhaustive and there will be other possibilities at local level.

What support is available?

We provide a wealth of support materials, including curriculum plans, delivery guides, authorised assignment briefs, additional papers for external assessments and examples of marked learner work.

You will be allocated a Standards Verifier early on in the planning stage to support you with planning your assessments. There will be extensive training programmes as well as support from our Subject Advisor team.

For further details see *Section 10*.

How will my learners become more employable through these qualifications?

BTEC Nationals are mapped to relevant occupational standards (see *Appendix 1*).

Employability skills, such as team working and entrepreneurialism, and practical hands-on skills have been built into the design of the learning aims and content. This gives you the opportunity to use relevant contexts, scenarios and materials to enable learners to develop a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates the breadth of their skills and knowledge in a way that equips them for employment.

5 Assessment structure and external assessment

Introduction

BTEC Nationals are assessed using a combination of *internal assessments*, which are set and marked by teachers, and *external assessments* which are set and marked by Pearson:

- mandatory units have a combination of internal and external assessments
- all optional units are internally assessed.

We have taken great care to ensure that the assessment method chosen is appropriate to the content of the unit and in line with requirements from employers and higher education.

In developing an overall plan for delivery and assessment for the programme, you will need to consider the order in which you deliver units, whether delivery is over short or long periods and when assessment can take place. Some units are defined as synoptic units (see *Section 2*). Normally, a synoptic assessment is one that a learner would take later in a programme and in which they will be expected to apply learning from a range of units. Synoptic units may be internally or externally assessed. Where a unit is externally assessed you should refer to the sample assessment materials (SAMs) to identify where there is an expectation that learners draw on their wider learning. For internally-assessed units, you must plan the assignments so that learners can demonstrate learning from across their programme. A unit may be synoptic in one qualification and not another because of the relationship it has to the rest of the qualification.

We have addressed the need to ensure that the time allocated to final assessment of internal and external units is reasonable so that there is sufficient time for teaching and learning, formative assessment and development of transferable skills.

In administering internal and external assessment, the centre needs to be aware of the specific procedures and policies that apply, for example to registration, entries and results. An overview with signposting to relevant documents is given in *Section 7*.

Internal assessment

Our approach to internal assessment for these qualifications will be broadly familiar to experienced centres. It offers flexibility in how and when you assess learners, provided that you meet assessment and quality assurance requirements. You will need to take account of the requirements of the unit format, which we explain in *Section 3*, and the requirements for delivering assessment given in *Section 6*.

External assessment

A summary of the external assessment for this qualification is given in *Section 2*. You should check this information carefully, together with the unit specification and the sample assessment materials, so that you can timetable learning and assessment periods appropriately.

Learners must be prepared for external assessment by the time they undertake it. In preparing learners for assessment, you will want to take account of required learning time, the relationship with other external assessments and opportunities for retaking. You should ensure that learners are not entered for unreasonable amounts of external assessment in one session. Learners may resit an external assessment to obtain a higher grade of near pass or above. If a learner has more than one attempt, then the best result will be used for qualification grading, up to the permitted maximum. It is unlikely that learners will need to or benefit from taking all assessments twice so you are advised to plan appropriately. Some assessments are synoptic and learners are likely to perform best if these assessments are taken towards the end of the programme.

Key features of external assessment in music

In music, after consultation with stakeholders, we have developed the following.

- *Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry* in which learners respond to an industry-specific scenario where they show understanding of the skills and knowledge required to work in the industry.
- *Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance* in which learners learn, rehearse and perform set music as part of an ensemble. This is based on realistic working commissions and is a task-based assessment.

Units

The externally-assessed units have a specific format which we explain in *Section 3*. The content of units will be sampled across external assessments over time, through appropriate papers and tasks. The ways in which learners are assessed are shown through the assessment outcomes and grading descriptors. External assessments are marked and awarded using the grade descriptors. The grades available are Distinction (D), Merit (M), Pass (P) and Near Pass (N). The Near Pass (N) grade gives learners credit below a Pass, where they have demonstrated evidence of positive performance which is worth more than an unclassified result but not yet at the Pass standard.

Sample assessment materials

Each externally-assessed unit has a set of sample assessment materials (SAMs) that accompanies this specification. The SAMs are there to give you an example of what the external assessment will look like in terms of the feel and level of demand of the assessment. In the case of units containing synoptic assessment, the SAMs will also show where learners are expected to select and apply from across the programme.

The SAMs show the range of possible question types that may appear in the actual assessments. They give you a good indication of how the assessments will be structured. While SAMs can be used for practice with learners as with any assessment, the content covered and specific details of the questions asked will change in each assessment.

A copy of each of these assessments can be downloaded from our website. To allow your learners further opportunities for practice, an additional sample of each of the Pearson-set units will be available before the first sitting of the assessment.

6 Internal assessment

This section gives an overview of the key features of internal assessment and how you, as an approved centre, can offer it effectively. The full requirements and operational information are given in the *BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook* available on our website. All members of the assessment team need to refer to this document.

For this qualification, it is important that you can meet the expectations of stakeholders and the needs of learners by providing a programme that is practical and applied. You can tailor programmes to meet local needs and use links with local employers and the wider vocational sector.

When internal assessment is operated effectively, it is challenging, engaging, practical and up to date. It must also be fair to all learners and meet national standards.

Principles of internal assessment

Our approach to internal assessment for this qualification is to offer flexibility in how and when you assess learners, provided that you meet assessment and quality assurance requirements. You will need to take account of the requirements of the unit format, which we explain in *Section 3 Units*, and the requirements for delivering assessment, given in *Section 7 Administrative arrangements*.

Operating internal assessment

The assessment team

It is important that there is an effective team for internal assessment so that all assessment is planned and verified. Full information is given in the *BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook*.

The key roles are:

- the Lead Internal Verifier (Lead IV) for the qualification has overall responsibility for the planning, record keeping and standard setting for the qualification. The Lead IV registers with Pearson annually and organises training using our support materials
- Internal Verifiers (IVs) check that assignments and assessment decisions are valid and that they meet our requirements. In a small team all people will normally be assessors and IVs. No one can verify their own actions as an assessor
- assessors set or use assignments to assess learners to national standards.

Planning and record keeping

The Lead IV makes sure that there is a plan for assessment of the internally-assessed units and maintains records of assessment undertaken.

The key records are:

- verification of assignment briefs
- learner authentication declarations
- assessor decisions on assignments, with feedback given to learners
- verification of assessment decisions.

Examples of records and further information are given in the *BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook*.

Effective organisation

Internal assessment needs to be well organised so that learners' progress can be tracked and so that we can monitor that assessment is being carried out in line with national standards.

We support you through, for example, providing training materials and sample documentation. Our online myBTEC service can help support you in planning and record keeping.

Further information on using myBTEC can be found in *Section 10 Resources and support* and on our website.

To make sure that learners are able to complete assignments on time, it is particularly important that you manage the overall assessment programme and deadlines.

Learner preparation

To ensure that you provide effective assessment tasks for your learners, you need to make sure that they understand their responsibilities for assessment and the centre's arrangements.

From induction onwards, you will want to ensure that learners are motivated to work consistently and independently to achieve the requirements of the qualification. Learners need to understand how assessments are used, the importance of meeting assessment deadlines, and that all the work submitted for assessment must be their own.

You will need to explain to learners the requirements of assessment and the expected standard that they need to achieve to attain a grade, how assessments relate to the teaching programme, and how they should use and reference source materials, including what would constitute plagiarism. You should also set out your approach to operating assessment, such as how learners must submit work and request extensions.

You are encouraged to employ a range of formative assessment approaches as part of teaching and learning before assessing the units summatively. Formative assessment supports teaching and learning, and should be ongoing throughout the learning process. It enables tutors to enhance learning by giving learners constructive feedback so that they can identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to put measures in place to target areas that need work. To ensure that learners progress, formative assessment approaches that incorporate reflective learning and regular skills assessment are important in encouraging self-development and reflective practice. You can give feedback on the following:

- technique and skills development
- identifying stretch and challenge.

Setting assessments through assignments

For internally-assessed units, an assessment task is defined as the independent production of evidence, by the learner, during a set period. The format of assessment tasks can include practical, written and observed activities.

An assignment provides the context for assessment tasks and should be issued to learners as a vocational scenario with a defined start date, a completion date and clear requirements for the production of evidence. A valid assessment task will enable a clear, summative assessment of outcomes based on the assessment criteria.

An assessment task in an assignment must be a distinct activity, completed independently by learners. It is a separate, more formal activity but can follow on from teaching activities that learners complete with direction from tutors.

When setting your assignments, you need to work with the information given in the *Essential information for assessment decisions* and the *Assessment activity* sections of the units. You can choose to use the suggested scenarios or to adapt them to take account of local circumstances, provided that assignments are verified.

In designing your own assignments you should bear in mind the following points.

- A learning aim must always be assessed as a whole.
- Assessment tasks in assignments must be structured to allow learners to demonstrate the full range of achievement at all grade levels. All learners need to be treated fairly by being given the opportunity to achieve a higher grade if they have the ability.
- Learners should be given clear tasks, activities and structures for evidence, the criteria should not be given as tasks.
- Assessment tasks in assignments provide a final summative assessment of a learning aim.
- Assessment tasks will draw on the specified range of teaching content for the learning aim. The specified teaching content is compulsory. The evidence for assessment need not cover every aspect of the teaching content as learners will normally be given particular examples, case studies or contexts in their assignments. For example, if a learner is carrying out a practical performance, then they must address all the relevant range of content that applies in that instance.

An assignment should have:

- a vocational scenario or context that motivates the learner to apply their learning through the assignment, such as an audience or purpose for which the evidence is being provided
- clear instructions to the learner about what they are required to do, normally set out through a series of tasks.

Forms of evidence

The units allow for a variety of forms of evidence to be used, provided that they are suited to the type of learning aim being assessed. For most units, the practical demonstration of skills is necessary. The units give information on suitable forms of evidence that would give learners the opportunity to apply a range of transferable and sector skills. Centres may choose to use different suitable forms for evidence to those proposed. Overall, learners should be assessed using varied forms of evidence.

The main forms of evidence include:

- projects
- recordings of performance, role play, interviews and practical tasks
- oral or written presentations with assessor questioning
- work logbooks and reflective journals.

It is important to note that an observation record is a source of evidence and does not confer an assessment decision. It must be sufficiently detailed to enable others to make a judgement about the quality and sufficiency of the performance and must document clearly the rationale for the assessment decision. Observation records should be accompanied by supporting evidence, which may take the form of video, audio recordings, photographs, preparation notes, learner logs and other similar types of record.

The form(s) of evidence selected must allow:

- the learner to provide all the evidence required for the learning aim(s) and the associated assessment criteria at all grade levels
- the learner to produce evidence that is their own independent work
- a verifier to independently reassess the learner to check the assessor's decisions.

Centres need to take particular care in ensuring that learners produce independent work.

Making valid assessment decisions

Assessment decisions through applying unit-based criteria

Assessment decisions for this qualification are based on the specific criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The way in which individual units are written provides a balance of assessment of sector-specific knowledge, technical and practical skills, and transferable skills appropriate to the purpose of the qualification.

Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria all relate to individual learning aims. The assessment criteria for a unit are hierarchical and holistic where, in satisfying the M criteria, a learner would also have satisfied the P criteria. The unit assessment grid shows the relationships of the criteria so that assessors can apply all the criteria to the learner's evidence at the same time.

Assessors must show how they have reached their decisions using the criteria in the assessment records. When a learner has completed all the assessment for a unit then the assessment team will give a grade for the unit. This is given according to the highest level for which the learner is judged to have met all the criteria. Therefore:

- to achieve a Distinction, a learner must have satisfied all the Distinction criteria (and all the Pass and Merit criteria); these define outstanding performance across the unit as a whole
- to achieve a Merit, a learner must have satisfied all the Merit criteria (and all the Pass criteria) through high performance in each learning aim

- to achieve a Pass, a learner must have satisfied all the Pass criteria for the learning aims, showing coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at Level 3 of the national framework.

The award of a Pass is a defined level of performance and cannot be given solely on the basis of a learner completing assignments.

Learners who do not satisfy the Pass criteria should be reported as Unclassified.

Making assessment decisions using criteria

Assessors should review authenticated learner work and make judgements on standards using the assessment criteria and the supporting information provided in units and training materials. The evidence from a learner can be judged using all the relevant criteria at the same time. The assessor needs to make a judgement against each criterion that evidence is present and sufficiently comprehensive.

Assessors should use the following information and support in reaching assessment decisions:

- the *Essential information for assessment decisions* section in each unit
- your Lead IV and assessment team's collective experience, supported by the standardisation materials we provide.

Once the team has agreed the outcome, a formal assessment decision is recorded and reported to learners. The information given:

- must show the formal decision and indicate where criteria have been met
- may show where attainment against criteria has not been demonstrated
- avoid giving direct, specific instructions on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade.

Authenticity of learner work

Assessors must ensure that evidence is authentic to a learner through setting valid assessments and supervising them during the assessment period. Assessors must take care not to provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback that may compromise authenticity.

Once an assessment has begun, learners must not be given feedback that relates specifically to their evidence and how it can be improved, learners must work independently.

An assessor must assess only learner work that is authentic, i.e. learners' own independent work. Learners must authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment through signing a declaration stating that it is their own work. Assessors must complete a declaration that:

- the evidence submitted for this assessment is the learner's own
- the learner has clearly referenced any sources used in the work
- they understand that false declaration is a form of malpractice.

Centres can use Pearson templates or their own templates to document authentication. During assessment, an assessor may suspect that some or all of the evidence from a learner is not authentic. The assessor must then take appropriate action using the centre's policies for malpractice. Further information is given in *Section 8 Administrative arrangements*.

Resubmission of improved evidence

The final assessment of evidence for the relevant learning aims is normally the final assessment decision, except where the Lead IV approves one opportunity to resubmit improved evidence based on the completed assessment.

The Lead IV has the responsibility to make sure that resubmission is operated fairly. This means:

- checking that a learner can be reasonably expected to perform better through a second submission, for example that the learner has not performed as expected
- making sure that giving a further opportunity does not give an unfair advantage over other learners, for example through the opportunity to take account of feedback given to other learners
- checking that the learner will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance and that the original evidence submitted remains valid.

Once an assessment decision has been given to the learner, the resubmission opportunity must have a deadline within 15 working days in the same academic year. However, we recognise that there are circumstances where the resubmission period may fall outside of the 15-day limit owing to a lack of resources being available, for example where learners may need to access a performance space or have access to specialist equipment. Where it is practical to do so, for example evaluations, presentations, extended writing, resubmission must remain within the normal 15-day period.

For assessment to be fair, it is important that learners are all assessed in the same way and that some learners are not advantaged by having additional time or the opportunity to learn from others. Therefore, learners who did not complete assessment tasks by the planned deadline or by an authorised extension deadline (if one was given for specific circumstances), may not have the opportunity to subsequently resubmit. Similarly, learners who submit work that is not their own should not be given an opportunity to resubmit.

The outcome of any resubmission of the assessment task by the learner is then recorded as the final decision.

A learner who has not achieved their expected level of performance in the relevant learning aims **after resubmission** of an assessment may be offered a single retake opportunity using a new assessment task. The highest grade that may be awarded is a Pass.

The Lead IV must authorise a retake with a new assessment only in exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so. For further information on offering a retake opportunity please refer to the *BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Assessment* available on our website. There is information on writing assignments for retakes on our website, see www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments.

7 Administrative arrangements

Introduction

This section focuses on the administrative requirements for delivering a BTEC qualification. It will be of value to Quality Nominees, Lead IVs, Programme Leaders and Examinations Officers.

Learner registration and entry

Shortly after learners start the programme of learning, you need to make sure that they are registered for the qualification and that appropriate arrangements are made for internal and external assessment. You need to refer to the *Information Manual* for information on making registrations for the qualification and entries for external assessments.

Learners can be formally assessed only for a qualification on which they are registered. If learners' intended qualifications change, for example if a learner decides to choose a different pathway specialism, then the centre must transfer the learner appropriately.

Access to assessment

Both internal and external assessments need to be administered carefully to ensure that all learners are treated fairly, and that results and certification are issued on time to allow learners to progress to chosen progression opportunities.

Our equality policy requires that all learners should have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments, and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every learner. We are committed to making sure that:

- learners with a protected characteristic are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic
- all learners achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

Further information on access arrangements can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational Qualifications*.

Administrative arrangements for internal assessment

Records

You are required to retain records of assessment for each learner. Records should include assessments taken, decisions reached and any adjustments or appeals. Further information can be found in the *Information Manual*. We may ask to audit your records so they must be retained as specified.

Reasonable adjustments to assessment

A reasonable adjustment is one that is made before a learner takes an assessment to ensure that they have fair access to demonstrate the requirements of the assessments. You are able to make adjustments to internal assessments to take account of the needs of individual learners. In most cases this can be achieved through a defined time extension or by adjusting the format of evidence. We can advise you if you are uncertain as to whether an adjustment is fair and reasonable. You need to plan for time to make adjustments if necessary.

Further details on how to make adjustments for learners with protected characteristics are given on our website in the document *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internally-assessed units*.

Special consideration

Special consideration is given after an assessment has taken place for learners who have been affected by adverse circumstances, such as illness. You must operate special consideration in line with our policy (see previous paragraph). You can provide special consideration related to the period of time given for evidence to be provided or for the format of the assessment if it is equally valid. You may not substitute alternative forms of evidence to that required in a unit or omit the application of any assessment criteria to judge attainment. Pearson can consider applications for special consideration in line with the policy.

Appeals against assessment

Your centre must have a policy for dealing with appeals from learners. These appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or assessment not being conducted fairly. The first step in such a policy could be a consideration of the evidence by a Lead IV or other member of the programme team. The assessment plan should allow time for potential appeals after assessment decisions have been given to learners. If there is an appeal by a learner, you must document the appeal and its resolution. Learners have a final right of appeal to Pearson but only if the procedures that you have put in place have not been followed. Further details are given in the document *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications and end point assessment policy*.

Administrative arrangements for external assessment

Entries and resits

For information on the timing of assessment and entries, please refer to the annual examinations timetable on our website.

Access arrangements requests

Access arrangements are agreed with Pearson before an assessment. They allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

Access arrangements should always be processed at the time of registration. Learners will then know what type of arrangements are available in place for them.

Granting reasonable adjustments

For external assessment, a reasonable adjustment is one that we agree to make for an individual learner. A reasonable adjustment is defined for the individual learner and informed by the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, to include:

- the needs of the learner with the disability
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the learner with the disability and other learners.

Adjustment may be judged unreasonable and not approved if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the integrity of the assessment.

Special consideration requests

Special consideration is an adjustment made to a learner's mark or grade after an external assessment to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the assessment. An adjustment is made only if the impact on the learner is such that it is reasonably likely to have had a material effect on that learner being able to demonstrate attainment in the assessment.

Centres are required to notify us promptly of any learners that they believe have been adversely affected and request that we give special consideration. Further information can be found in the special requirements section on our website.

Conducting external assessments

Centres must make arrangements for the secure delivery of external assessments. External assessments for BTEC qualifications include examinations, set tasks and performance.

Each external assessment has a defined degree of control under which it must take place. Some external assessments may have more than one part and each part may have a different degree of control. We define degrees of control as follows.

High control

This is the completion of assessment in formal invigilated examination conditions.

Medium control

This is completion of assessment, usually over a longer period of time, which may include a period of controlled conditions. The controlled conditions may allow learners to access resources, prepared notes or the internet to help them complete the task.

Low control

These are activities completed without direct supervision. They may include research, preparation of materials and practice. The materials produced by learners under low control will not be directly assessed.

Further information on responsibilities for conducting external assessment is given in the document *Instructions for Conducting External Assessments*, available on our website.

Dealing with malpractice in assessment

Malpractice means acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications, and/or that may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

Pearson does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners, centre staff or centres in connection with Pearson qualifications. Pearson may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners, centre staff or centres where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

Malpractice may arise or be suspected in relation to any unit or type of assessment within the qualification. For further details regarding malpractice and advice on preventing malpractice by learners, please see Pearson's *Centre guidance: Dealing with malpractice and maladministration in vocational qualifications*, available on our website.

The procedures we ask you to adopt vary between units that are internally-assessed and those that are externally assessed.

Internally-assessed units

Centres are required to take steps to prevent malpractice and to investigate instances of suspected malpractice. Learners must be given information that explains what malpractice is for internal assessment and how suspected incidents will be dealt with by the centre. The *Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice* document gives full information on the actions we expect you to take.

Pearson may conduct investigations if we believe that a centre is failing to conduct internal assessment according to our policies. The above document gives further information, examples and details the penalties and sanctions that may be imposed.

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

Externally-assessed units

External assessment means all aspects of units that are designated as external in this specification, including preparation for tasks and performance. For these assessments, centres must follow the JCQ procedures set out in the latest version of *JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures* (www.jcq.org.uk).

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

Learner malpractice

Heads of Centres are required to report incidents of any suspected learner malpractice that occur during Pearson external assessments. We ask that centres do so by completing a *JCQ Form M1* (available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice) and emailing it and any accompanying documents (signed statements from the learner, invigilator, copies of evidence, etc.) to the Investigations Team at candidatemalpractice@pearson.com. The responsibility for determining appropriate sanctions or penalties to be imposed on learners lies with Pearson.

Learners must be informed at the earliest opportunity of the specific allegation and the centre's malpractice policy, including the right of appeal. Learners found guilty of malpractice may be disqualified from the qualification for which they have been entered with Pearson.

Teacher/centre malpractice

Heads of Centres are required to inform Pearson's Investigations Team of any incident of suspected malpractice by centre staff, before any investigation is undertaken. Heads of centres are requested to inform the Investigations Team by submitting a *JCQ Form M2(a)* (available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff or anonymous informants), the Investigations Team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the head of centre to assist.

Incidents of maladministration (accidental errors in the delivery of Pearson qualifications that may affect the assessment of learners) should also be reported to the Investigations Team using the same method.

Heads of Centres/Principals/Chief Executive Officers or their nominees are required to inform learners and centre staff suspected of malpractice of their responsibilities and rights; see Section 6.15 of the *JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures* document.

Pearson reserves the right in cases of suspected malpractice to withhold the issuing of results and/or certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation results and/or certificates may be released or withheld.

You should be aware that Pearson may need to suspend certification when undertaking investigations, audits and quality assurances processes. You will be notified within a reasonable period of time if this occurs.

Sanctions and appeals

Where malpractice is proven we may impose sanctions or penalties.

Where learner malpractice is evidenced, penalties may be imposed such as:

- mark reduction for external assessments
- disqualification from the qualification
- being barred from registration for Pearson qualifications for a period of time.

If we are concerned about your centre's quality procedures we may impose sanctions such as:

- working with you to create an improvement action plan
- requiring staff members to receive further training
- placing temporary blocks on your certificates
- placing temporary blocks on registration of learners
- debarring staff members or the centre from delivering Pearson qualifications
- suspending or withdrawing centre approval status.

The centre will be notified if any of these apply.

Pearson has established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by Pearson will normally be accepted only from Heads of Centres (on behalf of learners and/or members of staff) and from individual members (in respect of a decision taken against them personally). Further information on appeals can be found in our *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications and end point assessment policy*, which is on our website. In the initial stage of any aspect of malpractice, please notify the Investigations Team by email via pqsmalpractice@pearson.com who will inform you of the next steps.

Certification and results

Once a learner has completed all the required components for a qualification, even if final results for external assessments have not been issued, then the centre can claim certification for the learner, provided that quality assurance has been successfully completed. For the relevant procedures please refer to our *Information Manual*. You can use the information provided on qualification grading to check overall qualification grades.

Results issue

After the external assessment session, learner results will be issued to centres. The result will be in the form of a grade. You should be prepared to discuss performance with learners, making use of the information we provide and post-results services.

Post-assessment services

Once results for external assessments are issued, you may find that the learner has failed to achieve the qualification or to attain an anticipated grade. It is possible to transfer or reopen registration in some circumstances. The *Information Manual* gives further information.

Changes to qualification requests

Where a learner who has taken a qualification wants to resit an externally-assessed unit to improve their qualification grade, you firstly need to decline their overall qualification grade. You may decline the grade before the certificate is issued. For a learner receiving their results in August, you should decline the grade by the end of September if the learner intends to resit an external assessment.

Additional documents to support centre administration

As an approved centre you must ensure that all staff delivering, assessing and administering the qualifications have access to this documentation. These documents are reviewed annually and are reissued if updates are required.

- *Pearson Quality Assurance Handbook*: this sets out how we will carry out quality assurance of standards and how you need to work with us to achieve successful outcomes.
- *Information Manual*: this gives procedures for registering learners for qualifications, transferring registrations, entering for external assessments and claiming certificates.
- *Lead Examiners' Reports*: these are produced after each series for each external assessment and give feedback on the overall performance of learners in response to tasks or questions set.
- *Instructions for Conducting External Assessments (ICEA)*: this explains our requirements for the effective administration of external assessments, such as invigilation and submission of materials.
- *Regulatory policies*: our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and explain how we meet internal and regulatory requirements. We review the regulated policies annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Policies related to this qualification include:
 - adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for general and vocational qualifications
 - age of learners
 - centre guidance for dealing with malpractice
 - recognition of prior learning and process.

This list is not exhaustive and a full list of our regulatory policies can be found on our website.

8 Quality assurance

Centre and qualification approval

As part of the approval process, your centre must make sure that the resource requirements listed below are in place before offering the qualification.

- Centres must have appropriate physical resources (for example equipment, IT, learning materials, teaching rooms) to support the delivery and assessment of the qualification.
- Staff involved in the assessment process must have relevant expertise and/or occupational experience.
- There must be systems in place to ensure continuing professional development for staff delivering the qualification.
- Centres must have in place appropriate health and safety policies relating to the use of equipment by learners.
- Centres must deliver the qualification in accordance with current equality legislation.
- Centres should refer to the teacher guidance section in individual units to check for any specific resources required.

Continuing quality assurance and standards verification

On an annual basis, we produce the *Pearson Quality Assurance Handbook*. It contains detailed guidance on the quality processes required to underpin robust assessment and internal verification.

The key principles of quality assurance are that:

- a centre delivering BTEC programmes must be an approved centre, and must have approval for the programmes or groups of programmes that it is delivering
- the centre agrees, as part of gaining approval, to abide by specific terms and conditions around the effective delivery and quality assurance of assessment; it must abide by these conditions throughout the period of delivery
- Pearson makes available to approved centres a range of materials and opportunities, through online standardisation, intended to exemplify the processes required for effective assessment, and examples of effective standards. Approved centres must use the materials and services to ensure that all staff delivering BTEC qualifications keep up to date with the guidance on assessment
- an approved centre must follow agreed protocols for standardisation of assessors and verifiers, for the planning, monitoring and recording of assessment processes, and for dealing with special circumstances, appeals and malpractice.

The approach of quality-assured assessment is through a partnership between an approved centre and Pearson. We will make sure that each centre follows best practice and employs appropriate technology to support quality-assurance processes, where practicable. We work to support centres and seek to make sure that our quality-assurance processes do not place undue bureaucratic processes on centres. We monitor and support centres in the effective operation of assessment and quality assurance.

The methods we use to do this for BTEC Level 3 include:

- making sure that all centres complete appropriate declarations at the time of approval
- undertaking approval visits to centres
- making sure that centres have effective teams of assessors and verifiers who are trained to undertake assessment
- assessment sampling and verification, through requested samples of assessments, completed assessed learner work and associated documentation
- an overarching review and assessment of a centre's strategy for delivering and quality assuring its BTEC programmes, for example making sure that synoptic units are placed appropriately in the order of delivery of the programme.

Centres that do not fully address and maintain rigorous approaches to delivering, assessing and quality assurance cannot seek certification for individual programmes or for all BTEC Level 3 programmes. An approved centre must make certification claims only when authorised by us and strictly in accordance with requirements for reporting.

Centres that do not comply with remedial action plans may have their approval to deliver qualifications removed.

9 Understanding the qualification grade

Awarding and reporting for the qualification

This section explains the rules that we apply in awarding a qualification and in providing an overall qualification grade for each learner. It shows how all the qualifications in this sector are graded.

The awarding and certification of these qualifications will comply with regulatory requirements.

Eligibility for an award

In order to be awarded a qualification, a learner must complete all units, achieve a Near Pass (N) or above in all external units and a pass or above in all mandatory units unless otherwise specified. Refer to the structure in *Section 2*.

To achieve any qualification grade, learners must:

- complete and **have an outcome** (D, M, P, N or U) for all units within a valid combination
- achieve the **required units at pass or above** shown in *Section 2*, and for the Diploma achieve a minimum of 600 GLH and Extended Diploma achieve a minimum 900 GLH at Pass or above (or N or above in external units)
- achieve the **minimum number of points** at a grade threshold.

It is the responsibility of a centre to ensure that a correct unit combination is adhered to. Learners who do not achieve the required minimum grade (N or P) in units shown in the structure will not achieve a qualification.

Learners who do not achieve sufficient points for a qualification or who do not achieve all the required units may be eligible to achieve a smaller qualification in the same suite provided they have completed and achieved the correct combination of units and met the appropriate qualification grade points threshold.

Calculation of the qualification grade

The final grade awarded for a qualification represents an aggregation of a learner's performance across the qualification. As the qualification grade is an aggregate of the total performance, there is some element of compensation in that a higher performance in some units may be balanced by a lower outcome in others.

In the event that a learner achieves more than the required number of optional units, the mandatory units along with the optional units with the highest grades will be used to calculate the overall result, subject to the eligibility requirements for that particular qualification title.

BTEC Nationals are Level 3 qualifications and are awarded at the grade ranges shown in the table below.

Qualification	Available grade range
Certificate, Extended Certificate, Foundation Diploma	P to D*
Diploma	PP to D*D*
Extended Diploma	PPP to D*D*D*

The *Calculation of qualification grade* table, shown further on in this section, shows the minimum thresholds for calculating these grades. The table will be kept under review over the lifetime of the qualification. The most up to date table will be issued on our website.

Pearson will monitor the qualification standard and reserves the right to make appropriate adjustments.

Learners who do not meet the minimum requirements for a qualification grade to be awarded will be recorded as Unclassified (U) and will not be certificated. They may receive a Notification of Performance for individual units. The *Information Manual* gives full information.

Points available for internal units

The table below shows the number of **points** available for internal units. For each internal unit, points are allocated depending on the grade awarded.

	Unit size	
	60 GLH	90 GLH
U	0	0
Pass	6	9
Merit	10	15
Distinction	16	24

Points available for external units

Raw marks from the external units will be awarded **points** based on performance in the assessment. The table below shows the **minimum number of points** available for each grade in the external units.

	Unit size	
	90 GLH	120 GLH
U	0	0
Near Pass	6	8
Pass	9	12
Merit	15	20
Distinction	24	32

Pearson will automatically calculate the points for each external unit once the external assessment has been marked and grade boundaries have been set. For more details about how we set grade boundaries in the external assessment please go to our website.

Claiming the qualification grade

Subject to eligibility, Pearson will automatically calculate the qualification grade for your learners when the internal unit grades are submitted and the qualification claim is made. Learners will be awarded qualification grades for achieving the sufficient number of points within the ranges shown in the relevant *Calculation of qualification grade* table for the cohort.

Calculation of qualification grade

Applicable for registration from 1 September 2018.

Certificate		Extended Certificate	
180 GLH		360 GLH	
Grade	Points threshold	Grade	Points threshold
U	0	U	0
Pass	18	P	36
Merit	26	M	52
Distinction	42	D	74
Distinction*	48	D*	90

The table is subject to review over the lifetime of the qualification. The most up-to-date version will be issued on our website.

Examples of grade calculations based on table applicable to registrations from September 2018

Example 1: Achievement of an Extended Certificate with a P grade

	GLH	Type (Int/Ext)	Grade	Unit points
Unit 1	90	Int	Pass	9
Unit 2	90	Ext	Merit	15
Unit 3	120	Ext	Pass	12
Unit 7	60	Int	Unclassified	0
Totals	360		P	36

The learner has achieved N or higher in Units 2 and 3 and P or higher in Unit 1.

The learner has sufficient points for a P grade.

Example 2: Achievement of an Extended Certificate with an M grade

	GLH	Type (Int/Ext)	Grade	Unit points
Unit 1	90	Int	Merit	15
Unit 2	90	Ext	Distinction	24
Unit 3	120	Ext	Near Pass	8
Unit 7	60	Int	Distinction	16
Totals	360		M	63

The learner has sufficient points for an M grade.

Example 3: An Unclassified Result for an Extended Certificate

	GLH	Type (Int/Ext)	Grade	Unit points
Unit 1	90	Int	Unclassified	0
Unit 2	90	Ext	Distinction	24
Unit 3	120	Ext	Merit	20
Unit 7	60	Int	Merit	10
Totals	360		U	54

The learner has a U in Unit 1.

The learner has sufficient points for an M grade but has not met the minimum requirement for an N or higher in Units 2 and 3, and a P or higher in Unit 1.

10 Resources and support

Our aim is to give you a wealth of resources and support to enable you to deliver BTEC National qualifications with confidence. On our website you will find a list of resources to support teaching and learning, and professional development.

Support for setting up your course and preparing to teach

Specification

This **specification** (for teaching from September 2018) includes details on the administration of qualifications and information on all the units for the qualification.

Delivery Guide

This free guide gives you important advice on how to choose the right course for your learners and how to ensure you are fully prepared to deliver the course. It explains the key features of BTEC Nationals (for example employer involvement and employability skills). It also covers guidance on assessment (internal and external) and quality assurance. The guide tells you where you can find further support and gives detailed unit-by-unit delivery guidance. It includes teaching tips and ideas, assessment preparation and suggestions for further resources.

Schemes of work

Free sample schemes of work are provided for each mandatory unit. These are available in Word™ format for ease of customisation.

Curriculum models

These show how the BTECs in the suite fit into a 16–19 study programme, depending on their size and purpose. The models also show where other parts of the programme, such as work experience, maths and English, tutorial time and wider study, fit alongside the programme.

Study skills activities

A range of case studies and activities is provided; they are designed to help learners develop the study skills they need to successfully complete their BTEC course. The case studies and activities are provided in Word™ format for easy customisation.

myBTEC

myBTEC is a free, online toolkit that lets you plan and manage your BTEC provision from one place. It supports the delivery, assessment and quality assurance of BTECs in centres and supports teachers with the following activities:

- checking that a programme is using a valid combination of units
- creating and verifying assignment briefs (including access to a bank of authorised assignment briefs that can be customised)
- creating assessment plans and recording assessment decisions
- tracking the progress of every learner throughout their programme.

To find out more about myBTEC, visit the myBTEC page on the support services section of our website. We will add the new BTEC National specifications to myBTEC as soon as possible.

Support for teaching and learning

Pearson Learning Services provides a range of engaging resources to support BTEC Nationals, including:

- textbooks in e-book and print formats
- revision guides and revision workbooks in e-book and print formats
- teaching and assessment packs, including e-learning materials via the Active Learn Digital Service.

Teaching and learning resources are also available from a number of other publishers. Details of Pearson's own resources and of all endorsed resources can be found on our website.

Support for assessment

Sample assessment materials for externally-assessed units

Sample assessments are available for the Pearson-set units. One copy of each of these assessments can be downloaded from the website/available in print. For each suite, an additional sample for one of the Pearson-set units is also available, allowing your learners further opportunities for practice.

Further sample assessments will be made available through our website on an ongoing basis.

Sample assessment materials for internally-assessed units

We do not prescribe the assessments for the internally-assessed units. Rather, we allow you to set your own, according to your learners' preferences and to link with your local employment profile.

We do provide a service in the form of Authorised Assignment Briefs, which are approved by Pearson Standards Verifiers. They are available via our website or free on myBTEC.

Sample marked learner work

To support you in understanding the expectation of the standard at each grade, examples of marked learner work at PM/MD grades are linked to the Authorised Assignment Briefs.

Training and support from Pearson

People to talk to

There are many people who are available to support you and provide advice and guidance on delivery of your BTEC Nationals. These include:

- Subject Advisors – available for all sectors. They understand all Pearson qualifications in their sector and so can answer sector-specific queries on planning, teaching, learning and assessment
- Standards Verifiers – they can support you with preparing your assignments, ensuring that your assessment plan is set up correctly, and support you in preparing learner work and providing quality assurance through sampling
- Curriculum Development Managers (CDMs) – they are regionally based and have a full overview of the BTEC qualifications and of the support and resources that Pearson provides. CDMs often run network events
- Customer Services – the 'Support for You' section of our website gives the different ways in which you can contact us for general queries. For specific queries, our service operators can direct you to the relevant person or department.

Training and professional development

Pearson provides a range of training and professional development events to support the introduction, delivery, assessment and administration of BTEC National qualifications. These sector-specific events, developed and delivered by specialists, are available both face to face and online.

'Getting Ready to Teach'

These events are designed to get teachers ready for delivery of the BTEC Nationals. They include an overview of the qualifications' structures, planning and preparation for internal and external assessment, and quality assurance.

Teaching and learning

Beyond the 'Getting Ready to Teach' professional development events, there are opportunities for teachers to attend sector- and role-specific events. These events are designed to connect practice to theory; they provide teacher support and networking opportunities with delivery, learning and assessment methodology.

Details of our training and professional development programme can be found on our website.

Appendix 1 Links to industry standards

BTEC Nationals have been developed in consultation with industry and appropriate sector bodies to ensure that the qualification content and approach to assessment aligns closely to the needs of employers. Where they exist, and are appropriate, National Occupational Standards (NOS) and professional body standards have been used to establish unit content.

Appendix 2 Glossary of terms used for internally-assessed units

This is a summary of the key terms used to define the requirements in the units.

Term	Definition
Accomplished	Demonstrate skills, expertise and mastery of activity or instrument.
Accurate	Perform music with precision and without error.
Analyse	Outcome of methodical and detailed examination, breaking down a topic to interpret and study the interrelationships between the parts.
Articulate	Express fluently and clearly.
Assured	Confident in own technique, understanding or knowledge when applying practical skills.
Coherent	Logically or aesthetically consistent and holding together as a harmonious or credible whole.
Collaborate	Work jointly with others.
Competent	Having the necessary knowledge or skill to do something suitably or sufficiently in amount or extent.
Comprehensive	Full, covering a range of factors related to goals, briefs or objectives.
Confident	Demonstrate secure application of skills or processes.
Considered	A well thought-out and developed idea, proposal or response.
Consistent	Able to reliably repeat an action that progresses towards achieving an aim.
Control/Controlled	Being in command of skills and techniques.
Creative	Using techniques, equipment and processes to express ideas or feelings in new ways.
Define	State or describe the nature, scope or meaning of a subject as objective facts.
Demonstrate	Carry out and apply knowledge, understanding and/or skills in a practical situation.
Describe	Give a clear account that includes all the relevant features and characteristics – ‘painting a picture with words’.
Discuss	Consider different aspects of a topic and how they interrelate, and the extent to which they are important.
Diverse	A variety of, to show a complete range.
Ease	Without noticeable difficulty or effort.
Effective	Show control over techniques, equipment and processes to efficiently meet the details and broad aims of a requirement.

Term	Definition
Engagement/Engaging	Connecting with and responding to the material.
Evaluate	Drawing on varied information, themes or concepts to consider aspects such as strengths, weaknesses, alternative actions, relevance or significance. Enquiries lead to a supported judgement showing relationship to its context, often in a conclusion.
Explain	Work shows clear details and gives reasons and/or evidence to support an opinion, view or argument. Learners can show comprehension of origins, functions and objectives of a subject and its suitability for purpose.
Flair	Performed in a creative manner, with finesse.
Fluent	Expressed with apparent ease and confidence.
Identify	Indicate the main features or purpose of something by recognising it and/or being able to discern and understand facts or qualities.
Imaginative	Develop ideas and concepts in new, engaging and inventive ways.
Insightful	Having or showing an accurate and deep understanding, being perceptive and discerning.
Interpret	State the meaning, purpose or qualities of something through the use of imagery, words or another means of expression.
Justify	Give reasons or evidence to support an opinion or prove something right or reasonable.
Musicality	Musical shape, balance and expression.
Outline	Learners' work, performance or practice gives a summary, overview or a brief description.
Perceptive	Showing an observant and discerning understanding.
Qualitative	Relating to, measuring, or measured by the quality of something rather than its quantity.
Reflect	Think carefully and review information and/or performance – includes articulating ideas, concepts, activities, findings or features.
Responsive	Reacting in a positive and thoughtful manner.
Review	Assess formally, appraising existing information or prior events with the intention of instituting change if necessary.
Secure	Well-practised, confident in own ability and skills.
Show	Learners' work, performance or practice presents evidence using knowledge, understanding and skills.
Summarise	Learners can express the condition of, or facts about something definitely or clearly.
Sustained	Maintained through successive stages or over an extended period.

This is a key summary of the types of evidence used for BTEC Nationals.

Type of evidence	Definition and purpose
Industry scenario	A specific example to which all learners must select and apply knowledge. Used to show application to a realistic context where direct experience cannot be gained.
Individual project	A self-directed, large-scale activity requiring planning, research, exploration, outcome and review. Used to show self-management, project management and/or deep learning, including synopticity.
Development log	A record kept by learners to show their process of development. Used to show method, self-management and skill development.
Performance	A defined and constrained opportunity to perform, to show skills in a structured context where the focus is on the skills/process rather than the specific outcome.

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Music Performance

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