

Qualification specification

**NCFE Level 3 Applied General Certificate in
Music Technology**

QN: 601/6779/8

This qualification is now withdrawn

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Summary of changes

This section summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version.

Version	Publication Date	Summary of amendments
v7.0	April 2018	<u>Additional guidance has been added to Section 4 regarding calculating the overall grade for a unit.</u>
v7.1	November 2019	<u>Information regarding the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners added to Section 1</u> <u>Information regarding the aggregation methods and grade thresholds added to Section 4</u>
v7.2	March 2020	<u>Information added to External Assessment section regarding additional retake opportunity.</u>
v7.3	January 2022	Paragraph added in regarding external quality assurance for graded qualifications .
v7.4	February 2022	The statement regarding the Key Stage 5 performance tables has been updated.
v7.5	June 2022	Further information added to the achieving this qualification section to confirm that, unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.
v7.5	June 2022	Information added to the entry guidance section to advise that registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the Portal.
v7.5	June 2022	Information added to the support for centres section about how to access support handbooks.
V7.6	August 2022	The decision has been made to move to the digital submission of learner evidence for external assessment purposes for this qualification. This will reduce the amount of administration for centres as learners will be able to save digital evidence in a secure folder to support the submission of their work. All references to the submission of physical learner work or hard copy evidence relating to external assessment has been removed from this qualification specification.

Section 1

Qualification overview

Qualification overview

Introduction

We want to make your experience of working with NCFE as pleasant and easy as possible. This qualification specification contains everything you need to know about this qualification and should be used by everyone involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of the Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Music Technology.

All information contained in this specification is correct at the time of publishing.

To ensure that you're using the most up-to-date version of this qualification specification, please check the issue date in the page headers against that of the qualification specification on the NCFE website.

If you advertise this qualification using a different or shortened name, you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the full regulated qualification title.

Things you need to know

Qualification number (QN)	601/6779/8
Aim reference	60167798
Total Qualification Time*	610
Guided learning hours (GLH)	372
Level	3
Assessment requirements	<p>Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence (units 01–06).</p> <p>Externally set and assessed question paper (sampled from units 01–06).</p> <p>Externally set and assessed practical assessment (sampled from units 01–04).</p> <p>Unless stated otherwise in this qualification specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.</p>

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

Total Qualification Time comprises:

- the Guided Learning Hours for the qualification
 - an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, Teacher or other appropriate provider of education or training.
-

About this qualification

This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 601/6779/8.

This has been developed to meet the Department for Education's (DfE's) requirements for high-quality, rigorous qualifications which:

- equip learners with transferable knowledge and skills
- motivate learners through applied learning
- fulfil entry requirements for a range of higher education courses.

This qualification features on the DfE list of approved Applied General qualifications for 16-19 year olds (Key Stage 5).

Qualification purpose

The Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Music Technology enables learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of working in the music technology sector. It's suitable for learners who are motivated by applied learning through hands-on creative experiences related to the work of a performing musician and music technologist.

This Applied General qualification is equivalent in size to an A level. It's aimed at post-16 year olds studying a Key Stage 5 curriculum with an interest in creative music production and performance.

This qualification has been designed to sit within the Study Programme, alongside A levels and other qualifications.

This qualification is not part of a suite.

It's appropriate for learners wishing to continue their education through applied learning which will equip them with transferable knowledge and skills whilst giving them the opportunity to respond to contextualised industry briefs.

Learners would typically progress onto Higher Education courses following this qualification.

This qualification aims to:

- focus on an applied study of Music Technology
- offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a significant core of knowledge and theoretical content and broad ranging applicability
- provide a number of opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills.

The objectives of this qualification are to enable learners to:

- operate and effectively use a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)
 - understand and experiment with musical elements in different musical styles
 - undertake recordings and successfully mix and master their audio
 - create sound for a range of multi-media purposes
 - manage sound for a live performance
 - explore revenue and marketing within the digital music business
 - reflect and build on their subject knowledge.
-

Entry guidance

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification.

This qualification has been developed for post-16 learners in schools and colleges.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy, and health and safety aspects of the qualification.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal.

Learners registered on this qualification shouldn't undertake another qualification at the same level with the same or a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding levels.

Achieving this qualification

To be awarded the Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Music Technology, learners are required to achieve a minimum of a Pass in each of the 6 mandatory units. Learners must also achieve a minimum of a Pass from across the external assessments.

This qualification consists of:

Unit no	Unit title	Guided learning hours	Mandatory/optional	Assessment method
Unit 01	Using a digital audio workstation	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 02	Creating music	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 03	Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 04	Sound creation	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 05	Live sound performance technology	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 06	Digital music business	60	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed

The learning outcomes for each unit are provided in Section 2 (page 14).

To achieve the Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Music Technology, learners must:

- successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the units as detailed in this qualification specification
- achieve a combined Pass grade across the 2 external assessments (see Section 4 for further information)
- attempt both external assessments (practical and written question paper).

A Unit Certificate can be requested for learners who don't achieve the full qualification but who have achieved at least one whole unit.

Grades are awarded for this qualification. For further information about grading and submitting these grades to NCFE, please see Section 4 (page 73).

UCAS points

This qualification has UCAS points as follows:

- Distinction*: 56
 - Distinction: 48
 - Merit: 32
 - Pass: 16
-

Progression opportunities

This qualification fulfils entry requirements for a range of Higher Education courses, either by meeting entry requirements in their own right or being accepted alongside and adding value to other qualifications at the same level.

Degree courses could include:

- music technology
- live sound production
- music production
- creative music production
- creative music technology
- music technology and audio systems
- music technology and popular music.

Qualification dates

Regulated qualifications have operational end dates and certification end dates.

We review qualifications regularly, working with sector representatives, vocational experts and stakeholders to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments.

If a decision is made to withdraw a qualification, we will set an operational end date and provide reasonable notice to our centres. We will also take all reasonable steps to protect the interest of learners.

An operational end date will only show on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications register.ofqual.gov.uk and on our website if a decision has been made to withdraw a qualification. After this date, we can no longer accept learner registrations. However, certification is allowed until the certification end date so that learners have time to complete any programmes of study. The certification end date will only show on the Ofqual Register once an operational end date has been set. After this date, we can no longer process certification claims.

Where a qualification has an external assessment, this can only be taken up to the last assessment date set by us. No external assessments will be permitted after this date so learners will need to be entered in sufficient time.

Staffing requirements

Centres delivering any of NCFE's qualifications must:

- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Assessors to assess the volume of learners they intend to register
- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Internal Quality Assurers to internally quality assure the anticipated number of Assessors and learners
- ensure that all staff involved in assessment and internal quality assurance are provided with appropriate training and undertake meaningful and relevant continuing professional development
- implement effective internal quality assurance systems and processes to ensure all assessment decisions are reliable, valid, authentic, sufficient and current. This should include standardisation to ensure consistency of assessment
- provide all staff involved in the assessment process with sufficient time and resources to carry out their roles effectively.

Assessors and internal quality assurance

Staff involved in the assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification must be able to demonstrate that they have (or are working towards) the relevant occupational knowledge and/or occupational competence, at the same level or higher as the units being assessed and internal quality assured. This may be gained through experience and/or qualifications.

Resource requirements

Although NCFE does not specify the resource requirements for this qualification, centres are expected to have appropriate equipment to allow learners to cover all of the learning outcomes. NCFE does not stipulate the software packages or equipment centres should use. However, centres must offer learners access to software packages and equipment appropriate to Music Technology. These might typically include (as available within centres):

- audio interface
- microphones
- MIDI keyboard/MIDI controller
- computer
- most up-to-date software that can satisfy the requirements of the qualification
- PA system

Learner evidence required for external assessment purposes must be transferred onto storage media and submitted digitally using PDF as the preferred file format.

Support for learners

Evidence and Grading Tracker

We've produced an Evidence and Grading Tracker to help learners keep track of their work and to help Teachers to reach a judgement on the overall unit grade.

They can be downloaded free of charge from the NCFE website. You don't have to use the Evidence and Grading Tracker – you can devise your own evidence-tracking documents instead.

Any documents you produce should allow learners to track their achievement against each required learning outcome and include:

- information on the content, availability and location of NCFE's procedures and policies
- advice on support mechanisms for learners who are experiencing difficulties with their studies
- a mechanism for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers to authenticate evidence and achievement for each unit.

Support for centres

This qualification specification must be used alongside the mandatory support handbook which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with planning, delivery and assessment.

This qualification specification contains all the qualification-specific information you will need that is not covered in the support handbook

Customer Support team

Our award-winning Customer Support Team will support you with approvals, registrations, external quality assurance, external assessment, results and certification. To contact your Customer Support Assistant, call 0191 239 8000 or email customersupport@ncfe.org.uk.

Assessment and Moderation Handbook for Schools

This guide describes the quality assurance process so that you can be aware of what systems and processes you should have in place.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments

This is designed to assist centres in the correct administration of the external assessment component of NCFE qualifications.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

This policy is aimed at customers – including learners – who use our products and services and who submit requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The policy can be found on the NCFE website.

Withdrawn

Subject maps

Our suite of subject maps showcase the qualifications we have available within each specialist sector and how they connect to each other. They demonstrate how you can plot routes for your learners at different levels from entry level right through to higher education or the workforce, with supporting qualifications along the way.

Fees and Pricing

The current Fees and Pricing Guide is available on the NCFE website.

Training and support

We can provide training sessions for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers. Bespoke subject-specific training is also available. For further information, please contact our Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Learning resources

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the qualification page on the NCFE website for more information and to see what is available for this qualification.

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

Accountability measures (performance points)

This qualification has been developed to meet the criteria set by the DfE to be included in the Key Stage 5 performance tables. Each grade has been assigned a points value. Please check the Register of Regulated Qualifications website register.ofqual.gov.uk/ for further information.

Work experience

Work experience can be very valuable to learners to gain a realistic insight into the career or job they may be interested in. The following websites provide useful information and guidance:

- www.bbc.co.uk/careers/work-experience/
 - www.creativeskillset.org/
 - www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm
-

Essential skills

In order to complete high-quality project-based learning, learners may spend some time exploring how such projects are undertaken in the commercial sector of their subject area. They may also seek work experience opportunities and develop contacts with workplaces and employers.

All this activity requires that they develop a thorough understanding of the essential skills employers look for in employees.

These range from familiar 'key skills' such as team working, independent learning and problem solving, to the softer skills such as:

- an appreciation for appropriate behaviour and dress
- appropriate interpersonal skills
- communicating with professional colleagues/peers and/or hierarchical seniors
- supporting other aspiring employees
- personal manners and deportment
- understanding work practices and how different roles and departments function within an organisation.

NCFE has a range of qualifications that schools can use to formalise learning in these aspects of essential work-ready skills. NCFE offers valuable support to learners whose portfolio of qualifications may benefit from some work-specific enhancements. For more information, please go to the NCFE website.

Section 2

Unit content and assessment guidance

Unit content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

The unit summary provides an overview of each unit including:

- unit title and number
- unit summary
- guided learning hours
- level
- an indication of whether a unit is mandatory or optional
- an indication of how the unit is assessed.

Following the unit summary, there's detailed information for each unit containing:

- learning outcomes
- assessment points
- grading descriptors and examples
- delivery and assessment (types of evidence for internal assessment)
- unit glossary.

The learning outcomes for this qualification should not be viewed as a stand-alone element of the unit. They should be viewed holistically with the assessment points, delivery and assessment guidance, and grading descriptors. These components combined ensure that the learners' achievement is consistent with the level of the qualification.

Information in the delivery and assessment section must be covered by the Teacher during the delivery of the unit.

Anything which follows a **must**, details what must be taught as part of that area of content. **These are subject to assessment.**

Anything which follows an **eg or could** is illustrative. It should be noted that where eg. is used these are examples that could be covered in teaching of the unit content.

The regulated unit number is indicated in brackets for each unit (eg M/100/7116). However, to make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we've used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

For further information or guidance about the qualification, please contact our Product Development team on 0191 239 8000.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment¹ is an important part of a high-quality vocational qualification because it shows that learners have achieved a holistic understanding of the sector and that they can make effective connections between different aspects they have studied. It enables learners to show that they can transfer knowledge and skills learned in one context to resolve problems raised in another.

To support the development of a synoptic approach, the qualification encourages learners to make links between elements of the course and to demonstrate how they have integrated and applied their increasing knowledge and skills from the beginning.

As learners progress through the course, they use and build upon knowledge and skills learnt in previous units.

The external assessments are also synoptic in nature as they require learners to apply and integrate their knowledge and skills from across the whole qualification in a vocationally relevant context.

Full evidence of learners' accumulated knowledge, skills and understanding and of their ability to 'think like a music technologist' will be evidenced when the learner successfully achieves the qualification.

¹ The Department for Education (DfE) defines synoptic assessment as: 'a form of assessment which requires a learner to demonstrate that s/he can identify and use effectively in an integrated way an appropriate selection of techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole vocational sector, which are relevant to a key task'.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987)

Unit summary	The Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) has increasingly become the key tool that many musicians and producers use to compose and edit music. In this unit learners will understand underlying technical concepts in context, apply them creatively, and will be able to review their work to gain understanding of the process of music creation and manipulation using a DAW.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand the functions of a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)

The learner must know about:

- the functions of DAW hardware
- the functions of DAW software
- the development of DAW technology.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p><u>Possible solutions</u> to complex technical scenarios are identified. Supports all points with <u>some</u> sophisticated examples.</p>
<p>Merit: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p><u>Effective solutions</u> to complex technical scenarios are identified. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and some</u> appropriate comparisons.</p>
<p>Distinction: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions from research into complex technical scenarios which are <u>effectively resolved</u>. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and</u> appropriate comparisons.</p>

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Learners should describe the hardware and software features of a DAW in relation to the production of music. The learners should demonstrate how developments in hardware and software technology over time have impacted upon working practices.

Learners must demonstrate their understanding of the following.

- **The functions of DAW hardware:**
 - computer hardware and peripherals
 - computer - operating system; memory; processing
 - audio interface
 - MIDI interface
 - headphones/speakers
 - connection types and functions
 - MIDI
 - USB/FireWire/Thunderbolt
 - SPDIF/ADAT
 - MIDI controllers
 - keyboard controllers
 - alternative controllers eg guitar controllers, pad controllers, wind controllers

- **The functions of DAW software:**
 - configuration of software preferences
 - creation of new projects
 - using and creating templates
 - project handling - setting working folders; appropriate naming of files
 - track types
 - audio
 - software instrument
 - external MIDI
 - MIDI data
 - MIDI principles – channels; IN, OUT, THRU connections; local control
 - MIDI message format – binary; status and data bytes; most significant bit (MSB) and least significant bit (LSB)
 - MIDI message types - channel messages (Note On, Pitch Bend, Controller); system messages (eg SysEx)
 - MIDI input
 - MIDI editing
 - Automation
 - Recording audio
 - Audio editing
 - DAW arranging features
 - Software instruments
 - Plug ins
 - Exporting to stereo audio – why different file types are used for different purposes

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)**

Delivery and assessment (cont'd)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development of DAW technology:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- historical overview of the development of sequencing hardware and software<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ hardware sequencers○ MIDI and audio sequencing software○ development of computer hardware, processing and memory- impact of the DAW upon the work of musicians and producers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ accessibility of equipment - financial accessibility; software instruments and processing versus hardware equivalents○ changing working methods - movement from hardware-based approach to 'working in the box' and the effect upon creativity and understanding
Types of evidence
Evidence could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• presentation• annotated diagrams• video recording/screencast• report• poster.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Create a musical project that will include MIDI and audio

The learner must demonstrate:

- use of DAW software functions in response to a brief.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p><u>Possible solutions</u> to complex technical scenarios are identified. Supports all points with <u>some</u> sophisticated examples.</p>
<p>Merit: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p><u>Effective solutions</u> to complex technical scenarios are identified. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and some</u> appropriate comparisons.</p>
<p>Distinction: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions from research into complex technical scenarios which are <u>effectively resolved</u>. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and</u> appropriate comparisons.</p>
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must create a piece of music in response to a brief.</p> <p>It is suggested that the finished piece should be between 3 and 5 minutes in length. Learners must use a minimum of 16 tracks, which must include both audio and MIDI.</p> <p>Learners must export the final project to an appropriate stereo audio format.</p> <p>Learners must demonstrate the use of DAW software functions with reference to the brief. These must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • configuration of software preferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creation of new products - using and creating templates - project handling – setting working folders; appropriate naming of files • MIDI input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - real-time - step-time - editor input – using editors to manipulate note and controller data

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment (cont'd)**

- MIDI editing, use of corrective and creative editing
 - copy/paste
 - quantise
 - velocity
 - note length
- automation
 - control of volume and pan
 - control of instrument parameters – filter; envelope
 - control of plug-in parameters eg delay time, wet/dry mix, bypass
- recording and configuration of audio tracks
 - gain setting
 - input routing
 - bit depth
 - sample rate
 - track type: mono/stereo
- audio editing, corrective and creative
 - fades and crossfades
 - transient detection
 - pitch and time manipulation
 - reverse
 - trimming
- DAW arranging features
 - use of markers
 - setting and varying time signature and tempo
- software instruments
 - synthesisers
 - samplers
- plug-ins
 - effects – reverb; delay; modulation (eg flanger, chorus, phaser); distortion; pitch shift/pitch correction
 - dynamic control – compression/limiting; noise gates/expanders
 - equalisation (EQ) – parametric; graphic
- routing
 - bussing
 - effects sends
 - inserts
- exporting to a stereo audio file
 - WAV
 - AIFF
 - MP3

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- the final piece delivered in a format appropriate to the brief
- evidence of the processes used to develop the piece.

Evidence of process could include:

- annotated photographs and/or screenshots
- video recording with commentary
- a written report
- audio files.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Review their completed musical project

The learner must evaluate:

- how the project has met the brief through the use of DAW software functions
- the outcome of experimentation
- strengths and areas for improvement.

Grading descriptors

Pass: Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices. These are linked to success or otherwise of the overall outcome.

Produces an action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which has some links to the experience of the task/performance.

Merit: Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and justifies their uses.

Produces an action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which is clearly linked to the experience of the task/performance.

Distinction: Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and justifies their uses.

Produces a comprehensive action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which is clearly linked to the experience of the task/performance.

Makes well-reasoned and balanced conclusions which inform future developments.

Delivery and assessment

Learners are being assessed on their ability to review their musical project and make recommendations for improvement.

This learning outcome should be delivered and assessed alongside learning outcome 2, with evidence of the learner's ongoing decisions influencing the development of their musical project. The learner should undertake action planning following self- and peer-evaluation of the project.

The evaluation should consider the finished musical project, and the development and experimentation undertaken by the learner.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (A/507/4987) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- an ongoing action plan
- their review.

The review could include:

- video recording with commentary/podcast
- a written report.

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988)

Unit summary	The ability to listen analytically and understand how pieces of music work underpins the techniques used in creating original compositions. In this unit learners will develop the skills to analyse music and use their findings to create their own original compositions. Learners will review their work to gain an understanding of the process of creating a portfolio of music.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand the musical and cultural elements of chosen styles

The learner must know about:

- key musical elements in relation to chosen styles
- cultural and technological developments in relation to chosen styles
- how notation is used to represent music.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Uses information from a specialist source and communicates it in their own words. Describes key musical and cultural elements of the chosen styles, <u>using</u> appropriate specialist language in context. All points are supported with <u>some</u> sophisticated examples.
Merit: Uses information found in <u>different</u> formats from <u>at least 2</u> specialist sources and communicates it, mostly accurately, in their own words. Describes key musical and cultural elements of the chosen styles, <u>using</u> appropriate specialist language in context. All points are supported with sophisticated examples <u>and some</u> appropriate comparisons.
Distinction: Uses information <u>appropriately taken</u> from a <u>wide range</u> of specialist sources in different formats and <u>accurately</u> communicates it in their own words. Describes key musical and cultural elements of the chosen styles, <u>using</u> appropriate specialist language in context. All points are supported with sophisticated examples and <u>consistently</u> appropriate comparisons.

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Teachers must introduce a variety of musical styles in terms of musical and cultural analysis and work through examples with the class, reviewing the key musical elements aurally and in notation format.

Learners must choose 3 styles and identify the musical elements that define those styles and the cultural and technological developments that have influenced them.

Learners must demonstrate their understanding of the following:

- **key musical elements in relation to chosen styles:**
 - musical structure
 - descriptions of structure - descriptions of form eg binary, ternary, rondo, arch; song structure - eg 12 bar; letter names eg ABC; descriptors eg intro, verse, chorus, middle 8, solo, outro
 - melody
 - descriptions of melody, eg chromatic; diatonic; conjunct; disjunct
 - scales; major; harmonic minor
 - modes; Dorian, Mixolydian; Phrygian; Aeolian
 - rhythm
 - tempo - descriptions in beats per minute (bpm)
 - time signature - simple time signatures; compound time signatures
 - syncopation
 - triplets
 - rhythmic motifs
 - harmony
 - diatonic chords; use of Roman numerals to represent chords; chord inversions
 - extended chords; use of Roman numerals to represent chords; chord inversions
 - chromatic chords
 - modulation
 - instrumentation
 - timbre
 - instrumental groupings
 - changing textures
- **cultural and technological developments in relation to chosen styles:**
 - historical events impacting upon music
 - eg war, economic conditions, censorship
 - social developments impacting upon music
 - eg youth cultures, changing patterns of consumption, influence of social media
 - influence of technology on the development of music
 - development of recording technology; multitrack recording; DAW
 - development of instrument technology; eg electric guitar, synthesisers, samplers, drum machines
 - development of consumer technology - playback formats eg vinyl, cassette, CD, MP3, streaming audio, radio, TV, portable playback devices, internet

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment (cont'd)**

- **notation:**
 - representation of pitch and rhythm
 - treble clef
 - bass clef
 - other graphic representation of musical elements
 - chord charts
 - guitar tablature

Research might include sound clips, online videos, musical notation, articles, website and music magazines.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- poster
- written report
- leaflet
- audio/visual narrative
- research evidence: audio examples, list of examples listened to.

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Create a portfolio containing 3 musical compositions in the styles described in learning outcome 1

The learner must demonstrate:

- stylistically appropriate selection and creation of key musical elements to produce compositions
- presentation of compositions as mixed audio files.

Grading descriptors

Pass: Completes 3 music compositions referencing their stylistic research from learning outcome 1. Learners will show experimentation with complex materials and techniques. The outcome will show application of some key musical elements in completing the compositions.

Merit: Completes 3 music compositions showing understanding of their stylistic research from learning outcome 1. Learners will show experimentation with complex materials and techniques. The outcome will show consistent application of all the key musical elements in completing the compositions.

Distinction: Completes 3 music compositions showing detailed and consistent understanding of their stylistic research from learning outcome 1. Learners will show experimentation with complex materials and techniques. The outcome will show consistent and musically accurate application of all the key musical elements in completing the compositions.

Delivery and assessment

Learners must select and create key musical elements in their chosen styles and develop them into compositions, responding to a brief.

Learners must use a minimum of 8 parts to include audio and MIDI tracks in each composition.

Their finished mixed compositions must be presented in an appropriate format to meet the brief. Appropriate formats must include audio files and could include notation/chord charts.

The length of the completed compositions must be relevant to the purpose of the brief. It is suggested that the total length of the 3 compositions should be approximately 10 minutes.

Learners must show evidence of how they developed their compositions in relation to their research, experimentation and the processes undertaken.

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- the final completed compositions as audio files.

Evidence of process could include:

- annotated screen shots
- annotated photographs and/or screenshots
- video recording with commentary
- a written or verbal report
- notated parts.

Unit 02 Creating music (F/507/4988) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Review their musical compositions

The learner must reflect on:

- how their research informed the final compositions
- their selection and creation of key musical elements
- their strengths and areas for improvement.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Describes the effectiveness of the research and practices. Consistently and effectively selects and uses appropriate technical language.</p>
<p>Merit: Describes the effectiveness of the research and practices and <u>justifies</u> their use in creating the final compositions. Consistently and effectively selects and uses appropriate technical language.</p>
<p>Distinction: Describes the effectiveness of the research and practices and <u>justifies</u> their use in creating the final compositions. Consistently and effectively selects and uses appropriate technical language.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions <u>which inform future developments</u>.</p>
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners are being assessed on their ability to review the process of researching and creating their compositions.</p> <p>This learning outcome should be delivered and assessed alongside learning outcome 2, with evidence of how ongoing evaluation influenced the development of the pieces.</p> <p>The evaluation should consider the finished pieces, including the development and experimentation undertaken by the learner.</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their review. <p>The review could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video recording with commentary • a written report • video review/podcast.

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990)

Unit summary	<p>The availability of technology has allowed some areas of the multitrack recording, mixing and mastering process to become more widely accessible, but basic skills in capturing and balancing recorded sound have remained largely unchanged.</p> <p>In this unit the learner will understand technical concepts in context and apply them to a recording project. The learner will review their work to gain understanding of the process of creating a recording from the initial recording session to the final stereo master.</p>
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Plan a multitrack recording session in response to a given scenario

The learner must know about:

- planning a recording
- recording equipment
- development of technology and practices.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Makes reasoned conclusions based on appropriate information. <u>Possible solutions</u> to the scenario are identified and a plan produced.</p>
<p>Merit: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Makes reasoned conclusions based on appropriate information. <u>Effective solutions</u> to the scenario are identified and a plan produced.</p>
<p>Distinction: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Makes reasoned conclusions based on appropriate information. Demands of the scenario are <u>effectively met</u> through a <u>comprehensive</u> plan.</p>

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Learners are given a brief to plan a recording. The learners will describe the key technical features of the studio environment and equipment.

At this level learners should plan to record one piece of music using at least 8 audio tracks and demonstrate refined choices in terms of planning.

The learners should produce a session plan commenting on appropriate choice of microphones/direct input (DI), microphone placement, use of the recording chain (pre-amps, audio interface and multitrack) and monitoring requirements.

The learners should explain how developments in technology have impacted upon working practices over time.

- **Planning a recording:**
 - recording environment
 - live room and control room
 - room acoustics - standing waves; reverberation; room shape; listening position
 - acoustic materials - absorption coefficients of different materials with regard to frequency
 - health and safety in a recording environment
 - exposure to noise at work
 - display screens
 - trip hazards
 - electrical hazards
 - session planning
 - timescales (recording, mixing, mastering)
 - logistics (equipment and personnel)
 - process planning (tracking requirements and set up)
- **Recording equipment:**
 - appropriate choices and properties of microphones
 - how different transducer types work; dynamic (including ribbon); condenser (including back electret, PZM)
 - recognise and interpret polar response; omni; cardioid; hypercardioid; figure of 8
 - recognise and interpret frequency response graphs
 - recognise and interpret sensitivity figures
 - phantom power
 - balanced lines
 - microphone placement
 - close
 - stereo pair (A/B and X/Y)
 - ambient

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment (cont'd)**

- direct input
 - o active and passive DI boxes
 - o unbalanced to balanced conversion
 - o high to low impedance conversion
- audio interfaces
 - o balanced and unbalanced inputs/outputs
 - o A/D and D/A conversion
 - o audio in and out routing
 - o connectivity to DAW
 - o selection of bit depth and sample rate
- pre-amps
 - o conversion of microphone to line level signals
 - o colouration and manipulation of audio path
- multi-track recorders
 - o software (DAW-based recording)
 - o hardware (magnetic tape, ADAT, hard disk)
- monitoring
 - o how loudspeakers work; electromagnetic induction; driver types (dynamic, compression driver/horn, piezoelectric); crossover
 - o control room speakers; near field; main; subwoofers; recognise and interpret power and frequency response figures
 - o headphone mixes; engineer; artist
- **Development of technology and practices:**
 - changing recording formats over time eg:
 - o magnetic tape
 - o ADAT
 - o hard disk
 - how the development of technology over time has affected the practice of sound recording
 - o accessibility, logistics, cost
 - o software vs hardware
 - changing end consumer formats over time
 - o vinyl, cassette, CD, MP3, streaming audio
 - o how the development of consumer formats has affected the practice of sound recording

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- poster
- written report
- audio/visual narrative
- annotated diagrams

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Undertake a multitrack recording session

The learner must demonstrate:

- use of equipment
- awareness of health and safety
- optimisation of gain
- over-dubbing.

Grading descriptors

Pass: Process will show application of some specialist skills in completing a complex brief. The outcome will demonstrate the ability to record a minimum of 8 audio tracks.

Merit: Process will show the effective application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief. The outcome will demonstrate the ability to record a minimum of 8 audio tracks.

Distinction: Process and outcome will show the consistent effective application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief. The outcome will demonstrate the ability to accurately capture a minimum of 8 audio tracks.

Delivery and assessment

Learners must record the session planned in learning outcome 1. They must be able to:

- adjust recording levels to optimise gain
- demonstrate sequential and simultaneous recording of multiple audio sources onto separate tracks
- follow health and safety procedures in relation to the recording environment.

Learners must demonstrate the use of appropriate tools and techniques considered in learning outcome 1 with reference to the brief. These must include:

- choice of microphones
- microphone placement
- direct input (DI)
- use of pre-amp/audio interface
- use of multitrack recorder
- use of monitoring for engineer and artist.

Learners are expected to record a minimum of 8 audio tracks.

Note that learners will be assessed on the quality of the recording, not the musicianship of the artist(s).

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- audio recordings of work in progress.

Evidence of process could include:

- video narration
- annotated photos
- diary or recording log
- blog
- health and safety checklists.

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Demonstrate mixing of a multitrack audio recording

The learner must demonstrate:

- preparation of audio for mix
- use of processing and mixing techniques.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show application of <u>some</u> specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Merit: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show <u>effective</u> application of specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Distinction: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show <u>consistent and effective</u> application of specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must mix the tracks recorded in learning outcome 2, ensuring that they demonstrate and explain the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation of audio for mix: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of audio editing to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ remove unwanted noise in tracks ○ apply fades and crossfades • use of processing and mixing techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EQ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of corrective and creative EQ to control frequency content ○ EQ filter types (low pass filter (LPF), high pass filter (HPF), shelf) ○ use of EQ parameters (gain, Q, frequency) - effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ using effects as inserts ○ using send/return (bussing) ○ use and control of reverb and delay effects to create ambience ○ reverb – use of pre-delay, reverb time, wet/dry mix ○ delay – use of delay time, feedback, wet/dry mix, tempo synchronisation

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment (cont'd)**

- effects; use and control of other effects
 - modulation effects eg flanging, chorus, phasing
 - feedback and rate parameters
 - distortion effects eg overdrive, distortion, guitar amp simulation
 - pitch shift/pitch correction eg tuning of parts, creation of harmony parts
- dynamics; use of corrective and creative processing to control dynamics
 - use of dynamics parameters
 - threshold, gain, ratio, attack, release
 - compression/limiting
 - noise gate/expander
 - use of side chains/key input
- balance
 - relative level of individual tracks
 - consideration of final output level with reference to dBFS
- stereo field
 - placement of individual tracks in the stereo field
 - mono compatibility and phase
 - consideration of panning law
- monitoring
 - headphones and speakers
 - use of reference material
- automation; use of automation for corrective and creative purposes
 - volume automation
 - panning automation
 - EQ/effects/dynamics automation

Learners must show evidence of the above in the final mixed recording and evidence of the process that was undertaken in mixing.

Note that learners will be assessed on the quality of the mix, not the musicianship of the artist(s).

Types of evidence

Learners must provide:

- their final stereo mix of the recording
- evidence of the mixing process.

Evidence of process could include:

- early mixes to demonstrate development to the final mix
- video narration
- annotated photos
- diary or recording log
- blog
- health and safety checklists.

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 4**

The learner will:

Demonstrate relevant mastering processes

The learner must demonstrate:

- application of an effective mastering chain
- saving final mastered audio file in an appropriate format.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show application of <u>some</u> specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Merit: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show <u>effective</u> application of specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Distinction: Shows experimentation with complex materials <u>and</u> techniques. Process and outcome will show <u>consistent effective</u> application of specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must set up and use an appropriate mastering chain and produce a master in an appropriate format. They must explain their choice of processors and format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of an effective mastering chain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - audio editing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ topping and tailing ○ applying fades - gain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of gain to control level - EQ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of corrective/creative EQ - stereo image <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stereo image adjustment - compression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of compression to control dynamic range ○ use of multiband compression - limiting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of limiting to control dynamic range and perceived volume • Saving final mastered audio file in an appropriate format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - format (AIFF, WAV, MP3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ data encoding (eg ISRC) ○ bit depth ○ sample rate

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 4 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- their final mastered recording.

Evidence of process could include:

- original pre-mastered recording
- video narration
- annotated photos
- diary or recording log
- blog.

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 5**

The learner will:

Review the process of recording, mixing and mastering and the final audio product

The learner must evaluate:

- planning
- progression from unmixed to mixed to mastered recording
- strengths of the final product
- ways to improve.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Correctly and consistently selects and uses appropriate technical terms.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the planning and the processes of recording, mixing and mastering. These are <u>linked to the success or otherwise of the overall outcome</u>.</p>
<p>Merit: Correctly and consistently selects and uses appropriate technical terms.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the planning and the processes of recording, mixing and mastering <u>and justifies their choices</u>.</p>
<p>Distinction: Correctly and consistently selects and uses appropriate technical terms.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the planning and the processes of recording, mixing and mastering <u>and justifies their choices</u>.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions <u>which inform future developments</u>.</p>
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must compare and contrast the mastered, mixed and unmixed recordings. They must consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQ • effects • dynamics • balance • stereo field. <p>They must comment on how their final piece meets the requirements of the brief via the recording, mixing and mastering processes. Learners must reflect on how planning and experimentation impacted on their final product.</p>

Unit 03 Multi-track audio recording, mixing and mastering (A/507/4990) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 5 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- their review.

The review could include:

- video recording with commentary
- a brief written report
- video review/podcast.

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992)

Unit summary	In this unit learners will study the properties of sound and how sound is theoretically represented, perceived and relates to music. Learners will apply knowledge by creating sampled and synthesized instruments and will be able to review their work.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand principles relating to sound, sampling and synthesis

The learner must know about:

- properties of sound
- sampling theory
- synthesis theory
- development of sampling and synthesis technology.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Uses information from a specialist source and communicates it in own words. Supports all points with <u>some</u> sophisticated examples.</p>
<p>Merit: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Uses information found in <u>different</u> formats from <u>at least 2</u> specialist sources and communicates it, <u>mostly accurately</u>, in own words. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and some</u> appropriate comparisons.</p>
<p>Distinction: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Uses information <u>appropriately taken</u> from a <u>wide range</u> of specialist sources in <u>different</u> formats and <u>accurately</u> communicates it in own words. Supports all points with sophisticated examples and appropriate comparisons.</p>

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Learners should work to a brief to produce a report which shows understanding of key concepts in relation to the properties of sound.

Learners could be asked to undertake a study of different types of sound creation using appropriate historical examples explaining different methods of sound production.

Learners could explain sampling theory in relation to learning outcome 2 and synthesis theory in relation to learning outcome 3.

Learners must demonstrate their understanding of the following:

- **properties of sound:**
 - sound wave propagation and how it is represented graphically
 - frequency
 - wavelength
 - amplitude
 - phase
 - the harmonic series and timbre
 - fundamental
 - harmonics
 - partials
 - measurement of sound and psychoacoustics
 - sound pressure level; dB SPL
 - perception of frequency; range of human hearing (Hz); dBA
- **sampling theory:**
 - sampling rate and frequency content
 - bit depth
 - creating sampled instruments
 - importing audio
 - key mapping; mapping pitched samples across range; mapping samples to single key
 - velocity switching
 - looping
 - filters; LPF; HPF; envelope
- **synthesis theory:**
 - oscillator waveforms
 - sine, sawtooth, square, triangle, pulse
 - filters
 - types of filter; LPF; HPF; band pass
 - filter control; cut-off frequency; resonance
 - envelope
 - attack, decay, sustain, release (ADSR)

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)**

Delivery and assessment (cont'd)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- modulation<ul style="list-style-type: none">o low-frequency oscillator (LFO) (control of PWM, tremolo, vibrato)• development of sampling and synthesis technology:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- know about how sound is produced in different types of synthesis<ul style="list-style-type: none">o subtractiveo additiveo wavetableo FMo sample basedo physical modelling
Types of evidence
Evidence could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• digital or interactive presentation• poster• written report• audio/visual narrative• audio examples.

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Explore sampling techniques

The learner must demonstrate:

- creation of an original sampler patch.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of <u>some</u> specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Merit: Process and outcome will show the <u>effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show the <u>consistent effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must use audio files to create one or more original patches using a sampling instrument.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners must record original audio for use as material to create a sampler patch. • Learners must use audio editing tools to prepare audio for use as samples. Audio editing tools should include cropping/trimming. • Learners must import the edited audio files into a hardware or software sampler instrument. • Learners must create and save an original sampler patch making use of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key mapping - velocity switching - looping - filtering. <p>Learners are to be encouraged to make use of the sampler patch to create a short musical example.</p> <p>Evidence must include the original audio recording and the learner's sampler patch as well as evidence of the process.</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audio/video recordings • the sampler patch. <p>Evidence of process could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video narration • annotated photos • diary or recording log • blog.

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Explore synthesis

The learner must demonstrate:

- creation of original synthesizer patches.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of <u>some</u> specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Merit: Process and outcome will show the <u>effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show the <u>consistent effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must use a synthesiser instrument (hardware or software) to create 2 or more original synthesiser patches.</p> <p>Learners must demonstrate the ability to use a range of synthesis types and techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis type (eg subtractive and FM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wave form selection - filtering - envelope - modulation <p>Learners are to be encouraged to make use of the synthesizer patch to create a short musical example.</p> <p>Evidence must include the learner's synthesizer patches as well as evidence of the process.</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audio/video recordings • synthesizer patches. <p>Evidence of process could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video narration • annotated photos • diary or recording log • blog.

Unit 04 Sound creation (J/507/4992) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 4**

The learner will:

Review the processes and tools used and the material created in learning outcomes 2 and 3

The learner must evaluate:

- suitability of chosen processes
- success of outcomes in relation to the brief.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>links these to success or otherwise of the overall outcome</u>.</p>
<p>Merit: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>justifies their use</u>.</p>
<p>Distinction: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>justifies their use</u>.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions <u>which inform future developments</u>.</p>
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must review the materials, processes and tools used in creating sampler and synthesizer patches and the impact their choices had on the final materials created.</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their review. <p>The review could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • digital or interactive presentation • video recording with commentary • a written report • video review/podcast.

Unit 05 Live sound performance technology (R/507/4994)

Unit summary	In this unit learners will plan and undertake a performance which makes use of music technology. Learners will undertake the performance in the role of performer or sound engineer.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Plan for a live performance that uses music technology

The learner must know about:

- roles of personnel in live performance
- the role of technology used in live performance
- health and safety practices
- technical specifications
- rehearsal and sound check processes.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context. <u>Possible solutions</u> to the scenario are identified and a plan produced.
Merit: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context. <u>Effective solutions</u> to the scenario are identified and a plan produced.
Distinction: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context. Demands of the scenario are <u>effectively met</u> through a <u>comprehensive</u> plan.

Unit 05 Live sound performance technology (R/507/4994) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Learners must plan for a live performance of at least 15 minutes which uses music technology. They should state what their role in the performance will be:

- Roles. Learners should choose at least one role to be undertaken during the planning and performance stages:
 - performer eg vocalist, instrumentalist, DJ, laptop musician
 - sound engineer.

Learners who select the role of sound engineer must work with performers during the planning and rehearsal stages and be actively involved in preparations for the performance.

Learners must demonstrate their knowledge of the following:

- **roles associated with live performance:**
 - performer
 - sound engineer
- **the role of technology used in live performance:**
 - performance technology
 - instrument technology; instrument sound sources (eg vocals/guitar/bass/keyboard/drum machine/drum kit/percussion)
 - onstage effects (eg guitar pedalboard, vocal processing)
 - amplification (backline)
 - DJ technology - DJ mixer, CD decks and turntables
 - computer technology - laptop, software, audio interface, MIDI controllers, MIDI sound source hardware, onstage mixer
 - sound reinforcement technology
 - front of house; microphones and DI boxes; mixer; effects; EQ; dynamics processing; multicore; power amplifiers; speakers
 - cabling and connectors (balanced lines (XLR); insert leads (stereo jack, mono jack); power connections (IEC, Powercon, Ceeform); speaker connections (XLR, Speakon); multicore
 - monitors - EQ; power amplifiers; speakers
- **health and safety practices with regard to:**
 - lifting
 - electrical hazards
 - trip hazards
 - sound pressure level

Unit 05 Live sound performance technology (R/507/4994) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment (cont'd)**

- **technical specifications:**
 - writing a technical specification to convey artist's requirements
 - creating a stage plot
 - creating a channel input list
- **rehearsal and sound check processes:**
 - planning a set list and timings
 - rehearsing performance to meet required time
 - working to deadlines
 - planning technical rehearsal
 - ensuring equipment is available
 - working to deadlines
 - planning a sound check
 - load in
 - working with technical specification to set up stage
 - working to deadlines

The learner's plan must include details of:

- performance technology to be used during the performance
- sound reinforcement technology to be used during the performance
- technical specifications with reference to performance technology and sound reinforcement
- planning to meet deadlines in the role identified.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- technical specification
- written report
- diagram (stage plan)
- video recording of preparatory work/rehearsals.

Unit 05 Live sound performance technology (R/507/4994) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Take part in the planned live performance

The learner must demonstrate:

- implementation of their plan through a live performance of at least 15 minutes.

Grading descriptors:
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of <u>some</u> specialist skills in completing a complex brief.
Merit: Process and outcome will show the <u>effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show the <u>consistent and effective</u> application of specialist skills in meeting a complex brief.
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must implement the live performance planned in learning outcome 1. Their role in the performance should be as a performer or sound engineer as previously identified.</p> <p>They must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation of music technology appropriate to the intended performance • completion of a sound check • involvement in a live performance of at least 15 minutes where technology takes a central role • application of appropriate health and safety procedures. <p>Note that learners will be assessed on the successful production of the performance, not the standard of musicianship.</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video and/or audio recording of the performance • observation document.

Unit 05 Live sound performance technology (R/507/4994) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Review their live performance

The learner must evaluate:

- effectiveness of the plan
- the success of the performance.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>links these to success or otherwise of the overall outcome</u>.</p>
<p>Merit: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>justifies their use</u>.</p>
<p>Distinction: Correctly and consistently uses technical terms in context.</p> <p>Describes the effectiveness of the processes and practices and <u>justifies their use</u>.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions <u>which inform future developments</u>.</p>
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must review their plan and performance with regard to the success of the performance based on video evidence and feedback.</p> <p>They must consider feedback from other people involved in the performance (eg peers, Teacher, performers, audience).</p>
Types of evidence
<p>Learners must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their review. <p>This review could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video recording with commentary • a written report • audio description • reflective account.

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995)

Unit summary	In this unit learners will release an original piece of music digitally. The learners will research ways in which music can be distributed, plan how they will undertake the release, and implement the plan. Learners will review the success of their plan to inform future engagement with the digital music business.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/externally assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand digital distribution of music as a process

The learner must know about:

- development of music distribution and retail in the 21st century
- planning a digital release
- effective marketing and promotional strategies.

Grading descriptors
<p>Pass: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Describes issues of current practice and supports all points with <u>some</u> sophisticated examples.</p> <p>Makes reasoned conclusions based on <u>appropriate</u> information.</p>
<p>Merit: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Describes issues of current practice, <u>using appropriate specialist language in context</u>. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and some</u> appropriate comparisons.</p> <p>Makes <u>reasoned and balanced</u> conclusions based on the information.</p>
<p>Distinction: Consistently and correctly applies technical terms in context and demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts.</p> <p>Describes issues of current practice, <u>correctly applying</u> appropriate specialist language in context. Supports all points with sophisticated examples <u>and</u> appropriate comparisons.</p> <p>Makes <u>well-reasoned</u> and balanced conclusions <u>which inform future developments</u>.</p>

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Delivery and assessment**

Learners must produce a plan for the release of an original piece of music. This could be a piece they have produced during the course or other original material.

The plan should define how the learner will approach the release considering appropriate model, format and distributor; projected costing and income; marketing and promotional ideas and research into the role of organisations relevant to a digital release.

Learners must demonstrate their knowledge of the following:

- **development of music distribution and retail in the 21st century:**
 - record label release compared to DIY release model
 - advantages and disadvantages of each model
 - distribution of physical product (CD, vinyl) compared to digital product (audio downloads, streaming audio)
 - advantages and disadvantages of each method
 - music streaming services (eg Spotify, Apple Music, Deezer, Tidal) and how they collect and distribute revenue
- **planning a digital release:**
 - timeline of release
 - release date
 - milestones
 - digital music formats appropriate for downloading or streaming
 - MP3, M4A, WAV, FLAC
 - encoding and mastering audio for digital distribution; ISRC codes; delivering required format, bit depth and sample rate
 - types of online retail outlets
 - stores (eg iTunes, Amazon)
 - artist direct (eg Bandcamp, NoiseTrade)
 - role of aggregators in the preparation of a digital release
 - organisations relevant to the collection of revenues generated from a digital release
 - PRS For Music, MCPS, PPL
 - legalities
 - copyright
 - licensing
 - royalties
 - contracts
 - income and expenditure
 - costs of release and promotion against projected income from revenues
- **effective marketing and promotional strategies:**
 - use of social media in online promotion (eg Facebook, Twitter, Soundcloud, Mixcloud)
 - role of video content in promoting a digital release (eg YouTube, Vimeo)
 - use of promotional items and merchandise

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- the plan for their digital release.

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- infographic
- written report
- audio/visual narrative
- audio examples.

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2**

The learner will:

Implement their plan for the digital release of a piece of music

The learner must demonstrate:

- digital release of a piece of music
- marketing and promotion of their piece of music
- working with relevant organisations
- collecting and managing relevant data.

Grading descriptors
Pass: Completes a series of complex task(s) following their plan.
Merit: Completes a series of complex task(s) following their plan and <u>amending it where appropriate</u> .
Distinction: Completes a series of complex task(s) following their plan and <u>making well-thought-out amendments where appropriate</u> .
Delivery and assessment
<p>Learners must follow their plan to release their piece of music. They must evidence the strategy used to release and market their piece, how they worked with relevant organisations, and their management of data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital release of a piece of music: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - piece of music to be available via online retailer • Marketing and promotion of their piece of music: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implementation of planned marketing and promotional strategies • Working with relevant organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eg retail outlets, aggregators, PRS, MCPS, PPL • Collecting and managing relevant data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - audience data eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ number of listens ○ number of downloads ○ audience demographic ○ audience feedback - financial data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ income (eg royalties, merchandise sales) ○ costs (release costs, promotional costs)

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- infographic
- written report
- audio/visual narrative
- audio examples
- annotated screen shots
- spreadsheets
- marketing material.

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3**

The learner will:

Review the success of their planning and implementation

The learner must evaluate:

- effectiveness of planning and implementation
- plans for future development
- collected data.

Grading descriptors

Pass: Describes the effectiveness of the chosen distribution and retail processes and marketing practices and links these to the success of the overall outcome.

Draws up an action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which has some links to the learner's experience gained in releasing a piece of music.

Merit: Describes the effectiveness of the chosen distribution and retail processes and marketing practices and justifies their uses.

Draws up an action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which is clearly linked to the learner's experience gained in releasing a piece of music.

Distinction: Describes the effectiveness of the chosen distribution and retail processes and marketing practices and justifies their uses.

Draws up a comprehensive action plan to improve or extend the outcome, which is clearly linked to the learner's experience gained in releasing a piece of music.

Makes well-reasoned and balanced conclusions which inform future developments.

Delivery and assessment

Learners must evaluate the success of their planning and implementation with reference to relevant evidence and data.

They must evaluate the success of chosen distribution, retail and marketing practices and provide an action plan showing how findings will be used to benefit subsequent releases.

Learners should review collected data to assist in evaluation.

- Quantitative data, eg number of unique and repeat listens, income generated against costs incurred.
- Qualitative data, eg customer reviews, requested feedback.

Unit 06 Digital music business (Y/507/4995) (cont'd)**Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)****Types of evidence**

Learners must provide:

- their evaluation and action plan.

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- infographic
- written report
- audio/visual narrative
- audio example.

Section 3

Assessment and quality assurance

Assessment and quality assurance

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in a qualification.

This qualification is made up of 3 different assessment components:

1. Internal assessment – each unit is internally assessed and externally quality assured.
2. External assessment – written test – this will assess the underpinning knowledge and skills drawn from units 01 – 06.
3. External assessment – practical test – this will assess the application of knowledge and skills acquired from units 01 – 04.

The different components are weighted based on their relevance to the vocational area. The 2 external assessments must account for a minimum of 40% of the final grade in order to meet the requirements of an Applied General qualification.

The external assessment components are set and marked by NCFE.

All learner evidence required for external assessment purposes must be submitted digitally and be transferred onto storage media that can be opened. PDF is the preferred file format for music technology and centres must ensure that all screenshots and written responses are saved in a single electronic document.

Learners must be successful in both internal and external assessments in order to achieve the qualification.

Assessment summary

Assessment component	Description	Duration	Marks	Contribution to final grade
1 Internal assessment	Portfolio of evidence covering all learning outcomes	Duration of the qualification	N/A	50%
2 External assessment – written test	Invigilated - listening task assessing underpinning knowledge and skills drawn from across the qualification	2 hours	80	25%
3 External assessment – practical test	Invigilated - practical task assessing application of knowledge and skills	10 hours	60	25%

Internal assessment

NCFE has created a set of sample tasks for each unit which can be found in the Internal Assessment Sample Tasks document. You can contextualise these tasks to suit the needs of your learners to help them build up their portfolio of evidence. The tasks have been designed to cover all the learning outcomes for each unit and provide opportunities for stretch and challenge. For further information about contextualising the tasks, please contact the Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. The assessment tasks should allow the learner to respond to a real life situation that they may face when in employment. On completion of each unit learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the Assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio for each unit are provided in Section 2 (page 14).

Internally assessed work should be completed by the learner in accordance with the qualification specification. A representative number of assessment hours should be timetabled into the scheme of work. Internal assessment hours must be administered outside of scheduled teaching and learning hours and should be supervised and assessed by the Teacher. Assessment activities can be integrated throughout, although separate from the teaching of the unit and do not have to take place directly at the end of the unit.

Any work submitted for internal assessment must be completed during scheduled assessment hours in accordance with the scheme of work, and must be authenticated and attributable to the learner. The Teacher must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own and the learner must declare that the work is their own.

In practice, this means that all of the portfolio of evidence will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours.

The internal assessment component is based on 100% coverage of the qualification content which is assessed holistically against descriptors to achieve a grade. Each unit of the qualification is internally assessed and will be allocated a weighting based on the guided learning hours. The grade achieved for each unit is converted to a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) score.

There is compensation within the internally assessed units as the grading descriptors are now based on learning outcomes rather than specific assessment criteria. All of the assessment points need to be evidenced in the learner's portfolio, but the grade awarded is based on the standard of work for the learning outcome as a whole. This allows for increased professional judgement on the part of the Assessor in terms of the learners' overall level of performance against the learning outcomes.

If a centre chooses to create their own internal assessment tasks, they must:

- be accessible and lead to objective assessment judgements
- permit and encourage authentic activities where the learner's own work can be clearly judged
- refer to the 'Internal Assessment Tasks: Guidance for Centres' document on the NCFE website.

Supervision of learners and your role as an Assessor

Guidance on how to administer the internal assessment and the support you provide to learners can be found on the NCFE website.

Feedback to learners

Guidance on providing feedback during teaching and learning and each stage of the assessment can be found on the NCFE website.

Presenting evidence

Written

Written evidence may be presented in word processed or handwritten form. Audio-visual content (videos, pictures, drawings, audio) may also be used.

Tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT.

Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged and quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible to ensure that learner work can be authenticated.

The use of word frames/templates provided by Teachers which give learners an advantage in meeting the learning outcomes must be avoided. If you're unsure whether a word frame/template does give learners an advantage, please contact your External Quality Assurer for advice prior to using them. If, on your quality assurance visit, your External Quality Assurer identifies that a word frame/template has been used which gives learners an advantage in achieving the learning outcomes, then the evidence will not be accepted and the unit grade may be rejected.

Recorded

For audio evidence, evidence created must be saved in acceptable file types.

Where audio-visual evidence of multiple learners is used, centres must ensure that each learner being assessed is clearly visible and can be identified by the Examiner/Quality Assurer.

The recorded evidence should allow the learner to demonstrate the learning outcomes clearly but should only show work relevant to what is being assessed. For example, if a performance/participation is done as part of a group, the Examiner/Quality Assurer will need to be able to see how each learner being assessed has contributed and met the learning outcomes.

To help our Examiners and Quality Assurers to identify clearly when a particular learner is performing/participating, we'd recommend including the following information:

- the exact start and finish times so that the Examiner/Quality Assurer can go straight to that spot on the tape/recording
- a running order list and a description of each learner
- information about where the performance/recorded evidence took place
- what type of audience they were performing to (if applicable).

Centres must also ensure that the camera and microphone are set up in a suitable place to ensure good-quality audio. This will allow the Examiner/Quality Assurer to hear both the learner(s) and the Assessor (if applicable).

We have set out an example used for a performance:

Test High School

Recorded evidence starts: 4 mins 30 seconds into the recording and finishes at 16 mins 27 seconds.

Venue: School hall

Audience: Teachers, parents and friends

Band 1:

Lead singer – James Doyle (blonde hair, front of stage)

Drummer – Diana Nisbett

Guitar 1 – Deepak Lahiri (black hair, blue jumper)

Guitar 2 – Deb Antani (brown hair, left hand side)

Performance of XXX:

Lead male – Su Jin

Lead female – Maya Solomon

Choir:

Caterina Petracci (black hair, back row 3rd from left)

Leonard Kalymniou (brown hair, back row 5th from left)

Luke Falconer (blonde hair, front row 3rd from right)

If learners are not clearly identified, NCFE may not be able to quality assure or examine the work.

Late submissions

Teachers and Assessors should encourage learners to understand the importance of deadlines and when they need to submit their internal assessments. Assessors do not have to accept late work and may refuse it.

Learners may only be given extra time for legitimate reasons such as illness. If you accept a late submission, you should follow the usual assessment process.

Grades should not be reduced as a result of late submission.

Submitting unit grades

Each internally assessed unit within the portfolio of evidence must be assessed and graded by Assessors in the centre.

A reasonable sample of portfolios must then be checked by an Internal Quality Assurer to ensure consistency with national standards. See the NCFE website for further information on sampling.

Learners may revise and redraft work up until it's submitted to the Assessor for end-of-unit assessment and grading. Once the work has been assessed, graded and internally quality assured, the grades should be submitted to NCFE. This will be classed as the first attempt. Submitted grades for the first unit(s) of the qualification will trigger your first external quality assurance visit.

Following the external quality assurance visit the unit grades will either be accepted and banked by your External Quality Assurer or, if they disagree with the grades, they will be rejected. If the grades are rejected, the work cannot be given back to the learner. If a grade is rejected, centres must reassess, re-grade and internally quality assure the work and resubmit the new unit grade.

Once the grades for the internally assessed units of the qualification have been accepted and banked by your External Quality Assurer, learners are permitted one opportunity to revise and redraft their work. The additional work will need to be assessed, graded and internally quality assured again, and the centre will be required to resubmit the updated grade to NCFE for further external quality assurance. Learners are only permitted one resubmission of internally assessed work.

The highest banked grade for a unit will contribute to the overall qualification grade.

Why would the unit grades be rejected by an External Quality Assurer?

This would occur if the External Quality Assurer did not agree with the grades the centre had submitted. It may be that the centre had been grading too harshly, too leniently or inconsistently from one learner to the next. In this situation, the centre would be required to assess, grade and internally quality assure all learners' work again.

External assessment

Each learner is required to undertake both external assessments.

External assessments are set and marked by NCFE. The assessment assesses learners' knowledge, understanding and skills from across all units of the qualification.

Learners must be taught the applicable unit content prior to sitting the external assessments. Learners **MUST** attempt both external assessments. A combined pass grade across the 2 external assessments is required in order for learners to pass the external assessment element (see section 4 for further information).

Any stimulus material used by the centre or work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used as evidence in the external assessment.

No hard copies or physical evidence should be submitted as part of the external assessment. All evidence must be submitted digitally.

The external assessment for this qualification consists of 2 exams. The same high level of control applies to each.

The external assessment is split as follows:

- Written exam – 2 hours invigilated external assessment
- Practical exam – 10 hours invigilated external assessment.

Both of these external assessments must be done under timed external assessment conditions and must be invigilated in accordance with the Regulations for Conduct of External Assessment.

The external assessments must not be altered in any way by the centre.

Sample papers for each of the external assessments will be made available. We'll update the website with the latest past paper soon after a live assessment has been sat.

There are 2 specific assessment dates for each external assessment during the year. Please refer to the assessment windows document on the NCFE website for the specific dates.

To access the external assessment, centres must have entered learners using the NCFE Portal. When you make your registrations in the NCFE Portal you will be prompted to select an assessment date for your learners. NCFE will issue external assessment papers to the learner for the assessment date selected at registration. If you want your learners to sit the external assessment on a different assessment date you will need to contact your Centre Support Assistant and arrange a transfer of entry.

Centres must enter learners at least 10 working days in advance of the assessment date. Late entries will incur a fee.

The external assessment material will be sent out in time for the assessment date. The material must be kept secure at all times throughout the assessment period.

You must return the Invigilator's Register and all learner work to NCFE one working day after the external assessment date. The last date that NCFE will accept learner work is the next working day from the exam being sat. Please refer to the external assessment windows on the NCFE website for confirmation of this date.

Learners are entitled to one resit for each of the external assessment components, which will be chargeable. This means that learners can have a total of 2 attempts at each of the external assessments. 'Did Not Attend', will not be classed as an attempt at the external assessment. If you know before the assessment date that a learner is no longer able to sit the external assessment, please contact NCFE to cancel or transfer the entry. The highest banked grade for the external assessment will contribute to the overall qualification grade.

This qualification is approved in the Key Stage 5 Performance Tables.

The DfE have confirmed that the additional retake opportunity in place for the 2018/19 academic year for all Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications will continue to be offered while the moratorium for 16–18 performance tables is in place. This includes Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications which will be counted in performance tables.

For guidance on conducting external assessments, please refer to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments, available from the NCFE website, or contact the Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Quality assurance

Internal quality assurance

Internal quality assurance is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is assessing to the same standards. It's the responsibility of Internal Quality Assurers to ensure that Assessors' decisions are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency and fairness. Internal Quality Assurers are also responsible for supporting Assessors by offering advice and guidance.

The Internal Quality Assurer will follow the centre's own sampling strategy in selecting the sample to be internally quality assured. See the guidance on sampling on the NCFE website.

The Internal Quality Assurer provides the vital link between the Assessors and the External Quality Assurer and acts as the centre's quality assurance agent.

External quality assurance

External quality assurance of internal assessments is carried out at least twice a year to ensure that assessment and grading decisions are in line with required standards. External quality assurance is carried out by External Quality Assurers who are appointed, trained and monitored by NCFE. External Quality Assurers are responsible for monitoring and sampling learners' evidence to ensure that internal assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair and consistent with national standards. Centres are notified of their External Quality Assurer's contact details on registration of learners with NCFE.

For further information on the responsibilities of Assessors and Internal and External Quality Assurers, please refer to NCFE's Centre Support Guide.

External quality assurance (CACHE and NCFE graded qualifications)

Summatively assessed and internally quality assured grades for at least one completed unit must be submitted via the Portal, prior to an EQA review taking place. Following the EQA review, the unit grades will either be accepted and banked by your External Quality Assurer or, if they disagree with the grades, they will be rejected. If a grade is rejected, centres must reassess, regrade, internally quality assure and resubmit the new unit grade in line with EQA actions.

Section 4

Grading information

Grading information

Grading has been introduced to make sure that this qualification rewards learners with a suitable grade to reflect their achievement in this subject. NCFE has developed a robust grading structure that can be applied to all its graded qualifications fairly and consistently.

Each unit of this qualification is graded using a structure of Not Yet Achieved, Pass, Merit and Distinction.

Grading internally assessed units

The grading descriptors for each unit have been included in this qualification specification. Grading descriptors have been written for each learning outcome in a unit. Assessors must be confident that, as a minimum, all learning outcomes have been evidenced and met by the learner. Assessors must make a judgement on the evidence produced by the learner to determine the grading decision for the learning outcome. We've provided a grading criteria glossary of terms to help you to make this judgement – see Section 5 (page 78).

Once Assessors are confident that all the Pass descriptors have been met, they can move on to decide if the Merit descriptors have been met. If the Assessor is confident that all the Merit descriptors have been met, they can decide if the Distinction descriptors have been met. As the grading descriptors build up from the previous grade's criteria, the evidence must meet 100% of the grade's descriptors to be awarded that grade for the unit.

If a learner achieves a range of grades for the learning outcomes within a unit, the lowest grade will be awarded for the unit overall. Learners are only required to meet the merit/distinction descriptors where they are specified in the qualification specification. For example, if a learning outcome/assessment criteria is only achievable at a pass level, then this grading criteria can be discounted when calculating the overall unit grade.

If the learner has insufficient evidence to meet the Pass criteria, a grade of Not Yet Achieved must be awarded for the unit.

Centres must then submit each unit grade to NCFE. The grades submitted to NCFE will be checked and confirmed through the external quality assurance process. This is known as 'banking' units.

The internal assessment component is based on performance of open-ended tasks which are assessed holistically against the grading descriptors to achieve a grade. Each unit of the qualification is internally assessed and will be allocated a weighting based on the GLH and a score based on the holistic grade. The overall grade achieved for each unit is converted to UMS score.

Marking the external assessment

The externally assessed components will consist of individual questions which are marked using a numerical mark scheme to achieve a total score. For each external assessment grades will be allocated by NCFE.

There will be a different weighting applied to the different components of external assessment depending on the requirements of the sector. The outcome will be based on the performance of the combined external assessments.

The weighting of the external assessments and the use of numerical mark schemes will allow for compensation. This will then be converted to a Uniform Mark Scheme (UMS), the following table represents the percentage UMS associated with each awarded grade:

L3 Pass UMS %	L3 Merit UMS %	L3 Distinction UMS %
45%	55%	65%

Awarding the final grade

NCFE needs to be able to compare performance on the same assessment components across different papers when different grade boundaries have been set, and between the different components. NCFE uses a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) to enable this to be done.

The final qualification grade is calculated by converting the 3 assessment components into UMS score to ensure comparability between the different components. These are combined using weightings based on their relevance to the vocational sector.

Learners must achieve a minimum of 135 UMS on the internal assessment component and a combined UMS of 135 on the external assessment components.

The collective UMS will then be converted into a grade based on the following fixed thresholds:

	Max	P	M	D	D*
UMS	600	270	330	390	480

The final grade for the qualification is based on a structure of Not Yet Achieved, Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*.

The final grade will be issued to the centre by NCFE.

Level 3 standard

At Level 3, learners will take responsibility for completing complex tasks, often with a commercial brief, and for analysis and evaluation. They will exercise autonomy and judgement in selecting and using relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures and must be able to identify how effective actions have been and create action plans for improvement.

Learners will consistently and correctly apply appropriate technical language and demonstrate the use of appropriate technical skills. They will be aware of different perspectives or approaches to tasks and use appropriate investigation to inform actions. An understanding of underlying theories and concepts is evident as is an awareness of current issues relating to the vocational area. They should be able to evaluate how effective methods and actions have been.

Tasks

At Level 3, tasks should be well defined but may be complex and non-routine, requiring a technical understanding of the key concepts, processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study. They should need some specialist skills or understanding for their completion.

Overall qualification grading descriptors

These grading descriptors should be used as a guide to show what we'd expect to see overall from a learner at each grade. Please refer to the Levelling Grading Descriptors document on our website for a table summarising Level 1, 2 and 3 standards.

Level 3 Not Yet Achieved
The learner will not have met all the learning outcomes, either because there is insufficient evidence or because the evidence does not meet the required standards for a Pass.
Level 3 Pass
The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts and will show awareness of different approaches within an area of study. They will use some sophisticated examples to support their work and demonstrate some application of specialist processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study. The learner will take responsibility, where relevant, for monitoring others (watching what they are doing and reporting to someone). Tasks will be completed to a minimum standard with some errors and the learner will be able to link the effectiveness of the processes and practices they used to the success or otherwise of the overall outcome.

Overall qualification grading descriptors (cont'd)

Level 3 Merit
<p>The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts and will be able to apply different approaches within an area of study. They will use sophisticated examples, and make some appropriate comparisons, to support their work. They will be able to select and effectively apply specialist processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study. The learner will take responsibility, where relevant, for supervising others (watching what they are doing, making sure they follow the rules given by someone else).</p> <p>Tasks will be completed to a level that exceeds the minimum standard with few errors and the learner will be able to critically evaluate the processes they used and the outcomes of their tasks, using this to inform an action plan to improve or extend the outcome</p>
Level 3 Distinction
<p>The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts and will be able to apply different approaches within an area of study. They will use sophisticated examples, and make appropriate comparisons, to support their work. They will consistently select and effectively apply specialist processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study, justifying their choices. The learner will take responsibility, where relevant, for supervising and guiding others (giving advice about how to do something/put something right).</p> <p>Tasks will be completed to a level that far exceeds the minimum standard with few or no errors and the learner will be able to critically evaluate the processes they used and the outcomes of their tasks, using this to clearly inform an action plan to improve or extend the outcome.</p>
Level 3 Distinction*
<p>To be awarded a Distinction* grade, the learner will have achieved within the top 20% of the maximum UMS or learners will have achieved a Distinction grade in every unit for the internal assessment and a Distinction grade in both external assessments.</p>

Whilst NCFE does not anticipate any changes to our aggregation methods or any overall grade thresholds, there may be exceptional circumstances in which it is necessary to do so to secure the maintenance of standards over time. Therefore, overall grade thresholds published within this qualification specification may be subject to change.

Section 5

Grading criteria glossary of terms

Grading criteria glossary of terms

This table has been provided as an aid to help you grade learners' assessments. These are generic terms used across all V Cert qualifications and may not all appear in this qualification specification.

Level 3 Music Technology	
Accurately	Learner carries out all stages of a process correctly and without errors (<i>see mostly accurately</i>)
Advanced ways	Solutions may be more complex or more considered (<i>see basic ways and considered ways</i>)
Appropriate	Ideas or choices must be realistic and viable to the vocational area and the learner's resources. They must be selected by the learner, as opposed to in Level 1 where they are directed.
Balanced conclusions	All arguments are considered in making a conclusion (<i>see reasoned conclusions</i>)
Basic ways	Straightforward, mostly obvious ideas or solutions (<i>see advanced ways and considered ways</i>)
Complex task/brief	A task/brief made up of several, interrelated elements.
Complex technical problem	A problem specific to the vocational area that has several interrelated elements (<i>see technical problems</i>)
Considered experimentation	Experimentation is well thought out and fit for purpose. It is comprehensive enough to draw a reliable conclusion out (<i>see limited experimentation and simple experimentation</i>)
Considered ways	Ideas or solutions that show some degree of thought (<i>see advanced ways and basic ways</i>)
Directed tasks	Learners are given clear instructions on how to complete the task, which may be broken into stages for them by the Teacher/Assessor.
Effective solutions	Solutions which are appropriate to the vocational area (<i>see possible solutions</i>)
Efficiently solves	Solves in a manner appropriate to the vocational area
Everyday language	The learner's own language and terms, the personal vocabulary the learner uses, non-vocational language and terminology (<i>see specialist terms/language and technical terms/language</i>)
General understanding	A basic understanding of the vocational area that does not require knowledge of technical skills, techniques or rules of implementation (<i>see technical understanding</i>)
Format of source	The style of information, eg a questionnaire, a report, an observation, an interview (<i>see type of source</i>)
Limited experimentation	Experimentation shows some degree of planning and thought but may not be thorough enough to draw a reliable conclusion from (<i>see considered experimentation and simple experimentation</i>)
Mostly accurately	The learner is able to carry out most stages of a process without errors to achieve an outcome (<i>see accurately and some degree of accuracy</i>)
Possible solutions	The solution may not involve technical skills or understanding and may not be a long-term or effective solution (<i>see effective solutions</i>)

Grading criteria glossary of terms (cont'd)

Range	Frequent use of most common words/techniques/materials (<i>see some and wide range</i>)
Reasoned conclusions	Explanations are provided as to why a conclusion was made (<i>see balanced conclusions</i>)
Simple experimentation	Straightforward, most obvious experimentation is carried out (<i>see limited experimentation and considered experimentation</i>)
Some	Occasional use of most common words/techniques/materials (<i>see range and wide range</i>)
Some degree of accuracy	The learner is able to carry out the stages of a process to achieve an outcome, but most stages will contain errors (<i>see accurately and mostly accurately</i>)
Sophisticated examples	Complex or less obvious examples provided with detailed explanation. Clearly related to the point being made (<i>see straightforward examples</i>)
Specialist skill	Advanced technical skills in context (<i>see technical skills</i>)
Specialist terms/language	Advanced technical terms in context (<i>see everyday language and technical terms/language</i>)
Straightforward examples	Direct obvious examples which lack complexity of any kind, but clearly relate to the point being made (<i>see sophisticated examples</i>)
Technical problems	A problem specific to the vocational area. This could include equipment, processes etc (<i>see complex technical problems</i>)
Technical skills	The application of technical understanding. The ability to put subject-specific skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation into practice to achieve suitable outcomes (<i>see specialist skills</i>)
Technical terms/language	Language relating to the vocational area. May include skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation etc (<i>see everyday language and specialist terms/language</i>)
Technical understanding	An understanding of the skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation appropriate to the vocational area. The learner may still be learning how to apply this understanding (<i>see general understanding</i>)
Type of source	The place that the information comes from eg the internet, a museum visit, staff, visitors (<i>see format of source</i>)
Wide range	Uses all relevant words/techniques/materials that could be expected at the level (<i>see range</i>)

Section 6

General information

General information

Equal opportunities

NCFE fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and social background. NCFE aims to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in its own employment practices and in access to its qualifications. A copy of NCFE's Equal Opportunities policy is available on request.

Diversity, access and inclusion

Our qualifications and associated assessments are designed to be accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. NCFE regularly evaluates and monitors the 6 diversity strands (gender, age, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation) throughout the development process as well as throughout the delivery, external quality assurance and external assessment processes of live qualifications. This ensures that positive attitudes and good relations are promoted, discriminatory language is not used and our assessment procedures are fully inclusive.

Learners who require reasonable adjustments or special consideration should discuss their requirements with their Teacher, who should refer to our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy for guidance.

For more information on the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy, please see the NCFE website.

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