



Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Music Technology (603/7008/7)

Learner version

October 2024 release

v1.0

Past paper

Introduction

The non-exam assessment (NEA) is a formal synoptic assessment that requires you to independently apply an appropriate selection of knowledge, understanding, skills and techniques, developed through the full course of study, in response to a real-world situation, to enable you to demonstrate an integrated connection and coherence between the different elements of the qualification.

The NEA will contribute **60%** towards the overall qualification grade; therefore, it is important that you produce work to the highest standard that you can. You must not start the NEA until you have been taught the full course, to ensure that you are in the best position to complete the NEA successfully.

What is synoptic assessment?

Synoptic assessment is an important part of a high-quality vocational qualification because it shows you that you have achieved a holistic understanding of the sector. It also shows that you can make effective connections between different aspects of the subject content and across the breadth of the assessment objectives (AOs) in an integrated way. The Department for Education (DfE) has consulted with awarding organisations and agreed the following definition for synoptic assessment:

‘A form of assessment which requires a candidate to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively in an integrated way an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories, and knowledge from across the whole vocational area, which are relevant to a key task.’

Synoptic assessment enables you to show that you can transfer knowledge and skills learnt in one context to resolve problems raised in another. To support the development of a synoptic approach, the qualification encourages you to make links between elements of the course and to demonstrate how you have integrated and applied your increasing knowledge and skills.

As you progress through the course, you will use and build upon knowledge and skills learnt across units. The NEA will test your ability to respond to a real-world situation.

Information for learners

Introduction

The NEA will be assessed holistically using a levels of response marking grid and against five integrated AOs. These AOs and their weightings are shown below.

Assessment objectives (AOs)
AO1 – Recall knowledge and show understanding The emphasis here is for learners to recall and communicate the fundamental elements of knowledge and understanding. 12 marks (10%)
AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding The emphasis here is for learners to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-world contexts and novel situations. 16 marks (13.33%)
AO3 – Analyse and evaluate knowledge and understanding The emphasis here is for learners to develop analytical thinking skills to make reasoned judgments and reach conclusions. 12 marks (10%)
AO4 – Demonstrate and apply relevant technical skills, techniques and processes The emphasis here is for learners to demonstrate the essential technical skills relevant to the vocational sector, by applying the appropriate processes, tools and techniques. 48 marks (40%)
AO5 – Analyse and evaluate the demonstration of relevant technical skills, techniques and processes The emphasis here is for learners to analyse and evaluate the essential technical skills, processes, tools and techniques relevant to the vocational sector. 32 marks (26.67%)

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Learner instructions

- Read the project brief carefully before you start the work.
- You **must** clearly identify and label all of the work you produce during the supervised time.
- You **must** hand in all of your work to the supervisor at the end of each timed session.

Learner information

- This NEA will assess your knowledge and understanding from across the qualification.
- The maximum mark for this NEA is **120**.
- The maximum completion time for this NEA is **17 hours** (plus **2 hours** preparation and research time).
- All of the work you submit **must** be your own.

Please complete the details below clearly and in BLOCK CAPITALS.

Learner name

Centre name

Centre number

Learner number

Learner signature

Preparation and research task

Maximum time: 2 hours

In addition to the allocated assessment time for this NEA, you are permitted to spend a maximum of **2 hours** to undertake research and develop a research pack that you can refer to during the formal NEA assessment time. During this 2-hour period, you may access all learning materials, the internet and other published materials.

You should use this time to create your own research pack, and it is this pack alone that you may use during the allocated time given to the NEA. This is the only support material that is permitted during the completion of NEA tasks (unless otherwise stated within each of the task instructions).

All research and data used in your final NEA **must** be referenced appropriately. As a minimum this **must** include the following:

- the use of quotation marks to clearly identify any passages not of your own words
- date accessed (websites only)
- name of source / author.

Evidence requirements: research pack of no more than four sides of A4, font size 12 (if word processed), to be returned to your assessor at the end of each task / session and submitted with the completed NEA.

Formal non-exam assessment (NEA)

Maximum completion time

You have been provided with a total of **17 hours** to complete this NEA (plus **2 hours** for preparation and research).

You may use some or all of the time provided for each task.

You are allowed to use any remaining time allocated to one task to rework previous tasks up to the maximum time allowed.

You are not allowed to exceed the total number of hours.

You should not start your NEA until you have been taught the full course of study. This will ensure that you are in the best position to complete the NEA successfully.

Project brief

You have been asked to write the introductory theme music to be played during the opening credits of a new TV drama series. The series is set in the UK in the 1960s. It is based around the character of a fictional police detective.

Your piece **must** be written in the style of soul.

Your final piece **must**:

- be produced using digital audio workstation (DAW) software and accompanying hardware
- be between 45 seconds and 1 minute 15 seconds long
- be submitted as exported stereo audio files
- use MIDI software instruments
- use audio recordings, including **at least one** audio source you have recorded.

You may capture and use performances from other musicians as part of your composition process. If other musicians have been involved in creating audio as part of your production, you **must** clearly explain who was involved and how they were involved.

Assessment tasks

Task 1

Responding to the brief	
Maximum time	2 hours
Content areas assessed	1. Introduction to music technology and the music business 3. Musical elements, musical style and music technology 4. Sound creation
Assessment objectives (AOs)	AO1 – 4 marks AO2 – 4 marks AO3 – 4 marks
The producer wants you to consider all requirements of the brief. You are required to: create a proposal for your piece. To meet the needs of the brief, your proposal must include the following: - the musical elements of soul music - definitions of the elements based on the findings of your research - explanations of how you will apply these elements to your piece - reasons for your choices. You are permitted to use the internet for this task. You must reference all sources used. [12 marks]	
Evidence	You should present your work as a word-processed document. If you want to provide supporting evidence for your proposal, you may use the following formats: - written report - mind maps - technical notes - digital presentation - annotated diagrams. You must also submit your internet browsing history of sites used to support your response to the task.

Task 2

Planning for production	
Maximum time	2 hours
Content areas assessed	2. The digital audio workstation (DAW) 3. Musical elements, musical style and music technology 4. Sound creation 5. Multitrack recording
Assessment objectives (AOs)	AO2 – 8 marks AO3 – 8 marks AO5 – 8 marks
You are required to: create a plan to produce your piece of music which evaluates the skills, processes, tools and techniques you intend to use. Your plan must include: - a timeline for your production - the hardware requirements including recording equipment and DAW hardware - the software requirements including DAW software features and software instruments - a plan for recording audio materials - health and safety considerations of the production - evaluation of the skills, processes, tools and techniques referred to in the planning process. You are permitted to use the internet for this task. You must reference all sources used. [24 marks]	
Evidence	You could use the following formats to provide evidence for your plan: - written report - mind maps - technical notes - digital presentation - flow chart - annotated screenshots. You must also submit your internet browsing history of sites used to support your response to the task.

Task 3

Production of the piece	
Maximum time	7 hours
Content areas assessed	2. The digital audio workstation (DAW) 3. Musical elements, musical style and music technology 4. Sound creation 5. Multitrack recording
Assessment objectives (AOs)	AO1 – 4 marks AO2 – 4 marks AO4 – 24 marks AO5 – 4 marks
You are required to: - use your plan from Task 2 to create the piece and export it as a stereo audio file evaluate the production processes you have used and decisions you made during your production submit your Task 3 stereo audio file. You must consider: - set-up of equipment - configuration of software - use of hardware - use of software - use of musical elements - use of sound creation - capture of recorded audio - export of stereo audio file. [36 marks]	
Evidence	You could use any of the following formats to provide evidence of your production process: - digital presentation - written report - blog / vlog - annotated screenshots - annotated images - video / screencast with commentary. You must include your Task 3 stereo audio file.

Task 4

Mixing	
Maximum time	4 hours
Content areas assessed	2. The digital audio workstation (DAW) 5. Multitrack recording
Assessment objectives (AOs)	AO1 – 4 marks AO4 – 24 marks AO5 – 4 marks
You are required to: • mix your completed piece and export it as a stereo audio file • submit your Task 4 stereo audio file • evaluate the mixing processes you have used and decisions you made during your mix. When mixing your music, you must consider the following: • placement in the sound stage • balance • editing • EQ • effects • dynamics processing • export to stereo audio. [32 marks]	
Evidence	You could use the following formats to provide evidence of your mixing process: • digital presentation • written report • blog / vlog • annotated screenshots • annotated images • video / screencast with commentary. You must include your Task 4 stereo audio file.

Task 5

Summative evaluation of the piece of music	
Maximum time	2 hours
Content areas assessed	1. Introduction to music technology and the music business 2. The digital audio workstation (DAW) 3. Musical elements, musical style and music technology 4. Sound creation 5. Multitrack recording
Assessment objectives (AOs)	AO5 – 16 marks
You are required to: evaluate the technical skills, processes, tools and techniques used to create, produce and mix your final piece of music. In your evaluation of your piece of music, you should consider: - the ways that your final piece of music demonstrates the use of skills, processes, tools and techniques - how did your piece of music meet the project brief - the ways that you could improve your final piece of music in relation to the brief - any alternative approaches to the brief you might have used. [16 marks]	
Evidence	You could use the following formats to provide evidence of your evaluation: - annotated screenshots - written responses - video / screencast with commentary - digital presentation.

Documentation

Declaration of authenticity

The learner and assessor **must** complete the form at the end of the assessment and before any marking takes place. The assessor **must** check the number of tasks submitted by the learner is accurate.

The completed form **must** be retained within the centre and is not to be sent to the moderator or NCFE unless specifically requested.

Learner name:	
Tasks submitted:	
Learner declaration:	
I certify that the work submitted for this NEA is my own. I have clearly referenced any sources used in the work. I understand that false declaration is a form of malpractice.	
Learner signature:	
Date:	

Assessor name:	
Assessor declaration:	
I certify that the work submitted is the learner's own. The learner has clearly referenced any sources used in the work. I confirm that all work was conducted under conditions designed to assure the authenticity of the learner's work.	
Assessor signature:	
Date:	

Note: once completed, the declaration of authenticity **must** be stored securely within the centre, in line with NCFE Regulations for Conduct of NEA – Non-Exam Assessment. A copy of this declaration form **must** be made available to NCFE upon request.

GDPR consent

Section A: this section must be completed by the learner

- NCFE may select your work for use at teacher training or standardisation events. Your work will be anonymised by removing your name. All materials will be reviewed regularly and will be removed if no longer required.
- NCFE may select your work at some point in the future for use in teaching and learning resources published on the NCFE website. Your work would be anonymised by removing your name. All materials will be reviewed regularly and will be removed if no longer required.
- You understand that this agreement may be terminated at any time through written request.
- For further details about how we process your data, please refer to the [legal information section on the NCFE website](#).

Please tick the option that applies, and sign and date the boxes below:

	Tick one only
I consent to my work being used in the manner detailed in section A	
I do not consent to my work being used in the manner detailed in section A	
Learner signature:	
Date:	

Section B: this section must be completed by any participants who feature in the work

Over 13 years old

- I am over 13 and I give my permission for my video and / or photographic image to be used as detailed in section A (above).

Under 13 years old

- I give my permission for my child's video and / or photographic image to be used as detailed in section A (above).

Name of participant (printed)	Participant / Parent / Carer signature	Date

If any of the participants have declined permission, please tick here: ☐