

Subject: Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology

Exam Board: NCFE

Written Exam

Exam (in lesson) - 45 Minutes

Unit 1 - Hardware and Software of the DAW

Hardware Components

- Components of the computer, role of the computer within the DAW
- Peripherals, how they are used and how they connect
- Audio interface. Function, controls and inputs/outputs.
- MIDI controllers.
- Cables and sockets (e.g. XLR, jack, MIDI, USB)

Software Features

- Features and advantages of different track types.
- Software instruments. Synthesisers vs samplers.
- Editing tools. Names and functions.
- Effects plug-ins. Functions and parameters.

Unit 2 - Musical Features of Genres

- Using musical vocabulary to describe structure, rhythm, harmony, melody and instrumentation.
- Musical features of a range of styles.
- Instrumentation of a range of styles.
- Key artists from a range of styles.

Unit 3 - Recording and Mixing

- Microphone selection.
 - Dynamic vs condenser
 - Frequency response.
 - Polar pattern (cardioid).
- Microphone placement.
- DI boxes.
- Health and safety in the studio.
- Setting up the audio interface.
- Setting up the DAW software.

Practical Exam

Exam (in lesson) - 45 Minutes

Your marks will be allocated for:

- 1) Explanations of processes
- 2) Use of technical vocabulary
- 3) Completion of practical tasks
- 4) Exporting of audio file (bouncing tracks)

Therefore, you must be able to complete and confidently explain the following:

Task 1 - Configuration

- Set up a blank session/master fader/tempo.
- Create audio and instrument tracks.
- Import audio and MIDI files.
- Choose a preset sound for the MIDI track.

Task 2 - Editing/Mixing Tasks

- Audio Editing Tasks
- MIDI Editing Tasks
- Balance track levels
- Add effects (e.g. compression, EQ, reverb, delay)
- Add automation
- Export audio file

Useful revision resources (all available on Google Classroom):

Quizlet revision cards to revise key terms.

Past papers / mark schemes.

Read through your coursework.

Written Exam:

Recordings of live lessons from January and February.

Work produced during live lessons in January and February.

Practical Exam:

Video resources in the 'Practical Exam' folder

Revision Tips

Step 1: Know the key vocabulary. Revise using the Quizlet cards. This will help you in both exams.

Step 2: Read the revision notes, watch the videos. For the practical exam, exam technique is key. You will need to use your time really efficiently to complete the exam within the two hours. There are also some 'hacks', quick techniques can gain you lots of marks very quickly.

Step 3: Practise exam style questions. Use the past papers and mark schemes on Google Classroom.

Tips:

- Take a highlighter into the exam. Know how to approach 'identify', 'describe', 'explain' and 'evaluate' questions and how much detail each one requires.
- For the practical exam, set out time limits for each question and stick to them. It's very easy to get intimidated by a difficult task, spend too much time on it, then run out of time at the end. Marks-wise it's better to have some work for all tasks than perfect work for only some.
- Learn to edit, compose and mix quickly for the practical exam.
- The practical exam awards equal marks for your practical work and your documentation. Give equal attention to both.