# BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Music Technology: Comparing unit content between the 2010 and 2016 qualifications

## Introduction

This document is designed to help you with mapping unit content as you transition from BTEC Nationals (2010) qualifications to the new BTEC Nationals (2016).

Our guidance is broken down into two sections:

### Section 1: How and where can I use existing content, and what new content has been included?
Highlighting comparable content with the BTEC Nationals (2010) and how closely this maps across to the BTEC Level 3 Nationals (2016).

### Section 2: What do these changes mean for planning and teaching?
Review of key changes in language, outlining which units are externally assessed and when, and where to find further support.

Further support can be found within the relevant specification on our website ([here](#)).

Below is an overview of how wider support also links to this document:

| Support | Purpose |
|---|---|
| Delivery Plans | Examples of how to structure and deliver different size qualifications over a one or two year period, including when to prepare learners for external assessment. |
| Authorised Assignment Briefs | Provides scenarios and teaching plans for each unit, to be used either as they are set out, or to inform your own planning. |
| Schemes of Work | Demonstrates how the unit content can be covered in the GLH while providing lesson ideas and highlighting links to other units to help you plan your teaching. |
| Sample Assessment Materials | Examples of how an externally assessed unit may be presented, with an accompanying mark scheme. These sample assessment materials have been developed to support this qualification and will be used as the benchmark to develop the assessment students will take. This covers either an exam or task. |
| Sample Marked Learner Work | Indicative example of learner work which has been assessed accurately to national standards. |

## Section 1: How and where can I use the existing content?

### Headlines

It should be noted that whilst there are considerably less units available on the NQF qualification the areas of study are very similar although at times restructured. Units are either 60 or 120GLH in both specifications, the majority remaining 60GLH which will align with centres' experience of delivering this subject at this level. Whereas previously on QCF there was only one unit at 120GLH, there are now four on the NQF, all of which are mandatory.

### At a glance

● Exact match
○ Partial match

| BTEC Level 3 QCF units | BTEC Level 3 NQF units | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | |
| | 2 | | ○ | | | | ○ | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | | | | |
| | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 7 | | | | | | ○ | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | | | | | |
| | 11 | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | |
| | 14 | | | | | ○ | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | | |
| | 17 | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 18 | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 19 | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 20 | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 23 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | |
| | 25 | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | | |
| | 26 | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| | 27 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ○ | | |
| | 29 | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 30 | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 31 | | | | ○ | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | ○ | | ○ | ○ |
| | 32 | | | | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | |
| | 35 | | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 36 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 37 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 38 | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 39 | | | | | | | ○ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 41 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 43 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | | |

## In more detail

The tables below maps the relevant content of the new BTEC Level 3 National in Music Technology (2016) against the content of the current BTEC Level 3 National in Music Technology (2010).

**The mapping focuses on mandatory units** and provides greater detail of where content is the same as the existing (2010) specifications, and also where content is partially covered.

| 2016 | 2010 |
|---|---|
| **Unit 1: Live Sound** | |
| **Comments/Details:** | |
| This unit has an increased status to become a mandatory unit in the new qualification suite. There is increased detail in the unit content plus health and safety have been embedded into the appropriate learning aims. The most significant difference in this unit is though that learners are also to be assessed on the front of house sound and their recording of this rather than just the on-stage mix for the performers. The requirement for a wider and higher order range of techniques, skills and processes in this NQF unit in comparison to the needs of the QCF unit should be firmly considered when developing assessment opportunities. There may be some resource implications as a result of the additional requirements and the mandatory status of the unit. | |
| **Learning Aim A: Examine live sound technology, equipment and roles** | |
| **A1** FOH, monitor and input equipment used in live sound<br>**A2** Processing equipment used in live sound | **Fully covered in:**<br>• Unit 29 Live Sound Techniques LO1 sound reinforcement equipment although updated for 2016 in the new specification. |
| **A3** Roles related to live sound engineering | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 39 The Sound and Music Industry LO2 where learners explore roles within a chosen area of the music industry. |
| **New content:**<br>The requirement to examine live sound engineering roles plus detailed specified equipment within the unit content for A1 and A2 | |
| **Learning Aim B: Carry out the set-up and soundcheck of a live sound system to meet the needs of performers and audience** | |
| **B2** Health and safety requirements<br>**B3** Technical requirements of artists | **Fully covered in:**<br>• Unit 29 Live Sound Techniques LO2 although there is more explicit content of "safety when using electricity outdoors" in the new specification.<br>• Unit 29 LO4 but with definitive and updated unit content in the new specification. |
| **B1** Connecting, positioning and checking of FOH and monitor system equipment | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 29 Live Sound Techniques LO2, 3 and 4 setting up of live sound reinforcement equipment for on-stage mix. |
| **New content:**<br>Explicit requirement to set up FOH equipment to meet the requirements of an audience. | |

| Learning Aim C: Develop live recording and mixing techniques. | |
|---|---|
| **C1** Mixing live sound | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 29 Live Sound Techniques LO4 through the establishment of an "on-stage mix for a performer". |
| **New content:**<br><br>**C1** Now incorporates a clear requirement to mix live sound.<br><br>**C2** Recording a live FOH mix produced in performance conditions – learners must now record their live mix. | |

| **2016** | **2010** |
|---|---|
| **Unit 2: Sound Recording Techniques** | |

**Comments/Details:**

There is a direct correlation between this unit and QCF U25 Music Production Techniques as both form the basis of knowledge and skills within recording. The new NQF unit does not however require mixing and mastering skills unlike QCF U25 – this is to be found in NQF U13 Mixing and Mastering Techniques, which allows for further detail in the teaching and exploration of a wider range of skills and techniques across both aspects. There is a more explicit focus upon practical and creative application and experimentation with recording equipment in LA: A plus more explicit focus upon planning the recording session in LA: B. LA: D also introduces a formal review and evaluation of the recording session to the unit, whereas previously ongoing review may have been supplementary evidence.

There is the introduction of underpinning knowledge to the unit content, as found in learning aim A. Previously this was related to analysis of manufacturers' specification (U25 LO1), whereas learning aim A encourages creative exploration and subsequent evaluation of a wide range of recording techniques. The unit content is significantly more detailed and technically-focused than previously which should provide structure and guidance to those delivering this unit. Essentially LA: B and C are very similar to GC4 of QCF U25 but again, it should be noted that there is a requirement for learners to clearly evidence and justify their technical decisions, therefore their work needs to more consciously planned and honed both creatively and organisationally.

| **Learning Aim A: Explore the equipment and processes used for a multitrack studio recording** | |
|---|---|
| **A3** Microphone and studio equipment<br>**A4** Cabling, connections and recording format/quality | **Fully covered in:**<br>• Unit 25 Music Production Techniques LO1 and 2 but now with more explicit and updated unit content. |
| **A1** Concepts of multitrack recording | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 25 LO3 but from an underpinning knowledge perspective. |
| **New content:**<br>More explicit coverage of monitoring for artist and engineer found in A2, including increased consideration of the control room environment. | |

| **Learning Aim B: Carry out music recording session planning to prepare for a multitrack recording** | |
|---|---|
| **B1** Session planning **and**<br>**B3** Planning recording sessions | **Fully covered in:**<br>• Unit 31 Planning and Delivering a Music Product LO1 provides consideration of session documentation and planning. |

| **B2** Studio set-up | • Unit 25 LO2 but with more explicit unit content. |
|---|---|

**New content:**

There is new content in relation to planning if previously unit 31 has not been delivered.

**Learning Aim C: Carry out music recording using techniques and processes for a multitrack recording**

| | **Fully covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **C2** Equalisation and compression | • Unit 25 LO4 but more specific unit content in the new specification with relation to equalisation and compression. |

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **C1** Recording techniques<br><br>**C3** Monitor mixes<br><br>**C4** Professional practice in a recording studio | • Unit 25 LO3 capturing audio sources but with consideration of a breadth of audio sources which may not have previously been explored.<br>• Unit 25 LO2 from a routing perspective but there is a more specific requirement to focus upon the monitor mix in the new specification.<br>• Unit 25 LO3 under the organisational subheading. |

**New content:**

There is increased focus upon the session file for the learner's multitrack recording, which will have been informed by their planning in LA:B. Professional practice has an increased importance especially including session etiquette.

**Learning Aim D:** *Review the processes used in the recording of the multitrack recordings*

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **D1** Session planning<br><br>**D2** Recording process | • Unit 31 LO7 where an evaluation of the process and product is required although this arguably has more emphasis on the product's viability in the marketplace rather than the planning and recording processes within the new unit. |

**New content:**

The evaluation and problem-solving aspects are new to the recording unit and can be seen as being developmental for learners.

| 2016 | 2010 |
|---|---|

## Unit 3: Music and Sound for Media

**Comments/Details:**

This unit also has an increased status to a mandatory unit in the new qualification suite reflective of contemporary technologies and the cross-pollination of the creative industries. The slight change in title to reflect wider media applications allows for the incorporation of apps and games as well.

The unit content is significantly more detailed than that of the QCF which will support centres in ensuring an appropriate range of coverage. The increased requirement for employer involvement in this Tech Level is particularly accessible for centres and local employers/professionals in this unit.

### Learning Aim A: Understand the use of music and sound in media products

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **A1** Sound used to support media products<br>**A2** Music used to support media products | • Unit 20 Music and Sound for the Moving Image LO1 but with a focus solely on moving image rather than wider media products. |

**New content:**

The incorporation of sound and music for games and apps as well as moving image

### Learning Aim B: Develop sound for use in media products

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **B1** Recording and production techniques for effects and foley<br>**B2** Creativity and problem solving for sound effects creation<br>**B4** Production of sound for media products<br><br>**B3** Working with different media file formats | • Unit 20 LO3 "produce non-musical sonic elements" but now with unit content detailed and relevant to games, apps and moving image media products. There is also more focus on creativity and problem-solving<br>• Unit 20 LO4 has updated file formats and associated considerations and conventions. |

**New content:**

Increased focus upon this rapidly expanding area of music technology to incorporate a wide range of media products on a variety of platforms for both consumption and storage.

### Learning Aim C: Develop music for media products.

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **C1** Production of music for media projects<br>**C2** Creativity and problem solving for music creation<br><br>**C3** Working with different media file formats | • Unit 20 LO2 but now with unit content detailed and relevant to games, apps and moving image media products. There is also more focus on creativity and problem-solving<br>• Unit 20 LO4 has updated file formats and associated considerations and conventions. |

**New content:**

In line with LA:B, there is an increased focus upon a wider range of media products on a variety of platforms for both consumption and storage.

| 2016 | 2010 |
|---|---|

**Unit 4: Music Technology Project**

**Comments/Details:**

The only 120GLH unit in the QCF specification, Unit 31 Planning and Delivering a Music Product has a direct correlation with Unit 4 Music Technology Project also 120GLH. Both are internally assessed. Aspects of QCF U31 can be found in many other NQF units but most notably U18 Working and Developing as a Production Team, which has aspects of production roles more clearly embedded within LA: A in comparison to QCF U31 LO2.

The QCF unit focuses upon all aspects of planning and delivering a recording project as a team, whereas the NQF U4 unit provides the opportunity for a much wider range of projects and for these to be undertaken individually or collaboratively. In the implementation stages therefore, centres may inadvertently limit learner choice in providing an assignment brief which fits with the limitations of the QCF unit.

Links can be found with the assessment methodologies for NQF U7 Music Technology Enterprise Opportunities (externally-assessed) i.e. pitches and planning, as well as many other units within the specification.

**Learning Aim A: Understand the requirements for successful music technology projects**

| | |
|---|---|
| **A2** Research methods<br>**A3** Stages of project management processes and their contribution to the success of projects | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 43 Special Subject Investigation LO1-3 has previously covered research methods and project planning with a breadth of projects possible.<br>• Unit 31 Planning and Delivering a Music Product LO1, 5 and 7 focused upon project management processes and review. |

**New content:**

**A1** Examples of existing music technology projects are now to be explicitly researched and considered.

**Learning Aim B: Develop a plan for a music technology project**

| | |
|---|---|
| **B1** Project selection and specifications<br><br>**B2** Features of a project plan<br>**B3** Project planning techniques | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 43 LO1 covers B1 but potentially from a different perspective.<br>• Unit 31 LO1 has some coverage of project planning but this is constrained to recording projects.<br>• Unit 11 Music Events Management LO3 focuses upon project management. |

**New content:**

The scope of the music technology project is much wider within the new specification and allows learners to learn and apply project planning processes with a focus appropriate to their interests.

**Learning Aim C: Carry out a music technology project**

| | |
|---|---|
| **C1** Use of appropriate equipment and resources<br>**C2** Processes involved in implementing a project<br>**C3** Time management<br>**C4** Types of format for delivery of the end product | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 43 project processes, time management and final format for presentation.<br>• Unit 11 Music Events Management LO3 project management.<br>• Unit 31 some coverage relating to recording projects. |

**New content:**

Alongside a wider scope of music technology projects, '**C5** Methods for gathering feedback' during the project is a new addition which will need to be highlighted to learners and incorporated into the initial delivery and planning stages.

**Learning Aim D: Review the effectiveness of the music technology project.**

| | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| **D1** Project evaluation techniques<br>**D2** Self-review and reflection<br>**D3** Skills developed and future potential of the project | • Unit 31 LO7 incorporates a project review but the new specification provides more explicit aspects for focus upon.<br>• Unit 38 The Music Freelance World LO2 focuses upon self-development in the wider sense of being a freelancer - this can be seen to be a relevant and related unit. |

**New content:**

More specific detailing of aspects for review and particularly the future potential of the project undertaken.

| **2016** | **2010** |
|---|---|

**Unit 5: Music Technology in Context**

**Comments/Details:**

Centres should be aware that this is an externally-assessed unit available in January and June series each year from June 2017.

**Assessment Objective 1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of developments in music technology, audience interaction and musical genre by responding to given musical material.

**Assessment Objective 2:** Apply knowledge and understanding of music technology with reference to musical developments.

**Assessment Objective 3:** Analyse musical material to interpret the influence of music technology on musical developments over time.

**Assessment Objective 4:** Evaluate musical material to make informed judgements about how music technology influences musical developments.

**Assessment Objective 5:** Be able to make connections which place music technology in context

| **List key content areas:** | **Partially covered in:** |
|---|---|
| A Development of music technology and its effect on music production<br><br>B Wider technological development and the effect on music production<br><br>C Listening to music through technology<br><br>D Music technology and its relationship to sound/style of music | • Unit 30 Pop Music in Practice LO1 and LO2 genre and development of technology and production.<br>• Unit 19 Music and Society LO2 covers "how technology affects music-making and consumption in society"<br>• Unit 26 Music Technology in Performance LO2 and Unit 18 Modern Music in Practice LO1 have some links to the development of technology affecting instruments and sounds within music production and performance.<br>• Unit 14 Listening Skills for Music Technologists LO1 links musical components to style and genre. |

**New content:**

The unit content is detailed, linking and combining the QCF content in a logical way with a clear music technology and production focus across a breadth of musical genres in context. Centres need to be aware that the externally-assessed nature of this unit means that good coverage across the period of the developments will be essential.

| 2016 | 2010 |
|---|---|
| **Unit 6: DAW Production** | |
| **Comments/Details:** Centres should be aware that this is an externally-assessed unit available in the June series only each year from June 2017. | |
| **Assessment Objective 1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of MIDI skills and techniques | |
| **Assessment Objective 2:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of digital audio skills and techniques | |
| **Assessment Objective 3:** Application of digital mixing and plug-ins | |
| **Assessment Objective 4:** Be able to develop a digital audio response to a client brief with appropriate justification | |
| **Key content areas:**<br><br>A Digital audio<br><br>B Explore a range of MIDI sequencing skills and techniques<br><br>C Explore a range of techniques used in manipulating digital audio<br><br>D Explore techniques for processing and mixing on a DAW<br><br>E Undertake creative projects on a DAW | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Unit 2 Audio Engineering Principles LO1 similar content on 'principles of digital audio' although slightly expanded in new specification.<br>• Unit 32 Sequencing Systems and Techniques LO2 and LO3 covering MIDI and audio techniques but with more explicit and updated unit content.<br>• Unit 31 LO4 editing and mastering material.<br>• Unit 7 Composing Music LO2 "extend, develop and manipulate musical material". |
| **New content:** Greater focus upon creative use of a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) to meet an externally-set brief. The combination of creativity and technical ability within a detailed specification provide more vocational parity. | |

| 2016 | 2010 |
|---|---|
| **Unit 7: Music Technology Enterprise Opportunities** | |
| **Comments/Details:** Centres should be aware that this is an externally-assessed unit available in the June series each year from June 2017. | |
| **Assessment Objective 1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of music technology enterprise in relation to employment opportunities in the field of music technology | |
| **Assessment Objective 2:** Analyse the different business considerations of a music technology enterprise project | |
| **Assessment Objective 3:** Evaluate a music technology enterprise project and its potential for success | |
| **Assessment Objective 4:** Be able to respond creatively to an enterprise opportunity in a music technology context with appropriate justification. | |
| **Key content areas:**<br>A Business and enterprise in music technology<br>B Working for yourself in the music industry<br>C Music Industry organisations and concerns<br>D Professional and personal requirements for industry success | **Partially covered in:**<br>• Units 38 The Music Freelance World and 39 The Sound and Music Industry - all aspects are relevant and supportive of this new unit, in terms of learners exploring the structure, organisations and roles within the music industry alongside self and professional development.<br>• Unit 39 LO3 learners "create a business plan" with financial projections and LO4 royalties and copyright |

| | considerations.<br>Unit 17 Marketing and Promotion in the Music Industry LO1 and LO2 supports the marketing planning and pitch required.<br>• Unit 31 LO5 "produce financial records" prepares learners well for financial projections alongside the work above for U38 and U39. |
|---|---|
| **New content:**<br>This externally-assessed unit is now specific about the need for a pitch and business proposal in response to a given brief. Previously learners have been able to choose their own path for these units yet it should be noted that there is still a good degree of flexibility in providing a creative response to the task set. | |

## Section 2: What do these changes mean for planning and teaching?

### What are the key changes that I need to be aware of?

**Different language used for delivery**
You can find a glossary of key terms and command verbs for both the internally and externally assessed units:
Internally assessed units – Appendix 2 within the specifications, found [here](#)
Externally assessed units – [here](#)

**An example of where the key terms have changed is below:**

| 2016 unit 1: Live Sound | 2010 unit 29: Live Sound Techniques |
|---|---|
| Pass criteria requires 'Explain'. | Pass criteria require 'Describe' |

**Which units are being externally assessed?**

| Unit | First Assessment Window |
|---|---|
| 5: Music Technology in Context | May/June 2017 |
| 6: DAW Production | May/June 2017 |
| 7: Music Technology Enterprise Opportunities | May/June 2017 |

### How should I plan delivery of these units to reflect the changes in assessment?
More guidance on delivery models can be found within the 2016 BTEC Nationals Delivery Guide and Delivery Plans.

These documents are available on the website within the 'course materials' section for all the Engineering pathways (accessible [here](#))