

SKILLS + KNOWLEDGE

Ask someone in the business what you need to get a job as a musician, a DJ, an MC or any other job in music and they'll give you a list of skills you need – like being a good performer, being good at mixing, having “an ear for music”.

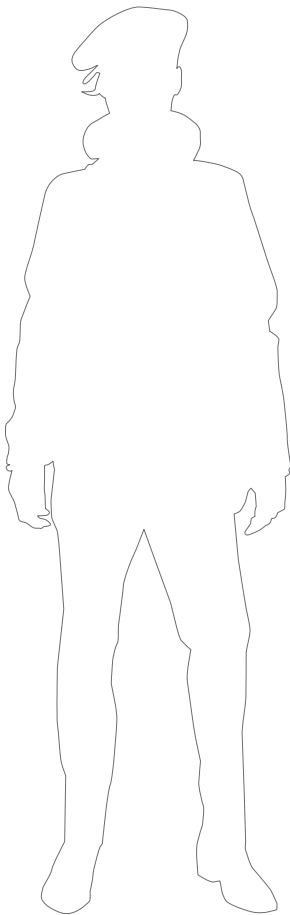
But this is only part of the picture.

Think of all the things which make you “YOU” – your skills and knowledge, personal qualities, experience – and then you can see the picture develop for which jobs need which type of person. It's only then that you can make it happen.

Use these categories to think about your skills and to do the research into 3 other jobs for your project. Feel free to add your own headings.

<div>examples of</div> <div>SKILLS and KNOWLEDGE</div> <div>Communication - writing</div> <div>Communication - speaking</div> <div>Numeracy skills</div> <div>Musical skills</div> <div>Technology skills ( including IT )</div> <div>Creative skills</div> <div>Marketing skills</div> <div>Business skills</div> <div>Health and Safety</div>	<div>examples of</div> <div>PERSONAL QUALITIES</div> <div>Reliable</div> <div>Calm under pressure</div> <div>Confident</div> <div>Organised</div> <div>Committed</div> <div>Trustworthy</div> <div>Passionate and enthusiastic</div> <div>Perfectionist</div> <div>Creative</div>	<div>examples of</div> <div>PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES and LIFESTYLE ISSUES</div> <div>to consider :</div> <div>Location</div> <div>Transport</div> <div>Health</div> <div>Flexibility in hours worked</div> <div>Commitments</div>
<div>examples of</div> <div>TRAINING and QUALIFICATIONS</div> <div>Look for specific training and skills which you might need, for example Music Technology National Diploma or GCSE Music.</div> <div>Look for any required level of qualification, for example, to be a teacher at Secondary school you would need to have a degree, or to be taken on as a member of staff by a record company they might insist you have GCSEs in 4 subjects.</div> <div>Look at which qualifications someone doing that job already has.</div> <div>You might need to research further training. Look at the section on further training and education later on in this chapter.</div>	<div>examples of</div> <div>EXPERIENCE</div> <div>Work</div> <div>( paid and unpaid, working for someone else or working for yourself )</div> <div>Work experience or placement</div> <div>Life experience</div> <div>( things that have happened to you )</div> <div>College, School or training</div> <div>Projects</div> <div>( making things, running events, working with a group of people )</div>	

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE



Personal qualities and skills required for work can be the same across many different areas of work, for example, you need to be good at turning up on time to be a performer, recording engineer or tour manager. This is often MORE important than just being good at your job!

Unless you are absolutely certain which field you want to go in, think carefully about your skills, personality, strengths and weaknesses. Ask yourself honestly whether you want to pursue a full time career as a musician or DJ, or whether you may be better suited to a related career in music. If you don't know the answers yet, these workbooks should hopefully help you to find out.

example answer to project question 2

A SESSION MUSICIAN NEEDS THE FOLLOWING SKILLS and KNOWLEDGE

Communication – reading and writing. Basic reading and writing skills.

Communication – speaking. Needs to be able to communicate well with lots of different people.

Numeracy skills. Works freelance, so needs to be able to manage money.

Musical skills. Usually need to have a combination of music theory and sight reading skills, expert performance skills in a number of different styles and advanced technical skills.

Technology skills. Some understanding of the recording process, including multitracking, overdubs and ‘takes’. Information technology skills are not essential, but any freelance worker needs basic IT literacy.

Creative skills. May need to be able to improvise and rearrange existing music parts.

Marketing skills. Works freelance, and so gets work through contacts with other people. A basic understanding of marketing is important in making and impressing new contacts.

Business skills. Works freelance, so needs to be able to understand the financial and legal implications of being self employed.

Health and Safety - Awareness of health and safety issues, particularly with equipment and live music venues.

A SESSION MUSICIAN NEEDS THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL QUALITIES

Reliable – 100% reliability is essential. If you can't turn up on time, you lose the job.

Confident – Must be a confident performer and be at ease with others.

Calm under pressure – Must be able to deliver the goods!

Organised – Must be able to keep your professional life organised.

Team Player – Needs to appreciate the dynamics of working in a team of other musicians who can have different opinions.

Careful – Attention to detail is important. You need to be passionate and enthusiastic about what you do

A SESSION MUSICIAN NEEDS THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCE

Some work history involving music performance. Previous experience of studio or live performance. Experience of playing with many types of musicians and musical styles. Projects which have involved other musicians.

A SESSION MUSICIAN NEEDS THE FOLLOWING TRAINING and QUALIFICATIONS

Not necessarily required. However, it is likely that a session musician will have studied their instrument for a number of years and often taken formal qualifications. ( For example Grade 6 Guitar, or a degree in Music )

A SESSION MUSICIAN NEEDS THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES and LIFESTYLE ISSUES

Location  
Live session work is likely to involve touring and constant travel, sometimes abroad. Studio session work is usually based in urban areas, particularly London and other large cities.

Transport  
Depending on whether you are touring or studio based, you may have to transport yourself and your equipment around safely.

Health  
If you are sick, you don't get paid. Touring can take its toll on your body, due to the late nights, constant travelling and variable diet.

Flexibility in hours worked  
Session musicians rarely make enough money without doing other work, so you need to be able to fit in your other jobs.

Commitments  
If you are touring and constantly away from home, this may affect your family, relationships or responsibilities.

## HOW TO FILL THE GAPS

Your options are:

**TEACH YOURSELF** - through reading books or researching on the Internet, talking to others and practising your skills. If you do this, it is essential to get feedback from others to check how far you’re progressing. Look at the “want to know more?” section.

**GET SOME TRAINING** - This is what NDFM is about and what you’re doing! However, there are many other courses and training opportunities. Look at local music networks, trade organisations and the music education directory, for example those listed in “want to know more?” at the end of this chapter. Read the section on Further education and training below.

**LEARN THROUGH OTHERS** - You can add 100% value to what you would learn on your own, or on a course, if you regularly network with others who do the type of work you’re after.

**TALK TO OTHER NDFM PEOPLE** - See what good advice and ideas you can share. Make contact with people doing the work you want to do. See if you can shadow them, pick their brains, go along on jobs with them. Learn more about this in the next chapter “How to find work and work placement”. Your MOLP and MIC will have lots of tips and advice for you about different jobs and how to get them.

“With any apprenticeship you have at least a year or two before you even get to touch the tools of the trade. The first thing you have to do is observe closely how the ‘professional’ applies his / her skills to the job / task.” - ‘The Art of Gigging’, Mark Addison Singleton.

Where your goals largely involve self-employed work, you need to be looking NOW at “Business and Money”, workbook 8. Get the workbook from your tutor if you haven’t already got it and start to work through it.

## DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL QUALITIES

Some things are harder to change than others... If it’s your confidence, your timekeeping or your motivation which needs a boost, then you’ve got to take responsibility for working on this yourself - and FAST!

Your time on New Deal will not last for long - seize the opportunity to change anything which is preventing you getting the job you want. Remember that you can take advantage of the New Deal Mentoring scheme, where you can have a mentor who can meet with you whilst you’re on the programme. Mentoring can really help to tackle any “personal qualities” which need improvement, like getting organised or building your confidence. If you’re interested, ask your MOLP or New Deal Personal Adviser to put you in touch. Your tutors, family and friends can also help you develop some of your personal qualities.

## DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL QUALITIES

### GETTING ORGANISED, KEEPING TIME AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE



**GET** a diary, address book or a personal organiser which you can carry in your pocket or handbag (preferably with a pencil ). Use it!

**GET** some folders to organise your worksheets, handouts, notes and somewhere to keep business cards, receipts, song lyrics, whatever you collect. Have a folder for different types of things, such as one for “creating” (lyrics, chords, notes); one for “recording and producing” (handouts, equipment lists, other people’s contact numbers ).

**GET** your friends in on the plan – if you’re trying to improve your reliability and timekeeping, get them to tell you how you’re doing.

**GET** a watch or use your mobile to check the time, regularly. Aim to be 5 minutes early for everything.

**TAKE** notes whenever you’re in a meeting or in a class. You don’t need to write things down “word for word”, just important words and key sentences. Contact details are best checked – if an e-mail address is not spelt correctly, it won’t work.

**REMEMBER** to listen as well as talk – give people time to speak and speak clearly yourself. This gives you time to think about what you’re going to say next!

**DO** your planning the night before: if you’re going to meet your tutor, get all your work together and make a note of the things you want to ask; if you’re going to a recording session, get your equipment ready, your list of songs / tracks, some water, spare strings etc.

**PRACTISE** looking people in the eye and dealing with new people by asking them questions.

**PRACTISE** using the phone. Write down what you want to say first. Practise by phoning up a shop and asking for information about a product, or phoning up about a job and asking for an application form.

## PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Some people have more chaotic lives than others. Some people are limited in what they can do and the hours that they can do it in, perhaps commitments to family, caring for others, their health or a disability.

It’s important to know what extra help you might be able to get if your personal circumstances make it difficult for you to work. Speak to the benefits advisers at Jobcentre Plus, to make sure you’re getting the help you need.

You need to recognise what hours, travel commitments and flexibility you can work within, before you can plan your career.

If you consider yourself to have a disability, then there is legislation to help prevent you being discriminated against. It is unlawful for employers to discriminate against people with disabilities in all areas of employment, including recruitment. An employer must make reasonable adjustments for a person with disabilities. If you want to know more about your rights as a person with disabilities, ask your adviser at the jobcentre or visit [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org) - the disability rights commission.

# HOW TO FIND TRAINING AND COURSES

You need to think about these questions before you can make the right decision about which training or educational course is best for you.

## WHICH SUBJECT AREAS ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?

**MUSIC** is a wide subject. You can study theory, composition or performance as well as other subjects. Sometimes courses specify ‘popular music’, which means that they concentrate on musical styles since the 1950s.

**MUSIC TECHNOLOGY** involves programming, studio skills, creating music and producing.

**PERFORMING ARTS** is a general term, which includes music and drama. Sometimes ‘performance technology’ is used, to also include music technology.

**MUSIC BUSINESS** is now included in most ‘full time’ courses, but there are some courses available which concentrate on this alone. Music business includes subjects such as copyright, management, touring and marketing.

## WHAT TYPE OF QUALIFICATION?

There are many different types of qualification.

**ACADEMIC** qualifications include GCSE, Scottish ‘National Qualifications’, A level and degrees. These concentrate on written coursework and examinations.

**VOCATIONAL** qualifications include NVQ, SVQ, City and Guilds, NCFE and BTEC ( now called Edexcel ) qualifications such as National Diploma ( ND ) and Higher National Diploma ( HND ). These concentrate on practical skills and project work rather than on examinations.

## WHAT LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION?

**IN ENGLAND AND WALES**, qualifications normally fall into 5 levels. Examples are:

### SECONDARY EDUCATION

NVQ level 1 GCSE grade D - G  
NVQ level 2 GCSE grade A - C

### FURTHER EDUCATION

NVQ level 3 A level or National Diploma

### HIGHER EDUCATION

NVQ level 4 HND, Degree, Foundation degree

### POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

NVQ level PGCE ( teaching qualification ),  
PG cert / Dip MA, MSc

Qualifications **IN SCOTLAND** are different.

### SECONDARY EDUCATION

Standards, ( previously O grades, ) SVQ level 1 and 2

### FURTHER EDUCATION

National Qualifications ( awarded at 5 levels ), SVQ level 3

### HIGHER EDUCATION

HND, Degree, SVQ level 4

### POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

PG cert / Dip, MA, MSc, SVQ level 5

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Before you can study on a particular course, you usually need to have achieved qualifications at the level below – for example, to study on a National Diploma, you normally need the equivalent of 4 GCSEs at grades A - C.  
Don’t be put off! Many courses will also accept people with equivalent practical experience, skills and knowledge. Mature students ( over 21 for further education and over 25 for higher education ), are often offered places on the basis of relevant life experience and commitment.

## HOW MUCH TIME?

Some courses are a few days or weeks long, others can take you two or three years. You may be able to study in the evenings, or by “distance learning”, studying in your own home, with support on the telephone or Internet. Remember that the hours in college are only part of the story. You might have coursework and practice to do which take many more hours per week.

## HOW MUCH DOES THE COURSE COST?

Often courses are ‘free’, particularly if you are on a low income or in receipt of benefits.  
You can study for up to 16 hours per week whilst on benefits, providing that you continue to look for work and agree this with jobcentre. Many further education students now support themselves through part time work whilst studying. Rules about studying and benefits are always changing. You can get advice from to your MOLP or MIC. Higher education students cannot get benefits, but do get a student loan. Sometimes other financial help is also available. Some higher education students have to pay a proportion of their course fees, others do not. Because the rules change so frequently, you need to check this out. Look at the websites listed in ‘want to know more?’.

## WHERE CAN YOU STUDY?

Find out about places which offer training in music. Look at the weblinks on ‘training’.

Contact Learn Direct  
tel : 0800 100 900 (free phone from UK excludes some mobile networks ),  
www.learndirect.co.uk

Contact your local college, community centre, library or adult education centre.

## HOW DO I CHOOSE?

Look at the prospectus and course leaflets. Visit the college and ask for a chat with someone who teaches the course, to get an idea of what it involves.

Look at the OFSTED or HEFC or ALI reports which are available on-line. These are the inspection agencies which look at all courses and give them ratings.

Try to find people who are doing or have done the course and ask them about it.

How many students go on to find work and what sort of work?

What sort of work placement or experience is offered?

What sort of projects or assignments would I have to do?

Ask your MOLP and MIC for guidance!