

NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Performance Skills (603/2960/9)

Assessment date: 27 November 2019

Paper Number: P001069

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the Chief Examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally perform well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grading information
- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Grade Boundary Information

Each learner's external assessment paper is marked by an Examiner and awarded a raw mark. During the awarding process, a combination of statistical analysis and professional judgement is used to establish the raw marks that represent the minimum required standard to achieve each grade. These raw marks are outlined in the table below.

NYA	Level 1 Pass	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Distinction	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
0	22	27	33	39	49	60

Grade boundaries represent the minimum raw mark required to achieve a certain grade. For example, if the grade boundary for the Pass grade is 25, a minimum raw mark of 25 is required to achieve a Pass.

Maximum UMS Score*	Level 1 Pass	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Distinction	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
160	24	47	70	92	115	138

** In order to ensure that levels of achievement remain comparable for the same assessment across different assessment windows, all raw marks are converted to a points score based on a uniform mark scale (UMS). For more information about UMS and how it is used to determine overall qualification grades, please refer to the qualification specification.*

Administering the External Assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our Regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the tasks and these are highlighted within the Qualification Specific Instructions Document (QSID).

Standard of learner work

The range of learner responses spanned the full range of available grades.

The majority of learners had attempted to answer questions in each section of the paper, although not all learners completed every question. A minority of scripts suggested that learners had run out of time in completing the paper, which indicated some potential time management issues.

A suggested time to spend on each section is given with the paper and it recommended that learners consider these timings in planning their responses and considering their progress through the paper.

Examiners noted that more time planning and exam technique was in evidence throughout learner responses in this session. Some learners made notes on the paper and appeared to mark questions they were less confident in responding to for reconsideration following completion of the section / paper, in line with sensible application of time management.

The learner responses are not assessed on handwriting or spelling in this examination. However, learners should consider that written responses should be legible in order for examiners to credit work appropriately. It was noted that the vast majority of responses were legible.

Learners who achieved well tended to be confident across all areas of the specification. Learner responses highlighted the need for delivery of all Unit 1 content prior to learners undertaking the external assessment.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment

Malpractice

There were no reported instances of malpractice in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice (for example, copying of work from another learner) will affect the outcome on the assessment.

Maladministration

No instances of maladministration were reported in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment document in this respect.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

Some learners had produced additional sheets in order to extend responses. Learners should be reminded that all additional sheets should be referenced with learner and centre details as per NCFE guidance.

Responses of the tasks within the sections of the external assessment paper

Section 1

In this section of the assessment learners were asked to respond to 9 multiple choice questions, with a total of 9 marks available. It was recommended that learners spend approximately 10 minutes on this section. The majority of learners responded to all questions in section 1.

Questions 1, 2 and 9 tested the learners' knowledge on technical skills, communicative skills and activities. The majority of learners were able to gain credit in these questions, with some learners being less confident in recognising how the assessment of risks within rehearsals may be undertaken.

The majority of learners were able to correctly recognise the definition of a dancer in Q3 and many were able to identify the responsibilities of a venue manager in Q7.

Some improvement in regards to learners knowledge of industry elements was noted in this session, with learners appearing generally confident in identifying Equity as a union and the function of a record label in questions 3 and 4.

Many learners were able to gain credit in Q6 by knowledge of public liability insurance, but this was not universal. As noted in the previous session this may indicate some lack of confidence with regards to presentation of professional performance events.

Learners were not always able to identify the correct meaning of SWOT analysis components in Q8. This potentially suggested some lack of familiarity with the application of SWOT analysis to their work as performers.

Section 2

This section contained 50 available marks. Each question was placed in context of a vocationally relevant performance situation, with some questions containing multiple parts related to the given context. Responses were allocated between 1 and 4 marks in this section.

The majority of learners responded to all questions in this section, with some learners skipping questions and a very small minority of learners apparently not reaching the end of the section.

Q10 asked learners to explain the importance of time management as a professional skill. The majority of learners were able to give creditable examples of useful time management but did not always expand their answers. A minority of learners confused time management with timing as a performance skill, which did not always allow for creditable responses.

The majority of learners were able to identify at least one (and often more) appropriate format for the presentation of promotional video Q11. Learners who did not achieve well in this question tended to have identified written formats, which would not allow for video (for example, posters and flyers).

Some learners were less confident in answering questions 12a and 12b, which were concerned with tax returns and invoices. In Q12a many learners were able to identify that completing a tax return correctly is a legal obligation, but did not always expand their response to consider the outcome. A minority of learners did not appear confident in regards to the function of tax return, sometimes confusing the tax return with ongoing accounts. In Q12b a significant amount of learners confused the purpose of an invoice with a CV or covering letter, which often did not allow for creditable responses. Learners who achieved well were able to identify an item for inclusion upon an invoice and expand upon the purpose of that item.

Question 13 was split into three responses, which were placed in the context of the planned staging of a performance. The majority of learners were able to correctly identify at least one funding organisation in Q13a. However, some learners were confused by the function of funding organisations v unions in their responses, and some learners identified organisations which would be unlikely to provide support in England (for example, identification of Creative Scotland - which suggested a misreading of the detail within the question).

Many learners were able to explain how improvisation and interpretation would be useful to a performer, and able to place their responses in context in Q13b. Learners seemed slightly more confident in expanding upon improvisation than upon interpretation as a skill. A minority of learners appeared to have misread the question and had attempted to insert commentary upon skills which they had chosen, which did not allow for credit in most cases.

Learners were often able to identify the correct name for a repurposed space in response to Q13c, with the majority of learners giving a performance space related term, showing general comprehension of the specification content.

Learners who achieved well in Q14 were able to differentiate between a technical and dress rehearsal in the context of a lighting technician. Learners who achieved less well in this question tended not to have considered the role of a lighting engineer and recounted the function of rehearsals from performers (or sometimes costume designers) viewpoint.

In Q15 the majority of learners were able to consider the importance of clarity for a performer, although not all learners were able to expand their response. A minority of learners identified ways in which clarity could be achieved (through technical means or otherwise) but failed to address the importance in relation to an audience, which tended to limit available credit.

Q16 asked learners to consider three responses in the context of a band undertaking a tour. The majority of learners were able to identify at least one appropriate verbal and/or non verbal direction that a musical director might use, with many learners able to expand on how the directions may be effective in context. A very small minority of learners had misunderstood the term 'direction' and had produced responses which alluded to ensuring that performers reached various geographical destinations.

The majority of learners demonstrated some understanding of the role of a publicist in Q16b, but fewer were able to creditably explain a specific way in which publicity may be undertaken. Some responses suggested some lack of familiarity with regards to methods of publicity and what activities a publicist may reasonably undertake. For example, in some responses there was confusion between the role of publicist and manager.

Responses to Q16c showed that many learners were familiar with the role of crew in events. However,

some learners did not identify creditable roles in response to the given description. It is suggested that learners should familiarise themselves with named roles as stated in the specification.

In Q17 learners were asked to consider responses related to a recently signed recording artist. The majority of learners were able to provide useful responses to Q17a, showing some knowledge of how performers engage audiences onstage. Learners who did not achieve well in Q17a tended to have considered offstage activities and products (for example, giving interviews or selling merchandise) which showed some lack of understanding of the question.

The majority of learners were able to identify one or more details likely to appear on a promotional poster for an album in Q17b. Learners who did not achieve in this question tended to have made reference to promotion of a live event or tour rather than album release.

Q17c(i) and 17c(ii) asked learners to make simple calculations based on a given table of information. The majority of learners were able to respond to 17c(i) correctly by addition of costs to give a total. Fewer learners were able to calculate the amount of sales to recoup costs however, with some learners unable to engage with the required division of costs by artists share. Responses suggested that in some cases learners should familiarise themselves with application of calculations and understanding of given information in the context of performance skills.

Responses to Q17d suggested that many learners are not completely comfortable with technical documents in relation to performance. Incorrect responses covered a number of areas including health and safety, insurance and licensing. Some learners were able to identify likely equipment requirements but unable to suggest how this may be documented. It is suggested therefore that learners would benefit from revision of knowledge related to technical specifications.

Learners were often able to identify appropriate promotional methods in Q17e, with many learners going on to describe what measures an artist could take to control their image within promotional material. Learners who did not achieve well tended not to have expanded their response by description of specific control measures.

The majority of learners were able to identify at least one method of understanding material in Q17(f). Learners who did not achieve in this question tended to have provided unspecific responses (for example, "research").

Q17(g) showed some knowledge of the role of producer, and in many cases consideration of interactions between artists and producers. Many learners were able to identify a potential disadvantage, with some learners expanding their response to consider repercussions. A minority of responses illustrated a somewhat cynical attitude towards the role of producer, which did not always result in creditable responses.

Section 3

In this final section, learners were asked to respond to three long form questions, with a total of 21 marks available split between two 6 mark questions (Questions 18 and 19) and one 9 mark question (Q20).

Learners were advised to spend approximately 30 minutes on this section. Some learners did not respond to all of the questions, and it appeared that a small minority of learners ran out of time whilst answering this section. Examiners were pleased to note that the proportion of learners who made no attempt to answer in this section was reduced in comparison to the previous session.

Q18 allowed many learners to consider the effectiveness of social media as a method of networking, often showing an awareness of social media in terms of marketing and increasing visibility. However, learners tended not to consider face to face networking and showed some misunderstanding of networking as opposed to advertising, which in many cases tended to inhibit higher level evaluation.

Learners generally handled Q19 well and were often able to consider one or more skills in the context of an ensemble. Learners who achieved well tended to cover a range of skills (for example, technical, communication and interpersonal) and evaluate the relative importance of these in context. Learners who achieved less well tended to cover a narrower range of skills and did not always provide evaluative commentary.

Learners who achieved well in Q20 tended to provide balanced responses, with conclusions drawn based on the given scenario. Many learners were able to consider potential positives and negatives of sponsorship, although not all learners applied analysis to this. Learners who achieved less well tended to provide limited expansion upon factors given in the scenario, and tended not to structure their response conclusively.

Chief Examiner: Graham Lees

Date: January 2020
