

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills (600/6990/9)

Assessment window: 25 February 2020 - 18 May 2020

Paper Number: P000994

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 Assessments
- 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.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment (both supervised and invigilated sessions) must be conducted independently from the teaching of the unit. Work produced during the teaching and learning phase of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Any stimulus materials used by the centre during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all of the tasks independently within the conditions set out within the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment.

The completion of the supervised tasks must be supervised by the Teacher and can be sat in a normal classroom environment. The tasks within the supervised period do not need to be invigilated. However, the supervised tasks must be treated independently from the teaching of the unit and learners must complete all tasks independently. This means the supervised tasks must not be Teacher led.

The completion of the invigilated tasks must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment.

It's important that the external assessment is sat in accordance with the specified conditions.

Standard of learner work

Very few learners entered this assessment window. The learners who entered this assessment achieved a range of grades across the assessment criteria, which reflected in the overall awarded grades.

The learners were aware of the standard of the qualification and were able to present appropriate evidence to meet all criteria. The Chief Examiner notes that in this session practical performance work exceeded the level of the accompanying written evidence.

The final learner performances benefitted from appropriate centre facilities and appreciative audience.

Centres are reminded of the standard required for Level 2 qualifications and they must ensure learners are able to meet these requirements set out within the Qualification Specification.

Learners must ensure they understand the brief and associated tasks in order to gain higher grades, rather than submitting a high volume of evidence which still doesn't meet the requirements of the associated task and assessment criteria.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments

Malpractice and Maladministration

Centres are reminded of the instructions for the supervised sessions. Centres will note that whilst teaching time should be Teacher led, the supervised time within the external assessment must be learner led. Learners must not be prompted or be provided with feedback for any aspect of the external assessment and such cases will be reported by the marking Examiner for investigation of malpractice within the centre.

Centres are also reminded that learners must not complete the external assessment outside of the proscribed classroom, rehearsal or performance spaces. Completing tasks as homework is not permitted for the completion of the external assessment. Only material produced independently by the learner during the supervised sessions and the invigilated sessions can be submitted for assessment.

Where learners within an individual cohort produce identical or very similar evidence, the evidence cannot be attributed to one specific learner. When learners are undertaking a group performance, learners must individually submit evidence in response to the associated tasks. In the teaching of this unit therefore learners are advised to consider how best to represent their contribution to group work.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

Learners must label and reference evidence to the associated task. Where evidence is not referenced to the associated task or assessment criteria, the marking Examiner may be unable to attribute what evidence meets what assessment criteria, which may affect the ability to award marks.

In this session the Chief Examiner was pleased to note that learner submissions were generally explicitly referenced, which supported the marking Examiner to understand learners' evidence and how they met the associated tasks and assessment criteria.

Evidence creation

Evidence should be submitted as video for rehearsal and final performance, and in other appropriate written or spoken formats where commentary is required. Written work can be submitted as hard copy or electronically. Learners must ensure that multiple versions of evidence are avoided, so only one definitive and correctly referenced version is submitted. In some submission examples learners submitted both written and electronic versions of commentary, and the content was different for the same assessment criteria. In order not to disadvantage learners, the marking Examiner has to mark both pieces of evidence.

Learners are expected to view their own videos as part of the evaluation and, at this point, they should judge if they can be seen and heard clearly and critically analyse their performance to inform their evaluation. Audio and video quality of evidence should therefore be of sufficient standard to allow for review and marking.

When presenting the video evidence, learners are reminded to label their evidence clearly and ensure the video clips are the correct orientation.

When learners are producing a group performance (for example, as part of an ensemble) they must ensure they introduce themselves.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1, AC 1.1

This task was approached appropriately, with learners stating the title / nature of the piece and their role within it to meet the criteria for a Pass. Learners in this session produced an interesting original performance which was outlined in basic detail to meet this criteria.

Learners who justified their choices, researched alternatives and linked their choices to their own skills and the skills of others in their group, generally achieved grades higher than a Pass.

AC 1.2 and 1.3

AC 1.2 requires learners to research different ways in which their piece can be performed; this might include the skills and techniques required. Learners tended to refer to performances that they had researched or studied. For higher grades learners would be expected to explore how these influence their own performance ideas.

AC 1.3 evidences consideration of the “requirements” of the piece and must include detail on sound, costumes, props, etc. Learners can demonstrate evidence of research for technical and staging requirements to support their submission.

In this session learners had included original pieces, and evidence demonstrated exploration of the requirements through discussion, development and written work.

Learners may present evidence for AC 1.2 and AC 1.3 together, which is quite acceptable, but learners need to be aware that they should give equal weight in their evidence to both ACs.

Learners seeking to meet higher grades should seek to draw links between research in terms of style and requirements to their own planned performance. Detailed research of different performers, styles and pieces without contextual reference is unlikely to provide evidence of critical thought or commentary.

Learners might not actually use the lighting and costumes that they refer to in their research for their final performance, but they could indicate what costumes and lighting they would like to have and why they would like it. Learners could demonstrate sophistication in terms of requirements by detailing specific lights, costumes and props and include, for example, designs, photographs and lighting cues.

When working in groups, learners must individually research the requirements of the piece and present evidence independently.

Task 2, AC 1.4 and 1.6

The level of rehearsal planning evidence in previous sessions varied considerably, from simple statements saying which days a learner would be rehearsing to a detailed, timed plan of exactly what would be rehearsed, what techniques would be worked on and an evaluation of each rehearsal. Some learners retrospectively looked at sessions via a diary, which whilst potentially creditable did not tend to show evidence of sophisticated planning.

The AC refers to the needs to the audience and learners often did not consider this aspect in detail. A Distinction can only be awarded for this AC where learners have mentioned different audiences. It is important to remember the needs of the audience in terms of the material presented.

For AC 1.6. learners must consider safe working practices. Some included this in their rehearsal schedule, and also through commentary on more general practices in terms of environment, warm ups and cool downs.

Task 3, AC 1.5

The minimum requirement to achieve a Pass in AC 1.5. would be one rehearsal run through of the performance piece. To gain a higher grade, learners must demonstrate improvement through rehearsals. Submitting video clips which do not show the learner rehearsing will be unlikely to meet the requirements of the AC.

Learners must select a number of rehearsal clips to show a variety of skills and techniques being developed and improved. Care should be taken to select appropriate clips which link to the criteria.

This section of the external assessment allows learner to demonstrate techniques and skills which are going to be used in the final performance. Learners who showed an early attempt at the performance and then development of techniques to show improvements tended to demonstrate the requirements of the assessment criteria at a higher grade. It was noted that video evidence of learner discussion in this session supported examiners decisions, and verbally presented evidence was often more detailed than accompanying written commentary.

Task 4, AC 2.1

Submitted evidence to meet this criteria should allow examiners to make judgments upon the final performance as delivered to an audience and therefore video evidence should be of appropriate quality. In this session learners were able to present performances which showed some creativity and technical proficiency. It was noted that the performances in this session were of a higher standard than supporting written evidence.

To gain a Distinction in AC 2.1, the performance must evidence creativity and fluency in the application of technical performance skills and techniques across all the areas of sustaining concentration, demonstrating projection, timing and engaging with the audience.

Examiners were pleased to note that in this session no performances broke down irretrievably. Break down of a performance would tend to adversely affect the available range of awarded grades.

Task 5, AC 2.2

AC 2.2. should provide evidence of learners undertaking summative review of their performance and the preparation leading to it. Pass level evaluations gave a fairly basic commentary about what happened in the performance and tended to talk about the whole piece rather than refer specifically to the learners own contribution and the skills they had shown.

To achieve higher grades in this AC learners should be able to present analytical and detailed reviews of their performance and their own contribution, and consider specific ways in which they could improve.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded that they need to teach this unit before the learners complete the external assessment. It also makes best sense to do the external assessment after the learners have completed Unit 1 which gives them chance to get used to similar forms of evidence.

Chief Examiner: Graham Lees
Date: July 2020