

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

Assessment window: 01 February – 22 April 2016

This report contains general information from the Chief Examiner. The aim is to point out the positives and negatives of the scripts in the assessment window to guide you to areas that are doing well and not so well.

Key points:

- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment (both supervised and invigilated time) must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching 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.

The completion of the supervised time can be sat in a normal classroom environment, however, separate from the teaching of the unit. The tasks within the supervised period do not need to be invigilated; however, learners must complete all tasks independently. This means the preparation tasks completed in this supervised time must not be Teacher led. The invigilated hours must be administered with a trained invigilator.

The completion of the external assessment both supervised and invigilated time must be sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs](#).

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

Standard of learner work

Examiners saw work in various disciplines including dance, drama and music. They marked work which covered the full range of grades from NYA to Distinction. In general the standard of the performances for 2.1 was good and centres seemed to have taken some trouble in setting up the performances with audience, video, etc. There were some centres where the audience was not visible on the video although the assessment paper states that the audience should be clearly visible. Examiners saw some really good work but unfortunately submissions were inconsistent and the high standard of performance was not supported by good quality research work for 1.2 or the good work on 1.1-1.4 was not matched by the same standard in the performance 2.1 or the evaluation on 2.2.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

The best centres organised the work well and referenced it to the tasks and ACs. The standard of presentation has certainly improved, centres and learners have clearly been working on the presentation of material.

There was, however, some examples of evidence being dispersed throughout the evidence with no reference to the tasks and/or the assessment criteria, which rather relies upon the examiner searching for the evidence. Examiners cannot make assumptions about where the evidence might be and if work is not clearly referenced, the examiner may not be able to grade the work and this could result in NYA being awarded. Examiners may not find the evidence or know that it was intended for a particular task or AC.

The lack of organisation in some submissions seems to suggest that the external assessment paper has only been referred to briefly at the start and learners have a general perception that the paper is about performance skills and put in work which they think might be relevant rather than working methodically through the tasks to ensure that all ACs have been evidenced.

There were examples of scrapbooks being used and the evidence tended to be scattered over the whole book with little reference to the tasks. Some of the evidence seemed to be of a generic nature with little relevance to the assessment criteria. One or two learners presented two versions of the work (eg the rehearsal schedule in 1.4) with no explanation of why this was done and which they wanted to be assessed. Perhaps one was an early version and was changed as a result of early rehearsals but how will the examiner know that if the learner does not make it clear?

Evidence creation

Candidates are reminded that they must make regular reference to the external assessment paper and the assessment criteria when preparing evidence. All ACs must be evidenced in order to achieve a Pass and to achieve higher grades all ACs apart from 1.6 must be at Merit or Distinction for the overall grade to be above a Pass. During the teaching of the unit, centres may use stimulus materials to support the teaching of the unit but these should not be included for use in the external assessment.

There were examples of 'scaffolding' where the centre used worksheets, proformas or leading questions from the teacher in interviews and this sort of evidence is not acceptable at this level, either in the external assessment or in the internally assessed units. Centres must understand that this sort of evidence may result in the learners being ungraded.

It is essential that all learners identify themselves clearly in group work; there were still examples of video evidence where the whole class was seen rehearsing with no commentary to explain what was happening or who the learners were. Some learners put forward long videos of a whole class rehearsing and this is of little value in assessing individuals.

The sound quality was often very poor so that it was not possible to hear what was happening. It is wise that the learners play back any electronic evidence to ensure that it plays correctly.

At the other extreme some video evidence was very well structured with short video clips where the learners explained what they were doing and showed how they could improve through rehearsals. A few well selected and justified rehearsal clips provide much better evidence than long recordings with no commentary. Rehearsals which just show the learner going over the same material several times with little improvement are not valuable as evidence. As stated in previous reports, it is much better if all candidates have individual memory sticks with their own clips of video. If evidence is recorded as a group then learners could select extracts which best show them individually which can be put on their own memory stick with some commentary explaining what they were doing. Some learners submitted evidence of a rehearsal process of which, however, did not evidence themselves rehearsing but only that of others.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1 AC 1.1

Learners generally performed well on this task and many gave good reasons for their choice of material and many showed insight to justify their choice. Some went on to look at other roles they were taking such as directing the lighting or choreographing the dance. Some learners went into details of roles of others in the performance. There is also scope here for learners to describe their changing role as the piece develops in drama and dance.

As in previous years there were a few examples of a simple piece not being performed well and this is not likely to achieve a Pass. Learners must consider the level of difficulty of the piece; a simple performance piece would need to be performed really well to achieve a Pass.

AC 1.2 and 1.3

These ACs were often rolled into one and while this is quite satisfactory learners must ensure that they actually cover research into performance styles and the requirements of the piece.

In some instances these ACs were very well addressed often gaining Distinction. 'You tube' recordings were referred to by some learners who then went on to make critical judgements when making decisions about their own performance.

There were also examples of the research being very generic and not really connected to the performance piece. General research into music, drama and dance is not likely to gain any credit unless it is related to the performance piece. As mentioned earlier it did seem as if some learners just saw the word 'research' and then decided to do research of their choice which was not connected to the performance piece named in 1.1.

Task 2 AC 1.4 and 1.6

For assessment criteria 1.4, learners are expected to produce a rehearsal schedule and for 1.6 they must consider safe working practices. There were a small number of learners who missed 1.6 and therefore would be NYA on this AC if safe working practices were not mentioned.

Some learners did extremely well on 1.4 and gave details of how they would improve their piece and what techniques they needed to develop. In some cases this was linked to the rehearsal clips included for 1.5 which seemed to link the whole thing together.

The weaker learners gave a fairly basic plan with limited details on timing or how they would deal with the more difficult and challenging parts of their performance. Some learners put in a similar schedule to others in their group but this schedule should be an individual piece of work and it is important that the learners show how they are going to work on their own part of the performance as well as how and when they will rehearse with everybody else in their group.

As mentioned above, learners should not be given a proforma from the teacher for this AC and there were still examples of this happening despite the fact that it has been mentioned in previous reports. Some learners interpreted the rehearsal schedule as a diary of what had happened instead of a plan for rehearsals.

Centres are reminded that to achieve the Distinction criteria on 1.4 learners must 'demonstrate critical judgement in planning a rehearsal schedule, showing insight and perception in setting the performance in context for different audiences' Learners are not expected to perform the piece for different audiences but they need to think about how they might make changes to their performance piece for different audiences and how this may impact on their rehearsals. Very few learners managed to get to Distinction for this AC.

The AC refers to the 'needs of the audience' and although some learners did refer to the audience, this generally seems to have been ignored. The 'needs of the audience' should be interpreted as how a particular audience or audiences will be successfully entertained by the performance being prepared, often the learners referred to other needs such as crisps in the interval or parking spaces which cannot be given any credit under this AC.

Centres should note that AC 1.4 is asking for a rehearsal schedule and not a plan for everything that happens during the external assessment, such as doing the research work and writing up the evaluation. The rehearsal schedule is intended to show how various skills or areas of difficulty will be addressed although for some learners the schedule was little more than a timetable of when rehearsals would take place eg lesson 1 on Monday and lesson 5 on Friday.

Task 3 AC 1.5

There needs to be clear evidence of preparation for the final performance and some learners did well on this task. The best evidence for this AC consisted of short clips of video showing the rehearsal process. These were best when the learners gave some commentary on what they were doing, either in writing or spoken on the video. Short demonstrations of sections of the piece being rehearsed provided the best evidence. Teachers should not complete interviews with the learners where they lead the pupils in the questioning; all evidence for the external assessment must be completed independently by the learner. Teacher input will lead to potential malpractice. Peer assessments however can work well.

Some candidates just recorded two or three rehearsals of their piece with no commentary and there is little value in this especially if there are no improvements. Sometimes it was not even clear to the examiner in what order the video clips were created. As mentioned under evidence creation, whole class activities are of little value especially if the candidates cannot be identified.

Task 4 AC 2.1

Examiners reported that the standard of performances for this AC was generally good and the work was well presented. Many centres presented the evidence on individual memory sticks and this is the preferred method. There were just a few learners where the choice of material was so simple that a grade could not be awarded.

Task 5 AC 2.2

Learners were asked to evaluate the performance on the video and most learners referred directly to the video. Some learners tended to give an account of what happened during the performance and did not really evaluate. The majority of learners stated what went well, what could be improved and what skills they have used. In this AC examiners expect learners to evaluate their own performance as well as commenting on the performance as a whole. Some learners tended to make a brief comment on the performance such as 'I think it went well' and did not really evaluate their own contribution with a view to improvement.

It is worth mentioning that this evaluation is about the videoed performance which has been submitted and it is not really intended to be an evaluation on the whole course including the research work unless this is being related to the final performance on video.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded again that they should allow time to teach this unit before the assessment takes place and it is not advisable to enter the external assessment too early in the course. It is important for the relevant teaching and learning to take place before attempting the external assessment. Teachers are also reminded that they should not be giving any feedback on the work during the supervised and invigilated timed assessment.

Most centres find it helps to have a visit from their external moderator before entering for the external assessment.

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Date:

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