

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

Assessment window:

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:

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

It's important to note that learners shouldn't sit the external assessment until they've taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit to ensure they are well prepared for the external assessment.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment (both supervised and invigilated) 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 tasks (Tasks 1, 2 and 3) must be sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments – V Certs](#). These tasks can 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 (Tasks 4, 5 and 6) must be invigilated and 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

Many centres now clearly understand the requirements of the qualification and learners are submitting good, well set out and correctly referenced evidence. Many learners also aspire to the higher grades with substantial and detailed submissions.

Within the assessment learner evidence covered the full range of grades from NYA to Distinction and was spread across music, dance and drama.

Most centres seemed to be providing the learners with a suitable opportunity to give their final performance for AC 2.1 and it was good to see this being performed in front of an invited audience, very often in the hall or theatre. There were a few centres that seemed to miss this opportunity to perform in front of an audience. Centres are reminded that the audience should be visible on the video.

Many learners seemed to find it difficult to maintain a good standard across all ACs and it is important to remember that the higher grades will only be awarded if the evidence meets the assessment criteria.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment- V Certs

Malpractice

Examples of malpractice may include evidence of learners being given templates to work through to create evidence, or the submission of identical learner responses (either written work or audio files). All malpractice issues will be investigated.

It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that malpractice does not take place.

Maladministration

Examples of maladministration may, for example, include the presence of unauthorised people during the invigilated element of the assessment. Any concerns will be investigated.

It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that maladministration does not take place.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

Some learners arranged their evidence clearly and referenced tasks and Assessment Criteria appropriately to their evidence. This is important for the Examiner to award a grade. Learners

are expected to label and reference their own evidence. This is very helpful to Examiners and is an important skill to have. Centres can provide labels for learners to attach to their evidence.

The learners need to be explained how to clearly referencing of material during the teaching of the unit. There were some learners who seemed to think that the qualification was just about a performance and they did not reference any other ACs; this approach will result in a NYA being awarded.

Some learners also presented work which was of a generic nature and did not address all the ACs in sufficient detail. Learners must be clear about why they are including a piece of evidence. If two copies of the rehearsal schedule are included this needs some explanation. It could be to show that the schedule has been updated; however this would need an explanation.

Evidence creation

As stated earlier worksheets etc. may be used during the teaching of the unit but they cannot be used for the final assessment. Any forms of “scaffolding” in the form of proformas, worksheets, teacher questioning is not acceptable in the external assessment. Learners must interpret the brief and associated tasks independently.

Some evidence of short video clips for AC1.5 were provided, where the learners introduced themselves and gave some commentary on what techniques were being developed; this is good practice. It is important that all learners identify themselves clearly in group work; there were examples of video evidence where the learners did not introduce themselves. All learners need to remember that examiners do not know them so clear identification is essential.

The sound quality on performances was often very poor, making it difficult to hear what was happening. It is wise to play back any electronic evidence to ensure that it plays correctly. Apart from the final performance on AC 2.1 short video clips make the best evidence for AC 1.5.

In terms of presenting the video evidence it is much better if the learners have one memory stick or DVD each rather than all the evidence for the cohort being on one memory stick. There are sometimes issues if evidence is missing when all the evidence is put on disc or data stick by the learner. In this instance, the examiner will not know if the learner has not completed the work or if the learner hasn't transferred all their evidence.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1 AC 1.1

This AC was generally answered well as learners stated the piece they were performing and their role within it. 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.

Some learners spent time describing details about the piece but then failed to actually say what role they were taking so this resulted in an NYA.

There were examples of learners who selected very simple material that was not likely to result in a grade. As stated in previous reports, learners must consider the level of difficulty of the piece; a simple performance piece would need to be performed well to achieve a pass.

AC 1.2 and 1.3

Many learners gave evidence for these ACs together and researched different performance styles for their chosen piece. This often involved “You Tube” recordings where learners went on to make critical judgements and say what features they liked and how they could use some of them in their performance.

There were some evidence submissions where the learners all seemed to have researched assorted styles in music or drama but these were not relevant to their chosen performance piece. General research into music, drama and dance is not likely to gain any credit unless it is related to the performance piece. There were also examples of the learner researching pieces which they decided to discard. This also is unlikely to gain any credit as the AC is asking for research into the piece that will be performed.

Task 2 AC 1.4 and 1.6

Assessment criteria 1.4 asks learners to prepare a rehearsal schedule and for 1.6 they are expected to consider safe working practices. Many learners combined these ACs into the schedule but a few failed to mention safe working and therefore were NYA on that AC.

There were examples of very good evidence on AC1.4 where learners gave details of how they would improve their piece and what techniques they needed to develop. This was particularly good where the learners had tried to link it to the video clips in AC 1.5. The best schedules contained timings for the activities.

Some very basic schedules contained little detail apart from the day of the week and the room details. This is not sufficient for a Pass on this AC, there must be some details about what will be rehearsed and an indication of timings.

Where learners worked as a group, it is not satisfactory to include the same plan for all learners although some details of the timings may be similar. 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 work with others in their group.

Some learners interpreted the rehearsal schedule as a diary of what had happened during the rehearsals. This schedule is intended as a plan for rehearsing the piece and how difficult areas and challenges will be overcome.

As on previous reports, centres are reminded that to achieve the distinction criteria on AC1.4 learners must “*demonstrate critical judgment in planning a rehearsal schedule, showing insight and perception in setting the performance in context for different audiences*”. Learners are expected to think about what changes they might make to their performance piece for different audiences and how this may impact on their rehearsals. This could be the difference of performing to an audience of parents as opposed to performing to a group of young children.

This AC refers to the “needs of the audience” and this seems to have been implied by many learners but not specifically stated. Very few learners mentioned the audience in their rehearsal schedule.

The rehearsal schedule is intended to show how various skills or areas of difficulty will be addressed but some learners misunderstood the AC and used it as an opportunity to talk about everything that would happen during the external assessment such as the evaluation and writing up AC 1.1 to 1.3.

Task 3 AC 1.5

Assessment Criteria 1.5 asks for evidence of the rehearsal process and the best evidence here is short clips of video. These are best when accompanied by some commentary on what they were doing either in writing or spoken on the video. Examiners are really interested in seeing the process of preparing for the final performance. There were some good examples of evidence for this AC but generally the evidence for this AC was disappointing and in some cases learners just showed one or two “run through’s” of the piece. This is not likely to gain more than a Pass. Ideally the evidence should show some progress in developing the skills. Some learners devoted whole sessions to timing, pitch, using microphone, breath control, remembering lyrics, stage presence etc, without being explicit about rehearsing their own piece in sections.

Examiners found it challenging that many learners presented video evidence with the wrong orientation and this comes from recording with an iPad. Learners need to view their evidence to ensure that it is appropriate and can be easily heard.

For this AC teachers should avoid interviews with the learners where they lead the learners in the questioning; peer assessments however can work well. Learners should work independently to interpret the brief and associated tasks.

Some evidence sent in on discs and data sticks did not play due to being corrupted or damaged. Learners need to ensure that their evidence plays and is on an acceptable file format. Evidence needs to be sent in securely.

Learners should attempt to “tell the story” of the rehearsals with a commentary. In some cases learners produced numerous clips of video but these were in no particular order and without any commentary. This sort of work is unlikely to achieve more than a pass grade although with some story of the development of techniques it might be possible to achieve a higher grade.

Task 4 AC 2.1

The standard and presentation of performances for this AC was generally good and many centres set up a suitable performance opportunity for the learners. There were a few where the performance seemed to be classroom based in school uniform and there seemed to be little effort to provide a real performance opportunity.

Evidence was best presented when the learners put their evidence for AC1.5 and 2.1 on individual memory sticks or DVDs. This is preferable to the evidence for the whole cohort being on one DVD or data stick.

There were some recordings where the volume was not good and it was difficult to hear or see the learners and this is something for learners to consider when preparing evidence for this AC. There were some learners who presented work which was not an appropriate standard eg a keyboard played with one hand. There were also performances which fell short of the required time of three minutes and these were graded NYA. The external assessment paper asks for learners to be seen “actively performing” for three minutes so when learners are on the stage they need to show that they are involved in the performance rather than standing at the side of the stage for most of the three minutes.

Task 5 AC 2.2

The learners were invited to evaluate their performance and most seemed to have watched their performance back. At the most basic level learners described what they saw and possibly stated one or two things that went well. Some of the evaluations were not that realistic to what happened and the learners did not really understand what was required from the evaluation. Some learners achieving a Pass grade spoke about the whole performance but did not relate to their own part in the performance.

Most learners stated what went well, what could be improved and what skills they had used. It is important that the learners evaluate their own contribution to the performance and avoid general comments like “it was good”.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded to give attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It's not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment early in their programme.

It is far more appropriate to enter learners in a window once they have taken part in the relevant teaching to ensure that they are well prepared.

Centres would be in a better position to prepare their learners for the external assessment following the support of an external quality assurance visit for the internally assessed units.

Chief Examiner: Derek Griffin
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