



Chief examiner's report

**T Level Technical Qualification in
Digital Business Services
(603/6902/4)**

**Summer 2022 – Employer set project
(Data Technician)**

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Assessment dates: **09 – 27 May 2022**

This report contains information in relation to the externally assessed component provided by the chief examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of student work within this assessment.

The report is written for providers, with the aim of highlighting how students have performed generally, as well as any areas where further development or guidance which may be required to support preparation for future opportunities.

Key points:

- grade boundaries
- standard of student work
- evidence creation
- responses to the external assessment tasks
- administering the external assessment

It is important to note that students should not sit this external assessment until they have received the relevant teaching of the qualification in relation to this component.

Grade boundaries

Raw mark grade boundaries for the series are:

	Overall
Max	80
A*	71
A	62
B	53
C	45
D	37
E	29

Grade boundaries are the lowest mark with which a grade is achieved.

For further detail on how raw marks are converted to uniform marks (UMS), and the aggregation of the core component, please refer to the qualification specification.

Standard of student work

This is the first time that students have been able to undertake assessment for the employer set project (ESP) for this qualification. The ESP is 1 of 2 core skills assessments that students undertake in the first year of their T Level qualification, alongside the core exam.

The ESP consists of a pre-release task given to students approximately a month prior to the assessment, which is then used to provide evidence for 5 tasks. These tasks are set over a 2-week timetable assessment period.

In the first week of assessment, students undertake tasks 1, 2a and 2b, with tasks 3 and 4 being completed in the second week.

The scenario for this assessment was for Stay Cool, an established camping equipment manufacturer who was aiming to enter new markets. The business was looking to launch a range of products for families and young people who are interested in staycation camping holidays in the UK. In addition to the project brief, students were also provided with a range of internal Stay Cool data and external secondary statistics.

There was performance across the grade range within this assessment for this series. The quality of student work varied, both across and within providers. At times there were some excellent quality responses to tasks that demonstrated a developed knowledge of digital business but also soft skills such as report writing and adapting presentations for specific audiences. These students also ensured that they were considering the project brief throughout their work and that the issues they were highlighting or recommendations they were making were specific to Stay Cool. Students who performed well within the project were able to demonstrate their range of digital business skills and knowledge, and demonstrated that they were increasingly able to consider the client's needs.

Where students performed reasonably, they demonstrated they had the underpinning knowledge needed for the digital business sector. These students now need to focus on developing their sector specific skills so that when given a project task such as this in the workplace, they are focussing on the specific requirements of the client.

One area where students must improve their performance would be to make more use of the project brief, the aims of the business, and the context within their project. Many students did not mention that Stay Cool's project involved launching a new range of camping equipment for staycating families. The purpose of the ESP is that this is a project set by an employer. If the student were in the workplace all elements of the project would be expected to refer to the brief and aims of the project at all times, and this also applies to student work for the ESP. Evidence for all tasks should have a clear link to the context in the project brief. Doing this will help students to ensure that the evidence they are producing is relevant to the project brief and that, for example, they are only offering risks/issues/mitigations that are relevant to this specific business and their needs.

Another area in which performance could improve is where students are asked to reflect on the project. Students were able to explain what work they had undertaken and why, however most students found the self-evaluation of their performance and their personal development need particularly challenging. Students were able to identify what elements of the project they found challenging, however many students could not then elaborate on this point, discuss how to improve these skills, or simply stated they have overcome the issues and will be able to perform better next time. Students are at the start of their career with much personal and professional development ahead of them and they should be encouraged to embrace this within their reflections. Where students were able to recognise and articulate this, they performed well in task 4 as they were able to say what skills or knowledge they need or want to develop and why. Students are expected to find the project challenging, and an honest reflection of this and how to improve will in turn improve student performance in this task in future series.

There were some instances this assessment series where student evidence was not present. In some situations, this was due to the student being absent for the assessment session; however, some student evidence was missing due to issues during the uploading of evidence from providers. Providers must try to complete invigilators registers accurately, identifying as clearly as possible where students were or were not present, and ensure that checks are completed to ensure that all student evidence is uploaded.

The project is designed to enable students to use the knowledge and data they have collected or generated in each task to support their decision making for the following tasks. In this series, students tended to use their evidence from each task in isolation. Where students referenced their evidence from preceding tasks, the evidence generated was in context and had greater depth than where students had not used evidence from preceding tasks.

Evidence creation

There was a range of evidence provided by students within this assessment.

For task 1, students presented their Gantt charts using a range of software such as Excel, Visio and in pdf format. Students were provided with a template for their email, and this has been submitted as a word document or a pdf.

For task 2(a), students were provided with a template for their email, and this has been submitted as a word document or a pdf.

For task 2(b), students have presented their cleansed data and their dashboards in Excel. Within the dashboards students used a range of tools to display their data such as charts, pivot tables, graphs, and lists. Students have presented their entity relationship diagram (ERD) in a range of formats. Programmes used include access, draw.io, word, and pdf.

For action 3, students have generally presented their email in the form of a document.

For task 3, students generally created their presentations in PowerPoint or exported their presentation to a pdf.

For task 4, students were provided with a template for their reflection of their project which most used, and this has been submitted as a word document or pdf.

Responses to the external assessment tasks

Task 1

Gantt Chart

This task was responded to well by students. Students were able to use the information used in the project brief to create Gantt charts for the project. A small number of students showed excellent knowledge of the project and were able to include subtasks to the main tasks of the project, although this was not a requirement of the task.

Many students did not consider that some tasks in the project had predecessor tasks that need to be undertaken. This then impacted on the effectiveness of their use of the Gantt Chart as a planning tool, as it

would mean the project would take significantly longer as some tasks would have to be delayed until the predecessor task had been completed.

A few students did not realise that some tasks could be undertaken concurrently and so their timescale for the project was longer than needed.

Email

For this task there was a range of performance from students. Some students were able to explain well why the project tasks needed to be completed in the order they were, referring to why it would be important to avoid delays to ensure that Stay Cool were able to launch their new camping items in time for their main sales period.

Some students were able to identify a range of issues and risks that could arise from the project plan, and they were also able to offer solutions to these issues.

Many students did not refer to the context of the project or the products that Stay Cool were looking to sell within their email. Referring to the context throughout the project is important as the type of business and the aims of the business will determine which risks and issues will be relevant to the scenario and will impact on the project plan, as different products/services will have key sales periods throughout the year that they must meet.

Some students tended to focus on the risks/issues or explaining the reasons for the project plan which meant that some elements of the task were missing. Students need to make sure that they are paying close attention to all the information that they need to include within the task.

English skills

Some students were able to demonstrate excellent use of English skills. These students used paragraphs within their work, and they also used an appropriate sentence structure and length. There were very few grammatical or spelling errors in their presentation.

Some students were able to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of English skills. There were some grammatical or spelling errors within their presentation. Their use of paragraphs was limited, and there was limited use of punctuation which led to long sentences.

Task 2(a): Source of data

Most students were able to explain sources of data that would be needed for the project. Most were able to consider internal and external sources of data, but many students tended to provide greater depth for either internal or external data. Many students were able to give examples of specific data they might want such as customer data showing the ages of customers, and to develop why this would be relevant to the project or what information they would be able to provide the client with as a result. Only a few students were then able to link this specifically to Stay Cool, their new camping products and the aims of the project. The context is particularly important to the selection of data sources as each project will require a different range of data to be selected based on the context within the project brief. Students should make sure that they are selecting relevant data types and then giving relevant examples for the context of the project.

Task 2(b): Data cleanse and data analysis

Action 1

Most students were able to create an entity relationship diagram (ERD) using the data set provided. Most students were able to include relevant entities and show the relationships between these. Some students were able to identify the attributes; however, many students were identifying their primary key and foreign key incorrectly.

Many students were able to cleanse the dataset provided. Most students were able to cleanse the data and times and the error codes; however, many students did not cleanse the time taken data sets. A few students did not scroll to the bottom of the data set and so did not fully cleanse all the relevant data and a few students did not cleanse columns that were not relevant to the data set.

Only a few students fully cleansed all the data. Most students cleansed most of the data, but they missed out one element. Students should check they have fully cleansed each section of the data set.

Action 2

Most students were able to create a dashboard using the data sets provided. Students made good use of the ONS data and the demographic sales data. Some students were able to consider the context of the project and selected more specific information rather than including all data. For example, they only used the ONS data which was relevant to camping sector or use the demographic data of the target market.

Action 3

Most students were able to explain how they had cleansed the data and created their ERD. Some were able to give more detail on how they did this and why they needed to do this. Most students were able to describe why they selected the data they had for their dashboard. Some students were able to explain why they had presented the data in the format they had such as pivot table or pie chart. A few students were able to discuss how the selected data is relevant to the context.

Task 3: Presentation of research findings

Most students created a presentation which was appropriate for the non-technical audience of Stay Cool's directors. Most students were able to explain data analytics; however, some students did not then explain how they can be used. Some students identified the stakeholders for the project but only a few students were then able to consider how the stakeholder would be impacted by the project. Many students were able to identify potential risks for the project; however, only some students were then able to explain how why these would be a risk or how to mitigate the risks. Most students included visual data within their presentation; however, some students did not explain what the data showed or how it was relevant to the project brief.

The solutions suggested by many students were generic in nature and not specific to the project brief or aims of Stay Cool. Only a few students consistently explained how the information in their presentation related to the project brief and the launch of the new camping range. This meant that many students presentations were more generic in nature, and they found it challenging to discuss solutions for the business.

Some students did not fully address all elements of the presentation and did not fully address data analytics, stakeholders, risks, mitigations, and confidentiality, integrity and availability (CIA). Students need to make sure that they are paying close attention to all the information that they need to include within the task.

English skills

Some students were able to demonstrate excellent use of English Skills. These students used paragraphs within their work, and they also used an appropriate sentence structure and length. There were very few grammatical or spelling errors in their presentation.

Some students were able to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of English skills. There were some grammatical or spelling errors within their presentation. Their use of paragraphs was more limited and there was limited use of punctuation which led to long sentences.

Digital skills

Some students showed a reasonable use of basic digital skills such as selecting an appropriate background for their presentation and using a range of basic presentations tools such as spellcheck and inserting images or charts into their presentations.

Some students showed a good range of digital skills. In addition to the backgrounds and use of basic tools, these students were also able to use annotation tools to explain the charts and graphs they had included. They were able to insert tables of data and a few students also added animations or transitions to their slides.

Very few students demonstrated excellent use of digital skills. The task required students to produce a presentation for an audience; however, very few students made use of the speakers notes, instead opting to place all the text onto the slide. Very few students used a range of visual data relevant to the project brief beyond the charts created in task 2(b).

Task 4: Reflective review of the project

Most students were able to provide a reflection of their work throughout the project. Most students gave good explanations of the skills and processes that they had used throughout the project. Most students were able to discuss the tools and techniques that they used and how they used this within their project.

Only a small number of students referred back to the project brief and aims throughout their reflection and how the actions they had taken would have enabled the client to achieve their aims. Where students had referred to the project brief, they were able to provide more considered evaluations of why they had taken the decisions they had, whereas students who had not made reference to the project brief found it more challenging to explain why they had undertaken some of the processes and did not have as well-developed evaluations.

Most students found the elements of the task which required them to reflect on their own performance and to make recommendations of their continuing professional development (CPD) challenging. Some students simply summarised how well the project went, whilst others did highlight areas they found challenging, but summarised that they have now learnt from this and if they were to undertake the task again, they would be confident in it. Very few students identified that as first year students they are at the start of their career and so having development needs and using CPD is important to the development of their technical skills and

knowledge. Where students were able to self-evaluate their own skills and knowledge, they were able to justify a range of suitable and appropriate CPD and how this would help them as they progress in their careers.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is supervised and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#). Students may require additional pre-release material to complete the tasks. These must be provided to students in line with our regulations.

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