NCFE Level 1 Technical Award in Interactive Media (603/0851/5)
NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Interactive Media (603/0852/7)

Assessment window: 21 January 2019 – 1 March 2019

Paper Number: P000705

This report contains holistic 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.

Max Mark	Level 2 Distinction	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Pass	Level 1 Distinction	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Pass	NYA
90	62	47	32	26	20	15	0

Grade boundaries represent the minimum raw mark required to achieve a certain grade. For example, if the grade boundary for the Pass grade (Level 1 Pass) is 15, a minimum raw mark of 15 is required to achieve a Level 1 Pass.

Max UMS Score	Level 2 Distinction	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Pass	Level 1 Distinction	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Pass	NYA
160	128	112	96	64	48	32	0

* 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.

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

Learners must only access software packages used by the centre in the delivery of the qualification and must not use unauthorised cloud-based software packages during the external assessment.

Learners must not use internet access to publish any material to the public domain during or after the external assessment.

Standard of learner work

This was the first external assessment for this qualification and the standard of learner work was good and mostly at the expected level and this had positive impact on the overall achievement of the external assessment.

In addition, there was a good understanding from learners regarding what is expected for each assessment task and this was positive to observe.

Most learners submitted digital evidence, and this was effective. Some learners produced hard copy evidence to support digital evidence and this was collated and submitted effectively.

There were some good examples of creative work submitted across a range of disciplines and most learners responded to the theme of the project brief well. However, there was some misinterpretation of the theme and some learners submitted very disconnected responses with limited connection to the project brief. In some cases, this had a negative impact on the awarding of assessment criteria for all Assessment Objectives 1 to 3 (Tasks 1 to 3) as there is a focus on responding to the brief throughout all assessment tasks.

Higher achieving learners demonstrated thorough interpretations of the brief leading to focused research that had been collated to purposefully inform the planning and development of design ideas. This was followed by purposeful experimentation and an outcome clearly linked to initial intentions. Final evaluations were also well justified in response to the brief and included valid improvements.

There was some evidence of learners not responding individually, in these case learners produced quite similar interpretations of the theme, used similar research sources, experimented with the same materials, processes and techniques and produced similar final outcomes. Learners will be best placed to achieve higher criteria if they respond to the project brief individually. The unit specification and external assessment paper states that learners must be encouraged to do this.

Some submissions were not considered to be at the creative or technical standard, which is consistent with the level of the qualification. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the

content of the qualification is delivered in its entirety, 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

Referencing of the assessment tasks was mostly effective and most submissions were digital. Most learners were able to organise folders within which to submit their work appropriately in clearly labelled folders per task.

There were some submissions that consisted of unclear or no referencing of tasks in any form. This proved difficult for examiners as many and in some cases vast numbers of files had to be accessed to find evidence. In addition, there was some submissions that contained the same evidence in multiple formats (e.g. a PowerPoint presentation and a PDF) and this is not required. Some submissions did not include a clear final outcome for Task 2, even if producing a pro-type in this task there should be a clearly accessible outcome to demonstrate the required interactive content and functionality.

Teachers and the Invigilator must ensure learners are aware how to label evidence correctly, per task. This should also include clear reference to the final outcome and reference to multiple parts of any task/s.

Learners are clearly informed to label each task separately within the Regulations for the Conduct of the External Assessment document. Failure to follow this requirement may have significant implications for the awarding of learner grades. If Examiners are not easily able to identify which evidence relates to which task, this may limit the marks awarded for that task.

Learners should also be instructed to attempt all tasks in the paper, and these should be clearly referenced. Any tasks not attempted or not referenced cannot be rewarded and may limit the marks awarded for the associated task/s.

Evidence creation

The external assessment is based on internally assessed units 1, 2, 3 and 4. Therefore, learners should only be entered for the external assessment after sufficient mandatory unit content of these units has been delivered. Most learners seemed to be well-prepared and demonstrated valid understanding from all units and this was positive to observe.

Centres are free to choose a single discipline or multiple disciplines within the Interactive Media subject area for classroom delivery; however, the discipline chosen for the external assessment should demonstrate a good standard of learner knowledge and access to all required resources.

It was evident in some submissions that learners may have not been taught the required skills in order to produce an outcome for Task 2 (e.g. use of authoring software) prior to the external assessment and this may have disadvantaged these learners. In addition, the use of templates or handouts is not permitted for any assessment task, inclusive of planning documentation to advantage learners.

Most learners provided a good interpretation of the project brief and responded well to the theme, there was also some good evidence of learners demonstrating how they explored the limitations and challenges the brief. However, many learners also had some common and obvious interpretations of the theme and there was substantial evidence of submissions having the same or very similar final product ideas early on and prior to any research or individual development of ideas.

Most learners evidenced valid and sufficient research sources that were used effectively within the development of ideas. However, there was also lots of irrelevant evidence (e.g. product reviews) that are not required and cannot be awarded marks in any assessment task. Learners should be discouraged from spending time on creating evidence that is not requested from the tasks.

There was good evidence of practical experimentation using hardware and software. Most learners had access to a range of appropriate resources to demonstrate the use of sources, techniques and processes.

In most cases, learners used their experimentation to create a functioning final outcome or functioning proto-type as expected. However, some learners were not able to meet their intentions based on the resources they had access to. (E.g. wanted to produce a website or mobile application, yet only had access to presentation software). Again, learners must ensure their work within a discipline that they can demonstrate knowledge and skills and have access to all required resources.

The use of annotation within all tasks was useful to verify learners understanding and choices made during the planning, design and development stages. Higher achieving learners did this very well and made consistent links to the project brief. Some evidence had no annotation at all, and this proved difficult to follow the creative process for some learners.

The majority of learners submitted good, detailed and well-presented evaluations. Higher achieving learners used the bullet points within the assessment task to guide the evaluation and this ensured all required areas of review, inclusive of improvements were addressed.

Some evaluations were basic and very descriptive of the stages undertaken, some also did not include any reference to improvements and this limited marks awarded for this task.

As it is not mandatory that learners create a final completed product in this assessment, teaching and learning of the unit content should be extensive with regard to interpreting a brief, experimenting with appropriate interactive media techniques and processes (including authoring), finalising a product to allow for functionality (even if a prototype) and evaluation in response to a brief.

Some submissions proved difficult for examiners to access, this was mainly due to damaged discs or files not being copied across to a USB or other device and this delayed the examination process. Learners must ensure all submissions are thoroughly checked prior to submitting these to NCFE.

Responses of the Tasks within the Sections of the external assessment paper

Task 1

In this task learners are required to consider all aspects of the brief and create a proposal for the content and layout of the interactive media product.

Most learners demonstrated this very effectively using written notes, mind maps, mood boards, design sketches, storyboards, navigation diagrams and layout designs. There was some evidence that learners simply reiterated the project brief, rather than making individual interpretations. Higher achieving learners used all bullet points in the task to structure their proposal and planning documentation and this is best practice.

There was generally an effective and creative interpretation of the theme Innovate Spaces, learners seemed to engage with the theme well and higher achieving learners demonstrated interesting and less obvious interpretations. Lower achieving learners may have struggled with the concept of the brief and produced quite basic and disconnected responses. However, engaging with the target audience was much stronger and all learners were able to demonstrate valid understanding of this and how this informed their ideas.

Most learners provided satisfactory evidence of the intended application of sources, processes and techniques. Much of this evidence could be seen in Task 2 and was awarded appropriately. In this task many learners spent time reviewing existing products, even though this is valid research, time is not allocated for such activity in the external assessment. In this task, time should be focused on creating a proposal and planning documentation.

Task 2

In this task learners are required to create their proposed interactive media product from Task 1. This might not be a completed version, but learners must demonstrate evidence that the product shows sufficient functionality.

Evidence for this task was variable, higher achieving learners used all bullet points in the task to structure their development and production work, however there was also some very basic submissions that had limited links to the requirements of the task or brief.

Many learners demonstrated practical experimentation of hardware and software as part of their development and this was very successful. Centres are reminded that even if learners have access to the same resources and may use similar techniques, the presentation of this evidence should be individual to each learner.

Higher achieving learners experimented with a wide range of processes and techniques (creating / editing images, authoring, saving / exporting file types, testing etc.), annotated their evidence to show development, and thought process in response to the brief and initial intentions. However, lower

achieving learners shown minimal development and submitted just the final outcome and this limited marks awarded for this task.

Most learners successfully completed a functional outcome even if a prototype; more learners that are successful complete a fully functioning final product. Less successful learners had clear evidence of the creation of a product or prototype yet did not submit the final outcome and this limited marks awarded for this task as functionality could not be demonstrated or awarded.

In the cases were a functional outcome was submitted, these demonstrated effective use of folder structures, file types and hardware/software solutions.

Task 3

In this task, learners are required to evaluate their interactive media product in relation to the brief. The evaluation should include a review of technical skills, the processes used and how to improve the interactive media product.

Most learners did very well in this task and were able to provide a valid evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses overall.

Higher achieving learners effectively used all bullet points of the task and focused on the improvements and this is best practice. In addition, there was clear and consistent links to the brief throughout the evaluation.

Lower achieving learners, although did provide an evaluation or evaluative statements within their work tended to describe the stages undertaken and what went well, there was minimal if any review of what could be improved and this limited marks awarded in this task.

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