

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

Assessment window: 13 May 2019 – 21 June 2019.

Paper Number: P000706

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 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 is 25, a minimum raw mark of 25 is required to achieve a 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.*

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 may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the Tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our Regulations.

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

Standard of Learner Work

This was the second external assessment for this qualification and the standard of learner work has improved, mostly at the expected level. This has had a positive impact on the overall achievement of the external assessment.

In addition, there continued to be a good understanding from centres regarding what is expected for each assessment task and this was positive to observe. In some minor cases there was an increase in the submissions of incomplete tasks or learners not submitting their actual interactive media product and at times this limited marks to lower mark bands.

Overall, most centres submitted digital evidence and this was highly effective and aided the efficiency of the examination process. Some learners produced hard copy evidence to support digital evidence and this was also collated and submitted effectively.

There was also an increase in centres duplicating hard copy evidence digitally, which is not best practice as this meant examiners had to spend additional time reviewing multiple documents and files.

Some excellent examples of creative work were submitted across a range of disciplines and learners responded to the theme of the project brief well. The theme and target audience seemed to be accessible for both levels of learners and a valid range of responses were submitted.

Most learners produced a website; however, PowerPoint presentations were also popular.

There were minimal examples of misinterpretation of the theme, in these cases learners submitted disconnected responses and mostly incomplete evidence for each task.

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.

As in the previous window, there was some evidence of learners not responding individually. Centres are reminded to encourage learners to interpret the theme and requirements of the brief 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. Although it is inevitable that learners may apply skills that they have been taught and that this may result in similar processes used, the actual evidence and quality of the evidence produced should be clearly attributable to each individual learner and their ability and personal interpretation.

There were some minimal submissions that were not considered to be at the creative or technical standard, consistent with the level of the qualification. Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that the content of the unit is delivered in its entirety, prior to learners undertaking the external assessment. In addition, it is the centres responsibility to recruit with integrity.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment

Malpractice

There have been some issues of malpractice raised in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice will affect the outcome on the assessment. It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment to ensure the integrity of the qualification and that malpractice does not take place.

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, which aided the efficiency of the examination process. Most learners were able to organise folders within which to submit their work appropriately, in clearly labelled folders per task. There were also some examples of learners duplicating evidence; however, this was mostly in cases where they had also submitted hard copy evidence and simply scanned this as well to include within their digital files. In addition, there were some submissions that contained the same evidence in multiple formats (e.g. a PowerPoint presentation and a PDF) and this is not required.

There was an increase in submissions that did not include a clear final outcome for Task 2 (the interactive media product) and this proved very difficult to award marks for this task. Centres are reminded that the actual product should be included to demonstrate learner's technical ability, even if only producing a prototype in this task there should be a clearly accessible outcome to demonstrate the required interactive content and functionality.

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

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 registered 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.

As in the previous window, some submissions demonstrated that learners had 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. This was also evident in evaluations and annotations were learners clearly stated they did not know how to use particular software in order to create a final outcome.

There was a slight increase in the use of templates within the submission, in particular for Task 1 and this is not permitted for any assessment task.

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 prototype 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, the centre must ensure learners 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. Lower achieving learners had no annotation at all, and this proved difficult to follow the creative process and choices made.

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 and focused on improvements, were addressed.

Some evaluations were basic, bulleted lists or very descriptive statements of the stages undertaken, some also did not include any reference to improvements and this limited marks awarded for this task. Centres are reminded that the focus of the evaluation for Task 3 is on improvements to the interactive media product rather than personal improvements such as time management or personal ability. In many cases, learners demonstrated valid evidence in other tasks and this was positively awarded.

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 accurately copied across to a USB or other devices and this delayed the examination process. In addition, centres are advised not to set passwords for USB devices or collate work on separate devices per learner. It is best practice to collate all learners work, per batch, or per centre, on one device.

Centres 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 plan 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 generally an effective and creative interpretation of the theme 24 Hour City Breaks, learners seemed to engage with the theme well and higher achieving learners demonstrated interesting and less obvious interpretations. Lower achieving learners, although did not seem to struggle with the concept of the brief, still had quite basic and literal responses. Engaging with the target audience was much stronger, all learners were able to demonstrate a valid understanding of this and how this informed their ideas.

Most learners provided valid evidence of the intended application of sources, processes and techniques. Much of this evidence was also seen in Task 2, where learners applied these skills and this was awarded appropriately.

In this task, many learners are continuing to evidence reviewing existing products, even though this is valid research, time is not allocated for such activity in the external assessment. For the task, time should be only focused on creating and producing planning documentation, rather than writing reviews that cannot be awarded marks.

There was a significant increase in the volume and detail of planning documentation submitted for this task, higher achieving learners used the bullets in the task effectively to ensure they included all required planning evidence, as this was very positive to observe.

There was also some evidence of learners explaining what each planning element is (e.g. what a storyboard is and what a layout design is) rather than actually creating their own planning evidence. The focus and time allocated to this task is for learners to produce the planning documentation to clearly inform the product they will develop and produce in Task 2.

Task 2

In this task, learners are required to create their planned 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) and annotated their evidence to show development and thought process, in response to the brief and initial intentions. However, lower achieving learners showed 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 it was a prototype, whereas more successful learners completed a fully functioning final product that was clearly reflective of their intentions.

Less successful learners had some evidence (e.g. screenshots) 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 where a functional outcome was submitted, these demonstrated effective use of folder structures, file types and hardware/software solutions.

There was an increase in the submission of websites and learners should clearly evidence how they authored the site as well as prepared assets appropriately for a website to achieve higher mark bands. There were some excellent and creative websites submitted, yet some had minimal supporting evidence, therefore did not demonstrate understanding effectively.

There continued to be a significant amount of PowerPoint Presentations submitted, this is as expected and entirely acceptable. However, some learners were limited to achieving in lower mark bands if the presentations had no interactivity, there was an increase in linear presentations and these do not demonstrate the required level of skill for this subject or external assessment.

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 this well 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 of the product and this is best practice. In addition, there was clear and consistent links to the brief throughout the evaluations.

Lower achieving learners, although did provide an evaluation or evaluative statements within their work, tended to describe the stages undertaken and what went well and not so well. There was minimal if any review of what could be improved with the product and this limited marks awarded for this task.

There was a significant increase in the volume and detail of evidence submitted for this task, although only one hour is suggested to spend on the evaluation, it was clear learners were able to draw on previous tasks to inform their review (e.g. initial intentions in Task 1 and the development and production in Task 2). In cases where these were also consistently linked to improvements of the product, these were particularly strong evaluations.

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