

Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2017

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Music

Unit 1: The Music Industry (21512E)

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Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Level 1 fallback).

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each test we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each test, because then it would not take into account that a test might be slightly easier or more difficult than any other.

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Summary

January 2017 was the sixth time that this paper was presented. Centres and learners are continuing to demonstrate a sound understanding of expectations and established strategies to address the examination successfully. Once again the paper was well received by learners, showing evidence of having been well prepared by centres. Learners address the Unit with confidence, indicating that many centres are understanding the expectations of the examination.

Learner confidence on this paper is demonstrated in the way that the majority of learners attempt a response to all of the questions on the paper, including the two extended response questions. There were hardly any instances where a good attempt was not made on these longer items or indeed an attempt made to address all items on the paper.

Section A

The first five questions, as in previous papers, are multiple choice. **Questions 2 and 4** were answered correctly by most learners. These concern the role of a session musician and responsibilities of a studio manager. Learners do seem to find questions on job roles more accessible than questions on organisations. **Questions 1 and 3** were answered correctly by a slightly smaller percentage than Questions 2 and 4 but still were mostly answered correctly. **Question 5** was answered correctly less often than the other questions of this type with just over half the cohort correctly selecting MPG as a trade body.

Question 6 is offered as a straight-forward question on the role of unions. Learners gained credit for 'union' as an answer and were also credited if they named specific unions or trade bodies from the Specification. Just over half of the cohort gained the mark in this question. Many who failed to gain the mark offered 'PRS' as a response which is a sensible guess.

<p>6 Name one type of organisation that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• supports members in negotiating rates of pay• handles disputes• provides advice for freelancers on tax issues. <p>MU</p> <p>(Total for Question 6 = 1 mark)</p>
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Question 7 requires learners to give two responsibilities of a musical director. Despite 'Musical Director' being listed as a job role in the Specification along with relevant responsibilities, many learners struggled to offer a correct response to this question. Credit was not given to vague responses such as 'tell everyone what to do' as this was not considered to offer enough relevant subject-specific information to be considered creditable. Some learners suggested the MD was responsible for staging, positioning actors on stage and even choreography.

It is important to remind learners that credit will never be given for repeating information given in a question. Therefore, those learners who offered 'to direct the music' as a response were not able to gain credit.

Of the correct responses offered, most concerned a description of directing the music such as controlling dynamics or tempo, conducting, selecting music as well as arranging and auditioning musicians. Composing was also allowed as a correct response as it was considered that this might sometimes occur during the process of arranging or of realising the performance.

7 Give **two** responsibilities of a musical director.

1 To lead and organise an artist or band

2 To choose the music for the performers to perform

(Total for Question 7 = 2 marks)

Question 8 asks learners to identify two ways a songwriter might encourage an A&R representative to attend their gig. Most learners demonstrated understanding of the question and were able to think creatively, suggesting two answers, but far fewer learners gained full credit in this question. Common correct responses included sending a demo, performing in a venue likely to be frequented by the rep or using social media or a website. Many learners suggested offering free tickets or backstage passes but this did not gain credit as it was not considered feasible since the A&R representative was unlikely to be impressed with this offer in the circumstances. A number of learners also suggested contacting the rep directly and simply asking or persuading them to attend which was also not considered a realistic approach.

8 Identify **two** ways a songwriter might encourage an A&R representative to attend their gig.

1 promote on social media

2 send them a demo

(Total for Question 8 = 2 marks)

Question 9 offers a maximum of three marks for learners to identify three types of organisation that typically work with a marketing manager. A good number of correct responses were available such as broadcaster, retail, promotion, distribution, advertising agency, etc. A small number of learners were able to identify three organisations correctly with the full 3 marks not often awarded. A mark of 2 was more commonly achieved. To gain marks in this question, learners needed to understand what a marketing manager was and then select relevant organisations. Those learners who were not able to do this tended to guess organisations so the most common incorrect responses offered were PRS, PPL, MPG, MU etc. A few offered 'marketing' or 'manager' as responses which do not gain credit in any case as these words are already in the question and learners cannot gain credit for repeating any part of the question text.

An example of a response scoring the full 3 marks is given below.

9 Identify **three** types of organisation that typically work with a marketing manager.

1 *Distribution*

2 *Retailing*

3 *Promotion*

(Total for Question 9 = 3 marks)

Question 10 is a straight-forward question requiring learners to identify the job role of instrumental support/guitar technician from a list of responsibilities.

10 Identify the job role that:

- tunes guitars before a performance
- checks backline
- repairs damaged guitar amps and guitars.

Instrumental Support

(Total for Question 10 = 1 mark)

Other correct responses included instrumental technician and roadie. Music technician was also allowed since it seemed reasonable that some learners might have experience of this in an educational setting, for instance. About half the cohort were able to gain the 1 mark for this question. Common incorrect responses included sound technician or live sound technician which may have been influenced by the scenario in Section C.

Centres and learners should note that there have been questions such as this in every previous paper and therefore learners should be fully prepared to identify each of the job roles given in the Specification in terms of their responsibilities as well as being able to offer a relevant responsibility when presented with a job role from the Specification.

Question 11 asks learners to give two reasons why it is important to always meet the terms of a contract in the music industry. Many learners answered this correctly, with responses relating to being paid less, damaging reputation, losing future work and ensuing legal action being the most popular. Where learners failed to gain marks it was often due to misreading or misunderstanding the question. Some learners gave reasons why it was important to *have* a contract, rather than meet the terms of one. These responses did not gain any credit. Learners must always be sure to read the wording of each question carefully and to be particularly careful not to assume that, because a question is similar to one in a past paper, that it is asking exactly the same thing.

11 Give **two** reasons why it is important to always meet the terms of a contract in the music industry.

- 1 If the terms are not met you could lose your contract along with the money you earned from it.
- 2 If the terms are not met it is a violation of the contract and the case could be taken to court.

(Total for Question 11 = 2 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 16 MARKS

Section B

Section B questions all relate to the scenario in Brief A concerning Lewis, a creator of dance music.

Question 12 is the first of the 'explain'-type questions in this examination and one of two 4-mark questions. Learners are required to explain two factors that might influence Lewis's choice of venue with a maximum of 4 marks available. Each of the factors can gain 2 marks to make this total of 4 marks. For each factor, one mark is available for a correct initial statement and the other for a consequence/explanation of that initial statement.

The example given here illustrates two factors that were commonly seen and is a good example of a 4-mark response. Firstly, location/accessibility is correctly identified as a factor. The explanation of this is so that as many people as possible can attend. In the second part of the response, cost is correctly identified as a factor with the explanation that Lewis will make less money if he has to pay more to hire the venue.

12 Lewis is choosing a venue for his club dance night.
Explain **two** factors that might influence his choice of venue.

1 Location will influence his choice as it needs to be easily accessible by his audience so that he can get as many people attending the show as possible.

2 The amount of money it will cost will influence his choice because he ~~could~~ ^{could} end up losing money by paying a lot to perform.

(Total for Question 12 = 4 marks)

This question was often well handled by learners, with attempts at 'explanation' the norm rather than the exception. Most of the points offered on the Mark Scheme were given by learners who demonstrated a pleasing breadth of response to this question.

Where learners did not attempt an explanation, instead just briefly giving a factor such as 'location', they were usually able to gain 2 marks for the factors but, of course, no marks for the explanation.

Where learners missed out on marks for this question it was often because they listed a couple of factors rather than one factor with a related explanation. Exam technique in these 'explain' questions is crucial to their success and ideally, all learners should go into the examination confident in their approach to this type of question.

Question 13a concerns the importance of printing the correct amount of tickets and requires that learners consider why this might be important and then provide an explanation.

13 Lewis has decided to produce the tickets and promotional materials himself.

(a) Explain **one** reason why it is important for Lewis to print the **correct number** of tickets for the gig.

Because if there aren't enough tickets⁽²⁾ to fill the place, Lewis isn't getting as much money as he would be getting.

The most popular correct response concerned printing too many tickets and gave overcrowding as the reason with the associated health and safety or legal issues as the explanation. The example above deals with printing less tickets than required resulting in a show that is under-capacity and was correctly offered less often.

It was common for learners to offer a reason relating to over-printing as well as a reason for under-printing, which was more than was asked in the question. Quite often in these cases the learner managed to provide an explanation for one but not the other, so did manage to gain the full two marks available.

No marks were awarded in the question for mention of over or under-printing itself. The first mark was awarded when a correct reason was given that related to over or under-printing.

Question 13b is an accessible question asking for a way that Lewis might promote his gig cheaply. The most popular response by far was social media, as in the example below, followed by posters or flyers. Most learners managed to gain the full 1 mark for this question.

(b) Give **one** way Lewis could promote his gig cheaply.

(1)

social media

(Total for Question 13 = 3 marks)

The few learners who did not gain credit in this question usually did so because they gave a method of publicity that was not considered cheap. For instance, responses such as TV or newspaper adverts were not credited. A few learners suggested reducing the price of the tickets to attract people but this was not considered creditable since this would end up costing Lewis money and therefore is not a cheap solution as required by the question.

Question 14 requires learners to connect two given activities to the job roles that are usually responsible for these activities. This format of question should be familiar to learners as it has been used quite often in the examinations for this unit. Despite this, a number of learners chose to link each activity box with two or more job roles which resulted in them not gaining any credit. Learners should note that only one line per box was required. They should pick the box of best fit and connect that one only.

The remaining majority of learners correctly linked 'organising event security' to 'venue manager' for 1 mark. However, very few learners linked 'assisting with get-in' to 'roadie'. In fact, many learners linked this to 'front-of-house' instead, which is not correct. Learners are encouraged to study the job roles and their responsibilities as given in the Specification as having these clearly in mind for the examination would be an advantage.

The example below shows a correct response, scoring the full 2 marks.

14 The diagram shows two activities happening in the venue before Lewis's gig.
Draw a line from each activity to the job role responsible for that activity.

Activity	Job role
Organising event security	Artist manager
	Front-of-house
	Venue manager
Assisting with get-in	Musical director
	Roadie

(Total for Question 14 = 2 marks)

Question 15 is one of two 8 mark questions on the paper which require an extended response. Both of these longer questions were again well attempted by learners in this examination and many managed a creditable response. Evidence of planning was clear in many cases, demonstrating that centres are continuing to invest time and effort in guiding their learners so that they achieve the best marks they can in these questions.

Of those who attempted a response, many were able to gain at least two marks by correctly identifying a couple of broad main issues. Marks of 3 or 4 were common and the higher marks of 5 and 6 were easily accessible to learners who were prepared to discuss as many opportunities and challenges of Lewis's employment options as possible, providing more description around each point. Marks of 7 and 8 were awarded less often but were well within the scope of those learners who were able to offer a more discursive response that explored the options in more depth, offering explanations and consequences, thus demonstrating a full understanding of the related issues.

An example of a response that scored the full 8 marks is given below.

15 Lewis is offered a full-time job producing music for advertising. He has two options he can take this job or he can continue his dance music career.

Discuss the opportunities and challenges of both these options.

The fact the Lewis has been offered a full time job producing music for advertising has several advantages. The most obvious is that with a full time job he will receive a salary and have a steady income with the possibility, depending on his contract of employment, of getting royalties on his musical creations. It would also give him the opportunity of being able to generate some money to put towards his dance music if he wished to pursue it at a later date. A slightly less obvious advantage is that it could also create networking opportunities within the music industry which would not necessarily be readily available to him were he to stay with his dance music career at the moment.

The challenges of taking the full-time job is that it would mean that he would be restricted in terms of his creativity in that he would have to produce music which has to satisfy the client's requirements which could be challenging. He would also have to work to much tighter deadlines and would obviously be answerable to his peers. He is also the challenge that producing music for advertising could stifle his dance music. The flip side of this is of course if he was fortunate to get producing music for an advert which was very successful it could really launch his career.

The opportunities of continuing his dance music career is that he will be in a much greater control of his career. He will also be able to be much more flexible, and be able to take on freelance work as and when it becomes available. He will also have more time and freedom to develop his sound and forward his business to directions he wants to go.

The challenge of taking this option is that his income will not be as secure, he will be taking a much greater financial risk, although he is already doing this. To achieve large success as a dance producer is difficult. There are a lot of people trying to go down the same path and it requires a break through to succeed and not everyone can get the break.

Also, he has quite a short time frame to succeed, as one gets older, and starts a family etc. It requires much dedication to build a career, and keep a family.

(Total for Question 15 = 8 marks)

Many learners were able to discuss the basic advantages of full time employment such as paid holidays and sick pay, etc. Although not the main focus of the question, these did provide some useful context and clearly had been remembered by some learners from a question in a previous paper. This was not the same question, however, so learners that simply stuck to that line of response were unlikely to score highly.

Learners who accessed the higher-level marks often demonstrated a deeper understanding of creating music for advertising, for instance, the anonymity and opportunities for advancement within the company structure. Many learners mentioned the possibility of working with better equipment and particularly of having to create music to a brief rather than freedom of self-expression. Higher-level learners also tended to be more realistic about Lewis's prospects in his dance music career, explaining the potential problems.

Learners who scored less well on this question often did not fully understand the situation of the full-time job option, suggesting that his music on adverts would lead him to be 'recognised', build up a fan base and become rich and famous. A few learners misread the question and instead discussed Lewis's career as a dancer.

Section C

Section C includes questions based on a scenario around a sound engineer working in a theatre.

Question 16 requires learners to identify two responsibilities of a live sound technician.

<p>16 Identify two responsibilities of a live sound technician.</p> <p>1 Having control of the mixing desk.</p> <p>2 Setting up musical equipment such as amps, mics etc and checking they work.</p> <p>(Total for Question 16 = 2 marks)</p>
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Most learners were able to offer a good attempt at a response to this question, with responses relating to sound levels and sound quality predominating. Some responses were rather vague and therefore less easily creditable. Learners should try to keep their answers as specific as possible and avoid general comments such as 'to make the music sound good'. Learners run the risk of losing credit with this type of response.

Sometimes learners failed to gain both marks because they had given the same reason twice, albeit phrased differently, e.g., 'to check sound volumes' and 'to make sure the music is not too loud' both relate to the same point on the mark scheme. These two answers are not sufficiently different to gain both marks. Learners will never gain credit for giving the same answer twice so should be encouraged to endeavour to present a diverse selection of responses in questions such as these.

Question 17 is a short question requiring learners to identify an organisation that might be used when arranging live sound for an outside broadcast.

<p>17 Identify one type of organisation Jordan might work with when arranging live sound for an outside broadcast.</p> <p>P.A hire.</p> <p>(Total for Question 17 = 1 mark)</p>
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A good range of organisations are available as correct responses to this question, including hire company, transport, media, police or fire brigade as well as any relevant trade association and also PRS for Music, PPL or MCPS. Sometimes learners did not attempt a response to this question. Where marks were not awarded, it was often because learners gave a job role rather than an organisation.

Question 18 is another 'explain' question which asks learners to explain the importance of a technical rehearsal for the sound crew. To gain the full two marks, learners needed to identify a correct reason and then support this with a valid consequence or explanation. This is well illustrated in the example below.

18 Explain **one** reason why it is important for the sound crew to have a technical rehearsal.

ensure everything is working and no feed back
because if this were to happen on the night/day
of performance the reputation of the venue would decrease
and the band may not want to perform there again

(Total for Question 18 = 2 marks)

Learners need to watch out in these explain questions that they do not just give two separate reasons as this will only gain them the first mark of the two available. Some learners said, for instance, 'to check the sound levels and make sure there is no faulty equipment'. These are two separate ideas rather than one with a related explanation so this response would only score 1 mark.

Many learners were able to gain full marks for this question, demonstrating the need to check equipment, levels and procedures so that the show is able to run without glitches on the night.

Question 19 is the second of the two 4 mark questions. It asks learners to explain one positive and one negative for an audience in attending a live music performance in a large sports venue. One mark is available for identifying a correct positive point with a further mark for a valid explanation or consequence and then one mark for a correct negative point with a further mark for valid explanation or consequence of this point.

An example that scored the full 4 marks is given below:

19 In the past Jordan has worked as part of the sound crew for a rock band in a large sports venue.

Explain **one** positive and **one** negative factor **for an audience** in attending a live music performance in a large sports venue.

Positive

4# There will be a better ~~chance~~ or higher chance of purchasing tickets as the venue has a bigger capacity thus allowing them to hold a bigger audience.

Negative

They will not get as much of an intimate connection with the performers on stage compared to a small venue like a club/pub as the venue ~~is~~ is big and so they are further away from the performers on stage.

(Total for Question 19 = 4 marks)

Learners generally did better with the negative point than the positive. An encouraging number of learners identified the potential lack of intimate connection between performer and audience or the potential challenges to sound quality presented by this type of venue. The most popular positive response was that shown in the example here, that the venue has a higher capacity therefore more tickets will be available. Another popular suggestion which was considered creditable was that the larger capacity would lead to larger audience numbers which would lead to a better atmosphere.

Occasionally learners did not take note of the perspective, 'for the audience', in the question, providing responses from the point of view of the crew or of Lewis himself. These responses were not able to gain any credit as they did not address the question correctly. A common misconception amongst learners was that a large venue meant more space per person. A fair number of responses suggested that there would be more room to move around, rather than realising that a larger venue would mean higher capacity rather than more personal space. Some learners went the other way, suggesting that a large venue meant high numbers therefore crushing and suggesting that fights and disruption were inevitable. These responses did not gain credit.

Overall this question was attempted by most learners and served to differentiate well.

Question 20 is the second of the longer, 8 mark questions. Again, this question was well attempted by learners and nearly all managed a response with a clearly structured answer provided in many cases.

Learners were required to discuss the challenges for the crew of using an outdoor venue for their show rather than the theatre where they have been working. Most learners were successful in noting that the question required the crew's point of view.

Learners often found a good number of points to discuss in this question. The challenges presented by the weather was usually the first point to come up and many responses that scored 1-2 marks identified only this issue. Responses that scored highest marks often mentioned challenges of transporting the equipment, potentially needing different equipment, the differing challenges of a different acoustic space and the practicalities of having to build a stage and set everything up from scratch. They also discussed the potential impact on crew members such as having to put in extra hours.

Below is an example of a response that scored the full 8 marks.

20 The musical production has run for several nights in the theatre where Jordan works. The organisers plan to present the production for one night in an outdoor venue in the centre of town.

Discuss the challenges for the crew of using this outdoor venue compared to using the small theatre.

There are many challenges in using holding the venue outside. There may be no access to an electricity generator or a lack of power sources which is bad because the electrical equipment needed to power microphones for the performers and of equipment such as guitar amps for the musical performers may not work properly. This may well destroy the reputation of the musical production as technical issues make the production not flow as smoothly and therefore seem less professional. The crew may be blamed for this.

Also, there is a chance of bad weather if there is rain, meaning that the crew would have to go to extra effort to find cover for the electrical equipment, or again the equipment may go wrong or break as a result of getting wet and disrupt the flow of the concert. There are also logistical issues for using an outdoor venue; in a small theatre, all of the equipment and props needed for the crew are already there - but the crew would have to take extra time to transport all of the equipment to the outdoor venue, which comes at a cost of dropping the equipment and damaging it; which would then require replacement by the

production begins.

Furthermore, the crew would also have to spend more time to either clear a space for the production to take place in, with an allocated place for the audience to sit, or set up a stage floor scratch in the middle of an open space. This may take more time and money, as in a small theatre the stage is already set up. In addition to this, there are more health and safety issues in an outside venue, such as the wind knocking over equipment or staging and hitting a performer/audience member, so the crew would have to go to extra health and safety measures to ensure the staging is properly set up - taking up extra time than in a small theatre, where the health and safety regulations would've automatically been checked.

Finally, the crew may have to go to extra effort to build wings for the performers, which would already be in place in a small theatre. However, in a small theatre, there is already automatic shelter from the rain (the roof) and a built in power supply.

(Total for Question 20 - 8 marks)

A common mistake by learners in responding to this question was to discuss issues that related to front-of-house organisation rather than the crew such as selling tickets, crowd control, security and the availability of food, drink and toilets. Some learners fixated on potential problems such as people getting in without paying or starting fights which did not help their mark.

Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, learners should:

- Familiarise themselves with all the job roles and their associated responsibilities found in the Specification;
- Distinguish the difference between an organisation and an individual for the purposes of questions that require learners to identify an organisation;
- Note that only one line is required to be drawn in the 'join the boxes' questions and that two lines from one box results in fewer or zero marks;
- Not presume that a question on a particular subject is the same as one that has featured in a previous paper. Care should be taken to respond to the specific question on the paper;
- Keep their answers as specific as possible and avoid general comments such as 'to make the music sound good' or 'to look after everything';
- Be sure to read each question as carefully as possible to avoid misinterpretations that can lead to irrelevant or uncreditworthy responses. All words in the question are likely to be relevant;
- Remember that no marks will ever be awarded for repeating text or information that is provided in the question paper, either in the question stem or the scenario;
- Continue to appreciate that questions asking them to 'explain' require not just the identification of a correct point but an explanation, for instance the consequences of the point they are making. As a suggestion, centres might encourage learners to consider the words '...so that...' in their response in 'explain' questions as it may help learners formulate a response that accesses both marks;
- Be sure to provide an initial point and then an explanation/consequence of that point in 'explain' questions rather than two unrelated points;
- Continue to avoid repeating the question text as an introductory sentence in questions. This will never result in any marks and just takes up valuable time and space on the paper. This issue is particularly relevant in the 8 mark questions;
- Try to identify and explain as many relevant points as they are able in the 8 mark extended response questions. Relating one point to another rather than just listing points is encouraged;
- Take care over handwriting. Examiners cannot mark anything that they cannot read. Learners should attempt to write as clearly as possible;
- Continue to attempt all questions on the paper.

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