

Level 3 Lead Examiner Report 1906

Summer 2019

**BTEC Level 3 National in Music
Technology
Unit 7: Music Technology
Enterprise Opportunities (31809H)**

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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, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external 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 is 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 external assessment 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 assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

Unit 7: Music Technology Enterprise Opportunities (31809H)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	16	28	40	52

Introduction

Summer 2019 was the third time that external assessment for Unit 7 was completed by learners. The Unit allows learners to understand enterprise opportunities through exploration of different types of music technology businesses.

The external assessment of Unit 7 requires learners to demonstrate application of this knowledge through responses to a brief based upon a given music technology enterprise opportunity.

As a Mandatory Unit within the Extended Diploma and Foundation Diploma, external assessment takes place once a year in May / June.

The paper is presented in 1 part which is undertaken in supervised conditions over 12 hours during a two week period timetabled by Pearson. Centres are free to arrange the supervised assessment period as they wish provided the 12 hours for producing final outcomes are under the level of supervision specified, and in accordance with the conduct procedures.

It is very important that centres refer carefully to the instructions in the task booklet and the Instructions for Conducting External Assessments (ICEA) document to ensure that the assessment is supervised correctly, and that evidence is provided in the correct format as outlined in the task booklet.

In this session learners were asked to respond creatively to a brief based upon setting up a mastering studio via crowdfunding.

The set task required learners to undertake three activities with the focus upon preparing a pitch for crowd-funded investment to fund the setup and development of their business.

A total of 65 marks was available for the external assessment.

In Activity 1 learners were required to produce a resources / costing plan for the business, using the spreadsheet template supplied by Pearson for the assessment. 15 marks were available for this activity.

Activity two required learners to produce a business case, including a creative vision, focused on supporting the pitch for crowd funding. The learner's business case should indicate the purpose of the business and potential sources of income. 30 marks were available for this activity.

Learners were required in Activity 3 to undertake a videoed pitch/presentation, within the context of encouraging people to invest in the crowd-funded business. 20 marks were available for this activity.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

In this session many more centres entered learners than last year. Learners achieved well across a range of marks and showed good understanding of the expectations and strategies to address the assessment successfully.

Evidence presented against the three activities within the paper was assessed across four areas within the mark scheme: resource costing plan, business case creative vision, business case and pitching / presentation.

The majority of learners had attempted all activities within the external assessment, with learners generally being better prepared in some aspects than others.

This year most learners took on the idea that within any scenario presented in this external assessment, it is reasonable to assume that they are working in the music industry and that any response does not have to be based entirely on their own current experience. This allowed learners to provide a more professional business case.

Many learners had made use of the given time to undertake useful research with regard to current music technology businesses to underpin their responses, both in terms of business ideas and financial considerations.

Learners who had accurately gathered costing and projected income information tended to be able to present this information purposefully in the context of the resource and business planning.

Learners who achieved well tended to produce thorough, detailed, accurate and credible costings which reflected the needs of developing a business, as specified in the brief. Some learners did not display a solid knowledge of what mastering is, with some confusion at times, inhibiting their ability to produce accurate resource costings or realistic business cases.

It was noted that many learners this year made good use of the updated supplied spreadsheet to correctly indicate costings and potential income, but that in some cases, learners produced costings and income which did not align in terms of time periods or had produced figures which did not support the business case. Examiners suggested therefore that learners would benefit from familiarisation with the completion of such documents using a range of different scenarios within unit delivery time, with particular focus on profit and loss in business.

Some learners had worked well in producing a creative vision for the business, extending and developing the given ideas within the brief to produce relevant,

creative and deliverable responses. Learners who had produced ideas which were not relevant within the context of the enterprise, or who had not linked the creative vision to resourcing or other requirements tended not to achieve as well. Many learners were still using the Sample Marked Learner Work as a resource, and many learners mentioned teaching mastering as a way to develop the business, with only 1 learner mentioning that if they did this, they were likely to lose potential customers in the long term.

Business cases presented by learners who achieved well tended to be informed by research and be aligned to the creative vision. Some learners had evaluated the practical and technical considerations of the enterprise, given a strategy for the business and provided well-referenced supporting evidence to achieve well in this area. The task asks learners to include an executive summary (a brief section that summarises a longer report or proposal in such a way that readers can rapidly become acquainted with a large body of material without having to read it all). Well-produced executive summaries allowed learners to show an overall understanding of the project and supported higher achievement. Learners who had produced business cases which lacked supporting evidence, reference to business needs and understanding of practical / technical considerations within the context of the brief tended not to achieve as well.

Examiners were pleased to note that the majority of learners in this session had presented the pitch / presentation within the time limit of between 8 and 10 minutes as specified in the external assessment and that those who were significantly under or over time tended to either not provide sufficient information or to repeat themselves without giving further evidence. It would be helpful to examiners where learners start again when presenting, to indicate this when submitting. Some centres arranged the pitch / presentation on a large stage which made some learners very nervous. There is no requirement for this and generally the pitches should take place in a less formal situation such as in a smaller classroom or studio where the learner feels more comfortable and the sound and vision are clear. Some centres provided work with poor audio quality which made it difficult to hear what learners were saying.

The lead examiner advises that learners should consider the presentation and how it might support their pitch rather than presenting exactly the same information and wording as the business case and could also look at how they should be presenting information in a relevant way to allow the pitch to be effective. It should be noted that the pitch should reference the scenario closely, so in this instance there was a need to reference crowd funding specifically. Some learners referenced a loan as funding, suggesting that they were still referring to last year's scenario. Lack of focus on specific context is likely to reduce the range of marks available to the learner.

It is suggested therefore that learners would be likely to benefit from delivery sessions given to practicing pitching and talking to camera within a time limit to increase confidence and effectiveness in pitching.

Set Task Activities

Activity 1: Resources/ Costings plan

Produce a resources/costings plan, in the electronic template provided, that breaks down and justifies the amount of money required to set up, develop and run your online enterprise over the first year.

Most learners in this session had made use of the updated Pearson supplied spreadsheet to show evidence of financial considerations although some went on to adapt this with extra pages or references included. Learners who achieved well in this activity tended to have provided a thorough, accurate and credible breakdown of costs based on research and supported by commentary within the document or the business plan to justify each item. Fewer learners this year confused weekly, monthly and yearly expense costings, although including crowd-funded income led to some inaccuracies where interest, repayments, or cost of funder rewards were not considered. Typically, those who achieved higher marks showed further expenses above and beyond suitable mastering equipment for the business that they were planning. Insurance, web hosting, website upkeep, internet charges, storage of client work, and a range of relevant expenses and realistic wages and other costs were sometimes included and were an indicator that costs were thorough, accurate and credible. Learners who did well also were able to include repayments of any investment with interest, or cost the rewards being given to the crowd-funders.

Well developed income projection tended to be relevant and based on consideration of factors in terms of hours of work and viable charges for services based on research and relevant businesses. Learners whose income was based on research into relevant job roles and who consistently referenced and justified expenditure tended to gain higher marks.

In the following example (Ex.1) the figures were researched from a range of sources and showed a realistic idea of how these might work out over a year.

Ex.1

Item	Income Per Unit	No. Units Per Month	Income Week	Income Month	Income Year
Masters (singles)	£80.00	11	£203.08	£880.00	£10,560.00
Masters (Eps)	£150.00	5	£173.08	£750.00	£9,000.00
Masters (albums)	£210.00	3	£145.38	£630.00	£7,560.00
Mixes	£90.00	2	£41.54	£180.00	£2,160.00
Production Classes	£10.00	44	£101.54	£440.00	£5,280.00
Sample Packs	£25.00	35	£201.92	£875.00	£10,500.00
digital distribution	£15.00	70	£242.31	£1,050.00	£12,600.00
Murkey downloads	£2.00	110	£50.77	£220.00	£2,640.00
Records	£6.00	40	£55.38	£240.00	£2,880.00
Murkey Downloads Track fee	£0.25	102	£5.88	£25.50	£306.00

Some learners included the crowd fund amount as part of their income. This meant that the income figures were not completely accurate. Within the activity the intention of the resource / costing plan was to work out how much money would be required to get the business started and persuade people to invest.

In trying to show how the business might develop over the year, some learners included a different figure for every month, but this resulted in 12 times more income than was intended. This might be better explained in the business case rather than learners try and include varying figures in the spreadsheet if they are not fully confident.

Learners who were able to cost the music technology aspects of the budget realistically tended to gain higher marks than those who focused on, for example more general business costs. Despite stating that the studio was free and fully furnished in the scenario to allow learners to focus on relevant business expenses, some learners still included rent and office furniture. Some learners also included personal expenses such as bus fares etc. which were not immediately relevant business expenses in this instance.

Learners who demonstrated detailed knowledge of equipment (for example, fully specified computers, top of the range mastering software, high spec outboard and a range of monitoring equipment) tended to be able to respond to the brief more effectively in terms of reinforcing the aims of the business case. Many learners provided links to the equipment they had selected and, in some cases, also explained their choices in context.

Equipment lists where learners had shown an understanding of mastering (such as having two sets of speakers or suitable software or outboard that allowed specifically mastering capabilities rather than just a DAW with standard plugins, tended to do better in this activity. In Ex.2 below the learner priced up software to compare masters for different platforms, two sets of different monitor speakers, and a switcher to move between these, showing a good understanding of the scenario and practicalities of the environment.

Ex.2

Projected Costs – Yearly / One Off						
Items	Cost Per Unit	No. Units (Year)	Equivalent Weekly Cost	Equivalent Monthly Cost	Total Cost	Notes
Equipment Items			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
MasterCheck Plugin	£166.80	1	£3.21	£13.90	£166.80	139 (+VAT) this is necessary because it allows you to run your mix through multiple simulations, for example if you wanted to make a song available through spotify, the software would run a simulation of what it would sound like instead of having to hope that the mix / master sounded good on the platform. This avoids problems like the bass not sounding good once it has gone through a platform. This problem needs to be avoided because it is extremely amateur and would ruin chances of customers returning as well as put potential customers off. https://mugenaudio.com/mastercheck
Izotope Ozone 8	£267.88	1	£5.15	£22.32	£267.88	This item would normally cost 382.68, but with a 30% off discount voucher that applies to Izotope on offers.c
Yamaha HS8 pair w/ Subwoofer	£745.00	1	£14.33	£62.08	£745.00	These are regarded as some of the best monitors in the business, they have very true to life sound. The set
Mackie CR4	£105.53	1	£2.03	£8.79	£105.53	These are on the list as reference monitors, not everyone will have such high end speakers as the hs8's so the
Beyerdynamic Dt990 Pro	£97.99	1	£1.88	£8.17	£97.99	Currently on sale, these are arguably the best studio headphones in the world. Open back works perfectly fo
Mac Pro	£5,699.00	1	£109.60	£474.92	£5,699.00	It is well known that pro tools runs much better on a mac, and to handle large projects the mac would need
Acer V226HQL 21.5" monitor	£52.97	2	£2.04	£8.83	£105.94	Monitors are needed for seeing what your doing, 2 are more ideal than 1 so you can see the main window as
Apple Care+	£229.00	1	£4.40	£19.08	£229.00	Because the whole business relies upon the bain of the operations, the mac, it is extremely important to ha
4 TB portable hard drive	£84.99	1	£1.63	£7.08	£84.99	To save cost, the mac pro has got the lowest storage capacity option, this means that I will need a lot of stor
1 TB portable hard drive	£42.99	2	£1.65	£7.17	£85.98	These are emergency back ups incase the 4 tb one gets used up. These can also be used to store another co
Surge protected extension chord	£13.99	1	£0.27	£1.17	£13.99	there needs to be enough power outlets to plug in all of the equipment, and it definitely needs to be surge p
Mackie Big Knob 2x2 monitor contro	£46.20	1	£0.89	£3.85	£46.20	This improves workflow as you can switch between reference monitors quickly and safely (without blowing a
Marketing			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Facebook Ad lifetime budget	£500.00	1	£9.62	£41.67	£500.00	
Instagram Ad lifetime budget	£500.00	1	£9.62	£41.67	£500.00	
						Total One Off Costs Per Year
						Total Year Cost
						Profit / Loss Per Year

Some learners looked at paying on a monthly basis for some equipment meaning that they didn't need to request quite as much funding, which showed some thought given to financial planning. For example:

Ex.3

21.5-inch iMac with Retina 4K display + Logic Pro X	£152.42	1	£0.00	£152.42	£1,829.04	Payments cease after first year. Monthly plan with 0% interest. Saves money by purchasing iMac and DAW in the first month for less money than either at full price.
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Learners who priced up marketing costs fully and also covered other expenses as well as the equipment tended to achieve well, and this information also potentially supported their business case. For example:

Ex.4

Jobs / Roles			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Principle mastering engineer	£12,000.00	1	£230.77	£1,000.00	£12,000.00	
Budget for outsourcing freelancers	£1,000.00	1	£19.23	£83.33	£1,000.00	In the event that the studio becomes overrun, the option will therefore be available to recruit freelancers to carry out the work, saving time. The money in this budget is put aside at the beginning of the financial year. In the event it is not completely used, this will be added to the final income.
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Marketing			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Instagram marketing and advertisement	£50.00	4	£46.15	£200.00	£2,400.00	
YouTube marketing and advertisement	£50.00	4	£46.15	£200.00	£2,400.00	
Google Adwords	£100.00	1	£23.08	£100.00	£1,200.00	Bought adword key "Mastering", pay per click (£0.98), budget cap set per month (shown in Cost Per Unit)
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Other			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Website Domain (SquareSpace)	£16.00	1	£0.31	£1.33	£16.00	domain: studioii-mastering.com
Animoto Professional	£26.99	12	£6.23	£26.99	£323.88	According to sproutsocial.com - "Videos receive 38% more engagement than image posts and 2.1x the amount of comments." Animoto will allow for easy and non-time consuming advertisement creation for social media (inc. Instagram, Facebook and YouTube).
Business insurance	£120.00	1	£2.31	£10.00	£120.00	Hiscox UK, estimation (quotes start at £105 p.a)
Public liability insurance	£119.37	1	£2.30	£9.95	£119.37	Average UK annual public liability insurance premium (AXA)
Professional indemnity insurance	£75.00	1	£17.31	£75.00	£900.00	

Learners who achieved less well tended to be less confident in regard to music technology equipment for example, pricing up computers but specifying unsuitable software, or very expensive software but relying on the cheapest monitor speakers or headphones only.

Some of the budgets submitted were not balanced, with very ambitious pricing or workload throughout the first year, or disproportionately high wages or advertising costs.

The majority of learners researched and priced new equipment for this task, but this was not always referenced or justified, and some learners were still quoting eBay etc. for items (which tended to be not up to date or potentially unreliable).

NB: The most recent costing template should be downloaded and shared with learners.

Learners should fill in all relevant columns on the spreadsheet to ensure that the numbers add up. Some learners missed out amounts which meant that income was zero or expenditure was skewed.

Activity 2: Business case

Write a business case that includes an executive summary (an outline of the core idea and creative vision including a clear indication of the purpose of the business and sources of income). The business case should focus on persuading people to back your idea through crowd funding, showing how much money you require to develop the idea and how you will provide a return for investors.

To meet the scenario, learners made use of the business case to explain why they needed the funding and how they would use it to develop their business, utilising examples from the music technology industry.

Creative vision

Those learners who did well in this section heeded the scenario which asked them to start an online mastering business, demonstrating creativity in further ideas such as: discount models, uploading, hottest tracks page, sample packs, mixing, tutorials, recording, stems, vinyl pre-masters etc.

Offering bundles was a popular feature - along with tutorials. Some ideas were more creative and offered online streaming of the actual process as well. Membership programmes were also notable.

Inclusion of rewards to investors often went beyond just paying back the money and showed that the idea of crowd funding was understood. Those who did well recognized that they would have to start small and develop the business giving examples of how they might do this. Those who did less well mostly either did not develop the scenario or in some cases mostly ignored either the mastering aspects or the crowd funding.

The following response showed a creative and fully deliverable response:

Ex.5

Murky Masters would love the opportunity to propose a fresh new business that is so diverse there is no other online platform quite like it. Murky Masters plans to be a cheaper solution for artists to get a professional standard of mixing and mastering with no hassle, and from the comfort of their homes. As well as this Murky will be offering MP3 downloads in our 'Hottest tracks' feature, any artist can pay a small fee of 25p per submission and take away 70% of all profits. We are also trying to push musicians into spaces where they will be recognised, to do this we take a fee of £15 per month for them to have 20 songs on Spotify. We will also be selling our own music on the site as well as releasing other artist's work through our business. Murky masters plan to be the centre of all things music, providing support to musicians as well as being a thriving online presence.

The learner also included a range of rewards in their presentation showing a good understanding of crowd funding and strategy for building the business:

Ex.6

WHY INVEST?

- £5) Free submissions to our 'Hottest Tracks' feature
- £10) 15% discount on our distribution service
- £20) 10% off all features (excluding hottest tracks)
- £30) 20% one off single or EP mastering
- £40) 15% of mixes (tracks under 3 minutes)
- £65) 25% off all features (excluding hottest tracks)
- £100) 35% off all features (excluding hottest tracks)
- £150+) Lifetime 40% off all features (excluding hottest tracks)
- Free Sample Pack
- 50% off any events hosted in the future.

Some learners did not show any further development of the scenario so tended to be limited in terms of evidencing creativity. Some learners did not explore the online nature of the mastering service which often limited the opportunity to show development of their business ideas.

Less focused learners again attempted to incorporate business ideas from the Sample Marked Learner Work, the Additional Sample Assessment Material or ideas that were outlined in the LE report for the previous external assessment. Both Task Briefs had a very different scenario and therefore the learner's submissions did not respond wholly creditably.

Learners should therefore be aware that creative vision should be set in the context of the given set task to attract credit.

Business Case

Learners who achieved well in this section tended to evaluate practical and technical considerations of the business idea. In the most developed cases learners showed an understanding that the business would not necessarily be working at capacity from the start and broke down the finances showing a gradual increase of work over time.

The understanding of the equipment needed for specific needs was also taken into consideration and learners who did well showed an in-depth evaluation of the practical or technical considerations as the following learners show in their analysis of the equipment needed for each package:

Ex.7

RX Production Suite 3: This bundle contains several plugins used in Mastering. This includes, RX7 Advanced which repairs damaged or noisy audio. Insite 2 which helps to meter the volume level and troubleshooting any problems within the mix. Neutron 2 Advanced helps to analyse and balance the mix with digital signal processing, this plugin itself contains several others like true peak limiters, multiband gates, dynamic EQ and others. The RX Production suite also has RX Loudness Control, Pro Sound Effects and Groove3 Video Training

Sonible Smart EQ 2: This EQ analyses the audio and creates a custom filter that creates a natural sounding tone. The EQ has several elements that would be useful when mastering a track. For instance, it has customisable presets what would help to reduce the time spent working on a master. Getting an EQ is almost fundamental, this will help to fix any harsh tones and make areas sound more detailed when working on a master

Slate Digital FG-Grey Compressor: Buying a compressor plugin is important when mastering as it help to reduce the volume of the loud sounds and can help amplify the quieter sounds. This is important as it also adds life to the track, and can make the track feel more upbeat. By adding compression to the final mix, I can make the track louder. Which is good because quieter songs tend to get skipped

Anker Bluetooth Speaker: I decided that buying a wireless Bluetooth speaker would be a good idea for when I master the track. This is because songs sound different on different devices. For instance, a song can be mixed using the Apple Mac's standard speaker may sound good when listening with the same Mac speaker, but when you listen to the song on a set of monitors like the Yamaha HS7's, it would not sound anywhere near as good as it should. With this in mind, buying an average speaker that isn't bass boosted or anything, is a good way to gauge whether or not the track is at a good place with how it is sounding

Ex.8

Adam Audio T7V (pair) For my studio monitors I chose the Adam Audio T7V pair. This also comes with stands and the required leads for easy and quick installation. These are powered monitors, which means that I won't need an amplifier to run them from. They provide accurate sound reproduction, which is needed for mastering. The speakers each have a 7" mid/low driver and a 1.9" high tweeter. The monitors also have XLR and RCA connections, allowing you to connect it to an audio interface. The speakers have a frequency response of 29Hz to 25kHz. This is a good range, however if needed I could purchase a subwoofer in the future to reach the extremely low frequencies. These monitors also have a crossover at 2.6kHz and come with two Class D amplifiers built in. These amplifiers will give 50w RMS power to each woofer and 20W RMS power to each tweeter. The monitors also have a rear-facing 'bass-reflect port' which is claimed to improve the speakers low end response and power. The pair of monitors also comes with a 2 year warranty, so I will be covered against damages or breaks, with a repair, replacement or refund offered.

This plugin helps you to AB compare track when mastering. You can add up to nine tracks into this plugin and compare them to the track your mastering. This will help you to compare level, loudness and dynamic range. I chose this particular software as it was recommended on multiple sites online with good reviews. Although this is a bit expensive I think its better to get something that will last you.

This bundle has some extra tools to help with the mastering process, including EQs, limiters, saturation tools and more. These plugins also use AI (artificial intelligence) which helps you get a more accurate sound. The bundle is expensive but it is needed and I feel it's worth it.

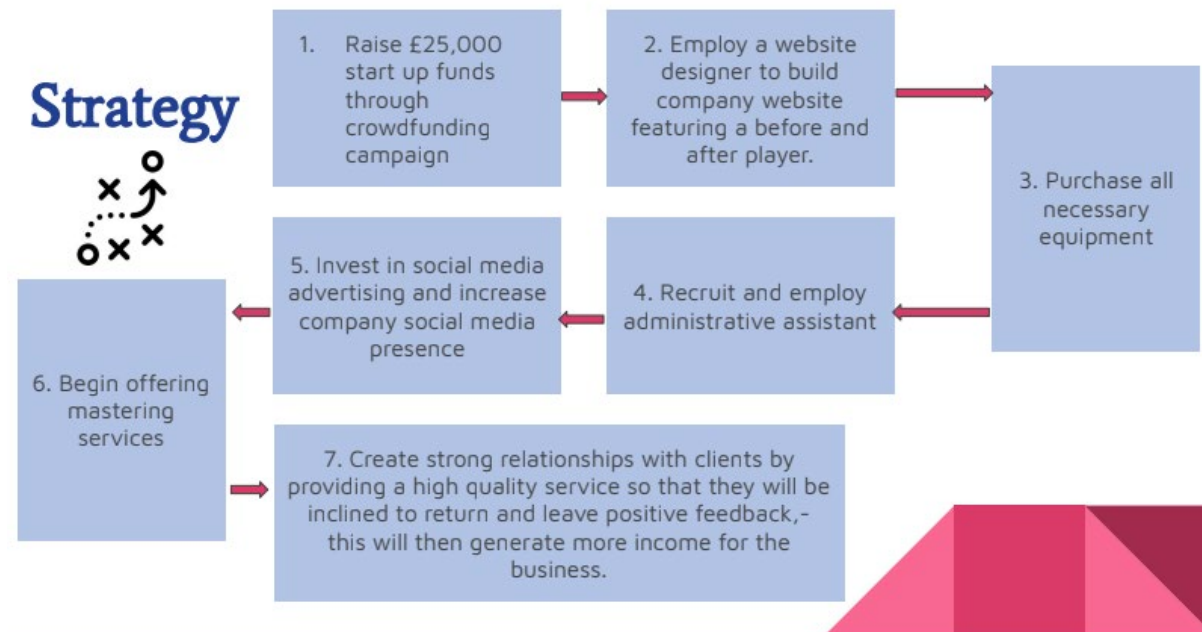
The reason I picked this software is because it has very good online reviews and is used and talked about highly by some other mastering engineers. I need good compression and limiter software to use while mastering and this one comes with both. This software also has a sample rate of 32kHz-384 kHz, which is the same maximum as the AXR4T audio interface, so these will pair well together.

Learners need to show how they will get started and how they will develop their enterprise to attract investment. The example below shows an understanding of how the business might get started and the subsequent example shows an example of how the business might develop further:

Ex.1

My business is an online mastering business called BC Mastering in which people upload audio files for me to personally master on Logic Pro X. I will have a website with my own domain from Wix.com and I will promote the website using Facebook and Instagram promotional advertisements. On my website I will offer deals and packages. Because I am a business that is only just starting up, I will further promote my business by doing "Free Master Mondays" in which the first 15 people to share my link to 3 friends will be rewarded with a free master. I will offer a 10% student discount and will offer packages such as album masters and EP masters for a cheaper price than it would be to master all the track individually. On Patreon I will offer 3 reward tiers to people who donate monthly and they will receive discounted masters.

Ex.2



Some research was very general (for example discussion of the wider music industry and how many people it employs) and this did not fully contribute to the specific research required for this scenario. Learners who addressed the market needs and the online competition also tended to achieve higher marks. It is important that learners' reference who the competition is and how they will compete in the target market in a task of this nature.

Many learners found either a range of online mastering services or local mastering engineers within their local area and used this in their response in terms of pricing or services. Responses that gained higher marks researched, for example, competitor's prices and used these to feed back into their own financial projections and strategy. Many learners identified 'Landr' as a competitor and of these, it was clear that a large number of learners understood that some mastering services operate using an algorithm and included human mastering as part of their USP. For example:

Ex.10

Who is my competition?

After researching one of my major competitors called LANDR, I have learnt that the whole service is online and there is no customised mastering on the audio files that are sent into the website. Instead, the website compresses and limits the audio itself; this method allows an almost instant turnaround which will attract more customers as it means they can have a finished product quicker. The prices of LANDR's services is £6.93 for a single master or £14.63 for a membership which grants you unlimited masters for the month. If I were to try and attract more customers through lowering the price of my service to beat my competitors, I would not be able to as charge below £6.93 would not give me any profit and would not justify the hours spent mastering and the total losses spent on equipment. Because I am going to be mastering people's audio individually to best suit the file I have been given, I decided to research businesses that do the same and count them as my main competition instead of LANDR as for a business that is just starting up, I would not be able to compete with them.

A local online mastering business, <http://playmastering-mixing.com/>, does both digital and vinyl mixing and mastering. They charge £20 for either mastering service, but they also offer stem mastering which costs £50 for 8 stems and an extra £8 for each additional stem. As I am crowdfunding, I cannot afford the hardware needed to master for vinyl as I am crowdfunding to achieve the money to purchase my equipment. I do however intend to purchase the equipment needed to do this in the future.

Metropolis mastering

(https://www.thisismetropolis.com/onlinemastering/?gclid=CjwKCAjw8e7mBRBsEiwAPVxxiEIU3uikROZoNruOpsibRwi759T_SwYByGT4pXINvz8mL7B0D17-WxoCbIsQAvD_BwE) provide the same service as me and specify that the people mastering the tracks you upload are mastered by Grammy award winners. They do however charge a substantial amount more than I intend to at £85 per track or £125 per track with a specified engineer.

Learners who did less well may have indicated some realistic pricing but did not support this with commentary upon research.

Those who did well were often able to suggest ways of securing work that went beyond basic advertising and talked about using social media more fully to promote their business. There were some creative ideas which showed a level of thought and understanding of how to develop an online business, with some learners also acknowledging that the use of the crowd fund sites would also have the secondary effect of potentially generating interest amongst customers

Some learners understood that their own wage would be the only wages potentially at the start of the business or showed costings for freelance which indicated a realistic understanding of how a business develops.

Responses that achieved less well tended to give examples of income that were unrealistically high/low, or services that were overpriced, and were often unsupported by research.

Other higher responses also incorporated the recording studio from the scenario and how they might work together. For example:

Ex.11

In order to compliment the studio who are offering us the treated room for free for the first year I have also planned to offer bands and artists who are recording at the studio cheaper rates of 10% off on each package if they choose us to master their music. This allows us to steadily increase our presence and income through word of mouth whilst also providing a steady flow of musicians to the studio.

NB: Quite often, learners work from a centre followed the same format. Learners need to be flexible in their approach each series and task. In this instance there was no requirement to analyse the music industry, talk about corporate structure or show three years of business development and figures for this.

The same issue occurred where learners downloaded a business case template from internet sources. Such materials did not always work well within the scenario and were also possibly too complex for the 12-hour time limit of this assessment.

Activity 3: Pitch/Presentation

Pitch/present your ideas, ensuring that you explain how you will market, finance and run your business.

There was notable good practice within this task as most learners produced presentations that were within the allowed time and supported the business development and creative vision. Learners who had expanded presentation content from their business case were also often able to put across developed and coherent information and therefore potentially access higher marks.

Learners who did well also attempted to persuade investors to provide money through crowd funding as required in the task and maintained the pitch with this focus. Those who did less well did not address or target their potential audience and therefore did not fully address the scenario.

This example shows pitching to potential investors within the presentation:

Ex.12

Monthly Patreon's	Rewards Before Goal Reached	Monthly Rewards Post Goal	Yearly Total Cost of Subscription:
£10 Patreon - Mastering Lite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 fully mastered song when goal is reached. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 10% off your first 6 mastered songs each month on company website.	£120
£30 Patreon – Nebula Follower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 fully mastered song when goal is reached. First 100 Pledgers receive a Company Branded T-Shirt to show promotion in the early stages. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 15% off your first 6 mastered songs each month on company website.	£360
£35 Patreon - Nebula Promoter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 fully mastered songs when goal is reached. First 5 Pledgers receive a Company Branded T-Shirt to show promotion in the early stages. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 8% Discount across all Nebula Studios purchases whilst pledged.	£420
£75 Patreon – Official Nebula Studios Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 fully mastered songs when goal is reached. First 10 Pledgers receive a Company Branded T-Shirt to show promotion in the early stages. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 10% Discount across all Nebula Studios purchases whilst pledged.	£900
£125 Patreon – Nebula Studios Lifetime Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 25 Pledgers receive a Nebula Studios Discount Card - 15% off all purchases from website. 10 free mastered songs when goal is reached First 100 Company Pledgers receive a Company Branded T-Shirt to show promotion in the early stages. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 5% Discount across all Nebula Studios purchases whilst pledged. <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Contact Details for Support Team and become a priority customer. <input type="checkbox"/> Access to sample packs and rights for commercial use whilst pledged.	£1500
Goal:	£2625.65		

Learners who included relevant examples of competitors and target market as part of the pitch tended to be able to evidence that they had researched the market and were aware of the wider music technology industry.

In this scenario, research into online businesses was more relevant than local ones, and successful learners gave examples of these, their services and prices, and how they might develop their own business in competition with them.

NB: Learners are reminded that the video recording of the pitch should be both visually and audibly accessible to examiners and that there should be no questioning or audience participation.

Summary

Based on submissions seen in this session learners who achieved well, tended to have:

- familiarised themselves with music technology equipment in all aspects of the subject and provided evidence of all equipment required
- made sure that there was market research into competitors and the target audience to inform the business case
- included industry practice and examples throughout their response differentiated content between the Business Case and the Pitch /Presentation
- considered costings in detail and presented the spreadsheet document legibly
- considered the difference between profit, wages and funding to support their response.

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