

Level 3 Lead Examiner Report 2001

January 2020

**Level 3 National in Performing
Arts**

***Unit 7: Employment Opportunities
in the Performing Arts (31561H)***

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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>

Employment Opportunities in the Performing Arts

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	9	19	30	42

Introduction

Unit 7 (31561H) Employment Opportunities in Performing Arts is a mandatory externally assessed task on the following qualification sizes of the BTEC Nationals in Performing Arts:

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts

Learners must respond to the employment opportunity given in the set task.

Learners must fully consider the employment opportunity, including the organisational profile, the performance project outline and the workshop requirement and submit a written response and a digital promotional portfolio.

The written response should be up to 2000 words and the digital promotional portfolio should be up to 10 minutes of video /audio material and can include up to 10 photographs/images and written supporting materials of up to 750 words.

The set task is marked out of 60. The written response is marked out of 36 and the digital promotional portfolio out of 24.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Overall the responses seen this series demonstrated that the set task was accessible and that it presented a similar level of demand to previous set tasks for this unit.

The employment opportunity included a similar number of factors that learners could use to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. The key factors within the task provided accessible research opportunities, and relevant information sources were available.

The three elements of the employment opportunity made a similarly coherent 'picture' of an employment opportunity that could be responded to with skills and experience that could have been gained through the study of other units from the specification.

We saw responses from across the performing arts disciplines.

Set Task

Activity 1: Written Response

Written responses on the whole were clearly structured and easy to follow. In most responses the information was presented in a logical order.

In relation to the skills and experience sections of the response, some learners fell into the pattern of 'telling us everything they know' and 'everything they have done', rather than the response being the result of a clear selection and refinement process. Some responses suggested ideas for the performance, which is not explicitly asked for.

Learners were generally able to use subject specific terminology to describe their performing arts experience and workshop ideas, however many seemed to struggle to use accurate terminology related to organisational structures and funding.

Some students explained what funding they would apply for, even though the funding was stated in the brief. Students often reiterated information that was already given to them or described what third sector funding and a heritage grant are, with very superficial understanding.

The most successful responses included clear analysis of the employment opportunity and learners were able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the organisational profile, the project outline and the workshop requirements.

Where ideas were consistently linked to the given scenario, the response was focused and relevant. Where we saw the detail go beyond simply quoting back key statements from the organisational profile, it was a far better fit to the higher bands in the mark scheme.

Another key factor in the more successful responses was the overall promotional intent, where the response was likely to engage the employer.

Better responses also included well thought-through workshop ideas. It was noticeable that some learners had prepared workshops that were suitable for intergenerational community groups.

In less successful responses, the knowledge and understanding of key areas of unit content were either partial or there was misunderstanding and sometimes confusion. For example, we saw several responses where the type of organisational structure and purpose had not been considered or mentioned. We also saw some responses that confused NPO (National Portfolio Organisations) with Non-Profit Organisations.

We saw in several cases the information given in the task about the organisation was simply repeated back. Knowledge and understanding of the organisation were often basic.

In the less successful responses, there was no evidence to suggest that the learner had thought about how to best engage the employer and the response often lacked promotional intent.

We saw overall that learners could make some straightforward links between funded organisations and their own charitable activities, but they sometimes assumed funded work would not have the artistic quality of a commercial company, perhaps confusing the third sector with amateur.

There was a tendency for whole cohorts to misinterpret the set task in the same way. For instance, seizing on the word 'Diversity' in the set task and planning workshop activities on this theme, rather than the stories of the people and places around the disused railway line.

The following examples are taken from across a range of responses and will hopefully illustrate some areas of success and others where further learning or refinement may have been beneficial.

Example 1:

The written responses were often descriptive, rather than interpretive. Learners could work methodically through the content of the set tasks, but tended to repeat back phrases from the set task such as 'widen access to the arts' and 'public sector funding', rather than demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the purpose, structure and work of performing arts organisations.

A more interpretive response (though still not in-depth) is below:

I strongly support your aim to widen access to the arts through rural touring, since I come from the East Midlands which is an area of low arts engagement. I am therefore passionate about opportunities that provide this option, and this can be shown through my current role as ambassador at a local rural touring theatre company. This company share your aims and contribute meaningful and realistic pieces to towns in the region.

Example 2:

Work was also judged more descriptive when learners had perhaps used general notes on the Heritage Lottery Fund or Arts Council funding. More effective responses (as below) were able to synthesise this information with their response to the set task.

This community sharing of oral history and cultural traditions through the recording and sharing of stories through music workshops will of course fit the criteria for the Heritage Fund as well as meeting the mandatory outcome of a wider range of people being involved in heritage.

Example 3:

We saw some responses with a focus on providing a workshop about trains and/or railways, rather than appreciating the 'chance to celebrate the people and places past and present' that make up the 'rich heritage' of the area. Sometimes meaningful research into local places had taken place, but the focus of a performing arts workshop had been forgotten.

My idea is to have the people living near this disused line taking part in the workshop, they will meet at the start of the line and they could provide a steam train from that time period and this could be used to show the workshop attendees what it was like to be evacuated to the country and what the journey would be like and this would also appeal to older attendees as well because if they are interested in trains then they will be able to experience a journey on the train. This train journey would end at the old station ...

Example 4:

Stronger responses started to appreciate the need to 'widen access' to the arts and could talk about the specific issues preventing access to the arts in rural communities. However, more generalised links to this factor focused on discussing accessible spaces with wheelchair access, rather than analysing how their chosen activities could possibly widen access to the project as a whole.

A more focused general idea for the workshop was:

We would open with an introduction into the project and its aim to expose rural communities to the arts which sharing and celebrating the stories of the people and places surrounding the old railways. We would then play a piece of folk music, encouraging the children and adults to participate through call and response (a common practice in folk music) and the use of instruments such as shakers and rattles for the children which are commonplace in folk music performances. We would then invite the older generations to share stories of their experiences in the mining community in small groups. Each group, with the help of a company member, would put this story into a small verse of iambic pentameter using rhyme as well as call and response to then be brought together with the whole workshop class in which we have a folk style song made up of multiple verses and stories of this community and their heritage.

Example 5:

Often responses did not add very much to what had already been given in the set task, and in some cases, it was repeated back in a manner that was less clear.

I feel like The Cornfield Players will be a rewarding place to work as it has performances about experiences what people have lived through and bringing back those memories to them. As the Cornfield Players is an established rural touring company, I know they are a company what have been around for a while. I feel as though they do old repertoires and new performances, they do a wide range of pieces what are new and old to show off all my skills and gain different audience types. As you receive public funding through local and regional community grants, this appeals to myself as through these means of funding you are able to give back to the community. Moreover, your aims of widening access to the arts through your performances and outreach workshops emphasizes my beliefs that your object is being met as you are giving back to the community what they once had and the memories they hold.

Example 6:

Some responses demonstrated a confused understanding of the aims of the organisation and the project.

Through research I have found that you are a private company that uses performances to educate those who haven't learnt about the heritage before as well as focusing on destroying cultural barriers. I have also interpreted the aim is to attract a range of international sponsors and get lots of people involved

because the more that take part the more who can benefit and learn about it. I am a great supporter within the idea of uniting people across the world and being a part of a company that would then continue to fulfil its promises and educate these around the world by going on a promised tour.

Example 7:

Some workshop ideas were not appropriate for the people they were aimed at; in particular, members of the wider community that do not have a performing arts background.

Firstly, I would have everyone start with a warm up activity such as bomb and shield and a game called 'falling' in which a group walks around and any individual can call out 'falling' and then fall backwards and everyone catches them.

Example 8:

Some responses demonstrated a clearer understanding of the main aim of the organisation.

The organisation The Cornfield Players is a social enterprise with links to charitable organisations, this highlights their purpose includes the aim to benefit and enrich peoples lives, including those in rural communities, through participation in the arts. The organisation is supported through public sector and third sector funding and shows that money they receive is invested in the organisation and the service it gives to members of the public. This is of interest to me as I would like to be part of an organisation that will widen participation to Dance. The Cornfield Players will be able to support those that have no access to community arts.

Activity 2: Digital Promotional Portfolio

The Digital Promotional Portfolio is an opportunity for learners to present their skills and experience as part of their response to the employment opportunity, showing themselves as an effective performer and workshop leader.

In order for the portfolio to show relevant examples of work and to engage the potential employer, learners should select and include appropriate examples of their practical work that would engage the potential employer.

Links should be clear between the skills and / or experience being demonstrated and the skills and attributes needed to fulfil this particular job role.

We saw a mix of showreel and PowerPoint responses and most were within the time limit. More successful responses included short clips of video, covering relevant areas of work, where the focus was on the learner.

Several responses included too many words, exceeding the number given in the guidance. This often led to the portfolio showing a lack of understanding of promotional intent and more resembled a piece of course work.

Several portfolios included video footage of workshop delivery and some included workshop plans. Where a plan was included, the content of this plan may have been better placed in the written response in terms of taking the ideas and suggestions from the plan and including it under the section about ideas for the workshop. Where practical delivery of a workshop was seen, this was more relevant.

In some responses, the content of the portfolio strayed from the role being 'applied' for and in some cases, learners included lengthy clips of themselves acting or directing for film, but did not articulate how this demonstrated relevant skills or experience for the Cornfield Players.

Some students focussed purely on promoting themselves as a performer, rather than a performer and workshop leader.

In more successful portfolios we saw that learners had fully considered appropriate ideas for the development of their portfolio, with clear and effective promotional intent. In such cases, the development of ideas was clearly linked to the organisation and project with selection, refinement and use of relevant examples; these learners demonstrated skills and experience in the promotional portfolio in a way that would engage the employer.

Some learners presented videos but provided no justification linked to the employment opportunity; and where the relevance of the clip was not explicit this was less effective.

Some showreels were produced with clear appreciation of promotional intent and these often included voice overs or narration and clear attempts at making links to the scenario.

An essential element in a successful portfolio is sustained relevance.

Less successful portfolios were often too generic and there was little evidence of any selection or refinement. It was not clear why the work had been included or what relevant skills or experience were being demonstrated.

Administration

Most centres submitted learner work in line with requirements. Centres should fully observe the demands of both the task for the specific examination series and the requirements as detailed in the instructions within the Set Task Brief and as outlined in the Administrative Support Guide.

Centres are reminded that work must be submitted by the deadline in the correct format in terms of recordings and PDF files. Each learner's work must be presented in its own folder, on a new, undamaged DVD or memory stick that will play on any commonly used laptop. Each learner's folder should include the written response and the digital promotional portfolio with any supporting material. Where encryption software has been used, a password must be provided.

Centres are reminded that they must complete the essential documents relating to each learner and the centre itself. These are required by the examiner for marking. It is essential that this paperwork is printed out and provided as a hard copy, which the examiner can write on and not just sent digitally.

Once the written response has been completed it should be converted and saved as a PDF document. It is not necessary to include both a Word and a PDF version of the written response.

Recordings were generally of a good quality however it is essential a learner can be identified in the practical work included in the digital portfolio.

Some videos and promotional documents were in separate folders making it hard to navigate through all of the evidence.

A small number of videos would not play or were corrupted, and it is imperative that centres check evidence before submitting it to ensure it is playable.

Summary

Based on the performance seen during this series the following should be considered:

- The starting point for a learner should be the unit content, which should be covered in preparation for the set task.
- Learners should respond to the employment opportunity as a whole, considering the organisational profile, the project outline and the workshop requirements.
- Learners will need access to recordings of their practical work, for possible inclusion in their digital portfolios.
- Learners need to fully consider promotional intent, with an awareness of current industry practice as much as possible.
- Additional material, such as certificates, references and publicity should only be included in the portfolio if relevant.
- Learners must be clearly identified in their digital portfolio.

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