

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

PERFORMING ARTS



Unit 32 January 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Unit 32 series overview

This paper will always propose a specified set of circumstances in which performance is to take place, to which the candidates should be able to take their taught knowledge and apply it to that specific situation in the role of Arts Administrator. To approach this paper candidates need a clear grasp of the range of functions that may come under that very diverse role and how these can be applied in practice. The role is bound by legal requirements in terms of insurance, licences and Health and Safety requirements, which must be observed to the letter when fulfilling the role. Additionally and equally, this role needs to be undertaken by a single person efficiently, effectively, and most important, flexibly. Candidates are pointed therefore by the questions towards clearly identified areas of the work that would need to be dealt with in practice. This involves also considering specific situations in which the Arts Administrator would fulfil tasks, evaluating choices and making decisions in conjunction with others. They should look to identify needs, prioritise what is desirable and select viable outcomes from what is possible. The desired best outcome is not always fully possible as is the nature of practical reality. Therefore, the outcome may have to be a viable adaptation by which the performance work can be delivered effectively. There is scope sometimes for a 'light bulb moment' where an imaginative solution may cover all bases, and any resourceful Administrator will need to use their wits and creative thinking at times. More often, a knowledgeable, methodical and co-operative approach is what is called for. Careful selection of aspects to be discussed when addressing an issue is usually more useful than listing everything that could be applied in the hope that one of them will work. The paper aims therefore to give candidates the opportunity to show both range of knowledge and resourcefulness in the Arts Administrator role.

Section A overview

Where candidates read the requirements of the questions carefully this section was well answered, and some excellent application of knowledge was evident across the range of answers seen. Many candidates did not answer some questions as set. Sometimes key phrases were addressed, in isolation and often using highlighter pens, with writing about those phrases from the questions but without answering the question as it had been set. No credit can be given for answers, which misread the question and so do not answer it. Candidates should be aware also that only the first point can be accepted in a 2-mark explanation question, and the first two points in a 4-mark two-explanation question. Additional points were not credited. Highlighters may be used, but coloured pens used to underline are a rubric infringement. Examiners have specific colours for different stages of the marking process and candidates' used of coloured pens can generate misunderstandings in that process.

Each pair of questions seeks to focus attention to an area of the Arts Administrator's role and asks the candidate to show their knowledge addressed appropriately to that aspect of administrative work. Candidates need to apply the stem statement in the paired questions to the task specified to be able to offer an effective answer. Legal requirements for performance were generally well understood but sometimes somewhat generically applied. Funding, quality management, marketing and practical management of performance were the further areas to be addressed, all of which are intended to feed into the longer questions in Section B without merely duplicating points made in Section A.

Candidates needed to recognise that the scenario in focusing on a TIE performance would have taken bookings from educational organisations rather than by selling individual tickets to the public. This relates to questions on marketing. Discussion of ticket sales and reference to box office seen in answers from some candidates in both sections did not lose marks as such but did indicate some not quite full engagement with the scenario.

Question 1

For all questions in this paper, you should assume that you are in the role of the Arts Administrator.

Read the following scenario.

Scenario

Building Bridges is a successful T.I.E. (Theatre In Education) company best known for innovative performance to engage young audiences with projects that bring together a range of subjects taught in schools. They offer each school they visit a performance and a workshop involving two or more art forms.

The company is planning a new tour. You are the Arts Administrator of *Building Bridges*. You work closely with the Artistic Director and the Company Manager. Other roles are undertaken by contracted freelance professionals. *Building Bridges* is a company limited by guarantee, which operates as a Social Enterprise.

The company gets most of its income from fees paid by schools for performances and workshops. It also receives a small grant from a private donor to support reaching audiences in some of the UK's most deprived areas. The company has an annual turnover in the region of £200,000. 70% of this is from fees received, 20% from the private donor and 10% from Charitable Trusts.

The current tour is to focus on dance and physical theatre, using both live and recorded sound as well as visual effects. This approach is effective in engaging Key Stage 3 pupils with subjects covering a wide range of themes and topics from across the school curriculum.

The following questions relate to the roles and responsibilities you will undertake for *Building Bridges* as the Arts Administrator.

Questions 1 and 2

You are required to review the legal requirements for the tour to be sure they will be met.

1 *Building Bridges* has insurance to cover their travel.

Explain **one** other type of insurance that the company would need for their tour to schools.

.....

.....

.....[2]

This question was largely answered successfully. Most responses cited Public Liability insurance or Employer Liability insurance. The question asks for 'one other type of insurance the company would need'. Where candidates wrote "employee" where "employer" was the correct word, the response could not be credited. The explanation had to include that the insurance would cover the company in the event of a claim, but not that it could prevent claims or legal action against the company.

Question 3

Questions 3 and 4

Your role requires you to be aware of funding opportunities for the company.

- 3 As stated in the scenario, the current tour has obtained a small grant from a private donor to support the company's work in disadvantaged communities. The donor does not expect the company to advertise this donation.

Explain **one** reason why a donor might support this aspect of the company's work.

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.....[2]

Most candidates answered this question successfully. The question requires the candidate to explain a reason why a donor might support a particular aspect of the company's work. Implicit in the question is the need to identify a reason for one mark and to explain it for the second mark. This could be quite broadly answered. Most candidates did so and were credited both marks. Any response, which cited wanting to do good for society and/or young people in these circumstances, was a valid reason; and how this might benefit them and/or the community or society as a whole qualified the response for the explanatory mark.

Question 4

- 4 You are responsible for gathering information about the schools that book performances and workshops from *Building Bridges*.

Financing the tour will be vital to its success.

Explain **two** types of information that will be useful to hold on record when planning how to fund a new tour.

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.....[4]

This question needs to be answered in terms of funding, ie information relating to funding as it could be used in planning touring to schools in the future. Some good answers were seen but the overall response was variable, often with one valid and one invalid point. Answers which clearly and coherently addressed sourcing funding and/or costing as it related to touring to schools were credited for one mark. A second mark was credited for an explanation of why that information would be useful to support funding planning. Responses seldom related this to the scenario, ie in which the funder's criteria would be included in planning. Recording locations of schools to be visited or previously visited to calculate travels costs was a common and accepted response; also records of previous touring visit fees paid by schools which were large enough and/or financially viable sufficient to afford to pay a good fee.

Question 5

Questions 5 and 6

As part of your role, you oversee quality assurance for the company. You keep records relating to the quality of the work delivered by *Building Bridges* T.I.E. company.

- 5 Explain **one** type of information you will need to record which relates to the company's performance work.

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.....[2]

Care needed to be taken by candidates in these paired questions 5 & 6 not to duplicate material across both. Question 5 was usually straightforwardly and knowledgeably answered, in discussion of recorded information, which can be used as evidence of the quality of the company's work. A second mark was credited for an explanation of how this would be evidence of the quality of that work. This was commonly answered by reference to audience feedback surveys and how they could be used to support the company in making improvements for future performances.

Question 6

- 6 The success of the company's performance work to its audience is crucial for it to continue to operate.

Explain **two** ways you can maximise customer satisfaction.

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.....[4]

This question was variably answered. Some good responses identified the need for relevance in the topic covered for TIE purposes, through engagement with the schools prior to performances to ensure the educational quality of the work. This was sometimes effectively followed for a second point, in the company's intention to create a vibrant atmosphere, through enthusiasm and a positive manner in its liaison with schools. Discussion of discount offers was not credited. These are financially-based forms of marketing not aspects of company work practices in engaging with audiences. The use of newsletters and promotional visits to schools as these can be used to maintain positive contact with the company's clientele were accepted as viable points relating to an Arts Administrator's responsibilities.

Question 7

Questions 7 and 8

As part of your role in a small company, to plan future tours you will have to take on additional responsibilities.

7 You are responsible for marketing the company's future work.

Explain **one** way your marketing of the company's work to schools will be effective.

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.....[2]

This question asks for a single specific example of how the marketing can be made successful not a general discussion of what marketing can achieve. This could include all the standard forms of marketing, including social media and most answers achieved both marks by reference to one or at least of these and with an explanation why it would be effective in practice. However, it was not always clear that candidate answers were discussing the targeting of schools (see Section A overview) rather than young people generally.

Section B overview

Section B offers candidates the opportunity to demonstrate expanded knowledge beyond the short questions in Section A of how an Arts Administrator can manage different situations to achieve successful outcomes. Candidates need to make connections between the overall scenario information at the head of the question paper and the additional information given at the heads of Question 9 and Question 10 to answer the specifics of those questions. Candidates often did not seem to know how to adapt their knowledge of touring performance to a specific situation in which that knowledge would need to be flexibly applied. Many tended towards addressing the question by writing pre-prepared information. Clearly an Arts Administrator will have regularly used and proper business methods of dealing with the practicalities of touring. Some descriptions and justifications of what they intend to do will be therefore be standard practice. However, a paragraph that does not refer to the scenario and does not engage with the specifics of it can only be considered as general knowledge of the process as a whole. Equally not all of the additional information in Section B will be closely prescribed. This offers candidates the opportunity to define aspects of the issues to be addressed more precisely in the situation as they envisage it. This allows candidates to be credited for depth of understanding in their answer by foreseeing and including circumstances an Arts Administrator is very likely to encounter and be expected to deal with.

Question 9

Read the additional information and answer the following two questions:

The current tour for this year (not next year's tour that is referred to in question 8 above) includes some residential centres that present a challenge in terms of access, facilities and company staffing. The Artistic Director and Company Manager are considering how to ensure staging of the performance in these venues will be effective.

As the Arts Administrator, you have been asked to present your plans to the Company Manager and Artistic Director.

- 9 The current year's show includes a good deal of juggling and acrobatics. Consider the multi-disciplinary style of performance and the potential for challenges a tour of this nature may bring.

Analyse the planning requirements you need to put in place prior to the tour.

[18]

This question was not usually answered very well. Most responses showed often quite thorough knowledge of a pre-prepared general plan for touring performance and wrote it in varying degrees of detail. The general scenario is that this is a TIE company that performs to young audiences. There is a simple connection to be made, that the residential centres are likely to be places where young people are resident, which may be for a variety of reasons that do not necessarily need to be discussed. It was not essential to make the connection between performance location and audience to address the key specifics of the scenario, ie that these were not professional venues but places of residence. Some responses inferred this was a place for elderly people and/or set in a rural location and discussed access issues accordingly. Marks were not deducted for doing so but this was slightly self-penalising as it was apparent that there was not entirely accurate engagement with the scenario. It was important to consider that the type of performance involved juggling and acrobatics and might not readily be accommodated by such locations. Implicit in that information is the question: how is the Arts Administrator going to deal with that? It is important in addressing this question to foresee obstacles in the scenario and then show planning to adapt the touring performance where the performance area may have some limitations for delivering the show. This is where the challenge of the question is located. Answers which suggested booking an alternative venue where the facilities were possibly less than preferable were somewhat evading the demands of the question. Discussion referring to levels of ticketing and ticket sales to the public was also somewhat off-scenario (see Section A overview above). Access, company staffing and facilities were also mentioned in the scenario as being issues for candidates to grapple with directly. As with other items on the Administrator's checklist that might need to be addressed, stronger answers showed evidence of a flexible mindset. Some stronger answers, which did this by discussing ways to ensure in advance that the show can be got in and out of a building without a backstage loading bay, for example. In addition, advance thinking could be shown to manage staffing roles to cover production needs, and to be able to adapt to a performance location that might not have dedicated changing facilities.

Question 10

Building Bridges has received an additional grant for the current tour, to support its work in disadvantaged communities. However, there are very few bookings from schools that meet the funder's criteria. Some of the grant has already been spent to cover production costs.

10 As the Arts Administrator, discuss the range of stakeholders you would contact to resolve the funding issues, and what possible solutions you would seek to achieve by doing so.

[18]

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This question was often not answered very well. A significant number of candidates did not assimilate the entire sentence in the question and took the phrase "resolve the funding issues" to write a generic answer listing and evaluating other sources of funding to replace that of the private donor whose criteria were not met because few bookings were made from schools in disadvantaged areas. A minority of answers were more directly focused in discussing potential dialogue to be had with a range of stakeholders, ie those with a vested interest in the company and its current project.

Where the question had been more accurately read and addressed properly, most candidates were comfortably able to consider the discussions that would need to be had between the various parties with a vested interest in the show. Stronger answers outlined in an organised and sequential manner. They showed understanding that those both above and below the Arts Administrator in the company could usefully contribute to discussions to overcome the funding issue. It was evident to many also that a funder who had donated funds to support disadvantaged communities might well be flexible where the company had not been able to achieve as many bookings as desired, as long as at least some of the target audience had been reached. Good answers also recognised that this could not be taken for granted. A useful approach was seen even by many of those who were off-question, in evaluating the merits and de-merits of options under discussion. As stated in the overview above, selection of the most important aspects to focus on marked out stronger answers. There is some merit in discussing why cancelling the entire tour for a 20% shortfall is a bad idea, but there is greater merit in discussing the company would prefer not to cancel and ways in which it could avert any need to do so, which was seen in some confident answers. Upper range responses recognised that several actions might need to be engaged to manage the situation and that more than one outcome was possible even when they had been put forward.

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