

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

PERFORMING ARTS

05850–05853, 05876

Unit 32 January 2021 series

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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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Unit 32 series overview

The outline scenario given in Unit 32 Arts Administration provides a set of circumstances in which performance will take place. It is both broad and specific. It offers candidates a situation to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge and understanding of how to engage with and apply Arts Administration procedures and processes in context of a public performance project. The tasks set will be the essential organisational tasks of the company which an Administrator is likely to carry out. These will not include creative and technical processes. The situations will always be those which could be encountered in managing the ongoing business of a small-scale performance organisation. Responses should show how an Arts Administrator would apply, where needed, a range of essential business knowledge for administration, organisational responsibilities, decision making and interpersonal skills.

The Section 1 questions will always be specific, and with scope for several alternative viable answers. Candidates should be careful to pay close attention to the wording to make sure their answers are securely within the frame of the question. The questions in Section A are paired to elicit two answers on related topics. These should be familiar to candidates from the taught knowledge. The two questions allow candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding across three points in total.

The Section 2 questions for longer answers will always provide additional information to extend the original scenario. This enables candidates to show they can apply Administration skills actively when the performance project is in progress. Candidates have the opportunity to show professional propriety and flexibility, using knowledge and skills to a more developed level than section A, by engaging with the given situations to facilitate a smoothly successful performance outcome as their core priority.

	<p>AfL</p>	<p>Taught knowledge should always underpin Section 1 answers. An effective response in Section 2 will show understanding that a successful outcome lies in how decisions should be properly made and why those are the decisions that should be made, to overcome the many potential obstacles the Arts Administrator may encounter. An Arts Administrator will seek to facilitate a smooth and collaborative outcome, to achieve an undisturbed flow of the process of planning to performance for all who engage with the work.</p>
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<p>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</p>	<p>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applied the scenario fully in their responses • read the questions carefully to make sure they were addressing what was asked • addressed the scenario accurately • selected appropriately from taught knowledge to address the given scenario • chose securely how to apply skills where the scenario does not specifically direct their use • applied in full the additional material given for the Section 2 questions, making it integral to their responses • showed a planned and sequenced approach in answering the longer questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skim-read some questions, not always fully absorbing what was asked • repeated the same content across more than one Section 1 question • used inaccurate terminology • did not refer to the key elements of the given scenario when writing longer answers • used pre-prepared general planning answers to Question 9 where application to the details of the task scenario was needed • did not justify or evaluate the reasons for taking the actions described in the response

<i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i>	<i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• prioritised both the audience's and the company's needs in seeking solutions• recognised the implications of identified options evaluating clearly and concisely• showed adaptability in identifying practical alternative ways forward where a given situation has not offered an ideal choice• in problem-solving, focused on the best solutions for a successful outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• evaded the issues in Questions 9 and/or 10 with solutions that did not clearly tackle the needs and problems in the scenario• discussed less viable options at length leaving little space to discuss the best solution.

Question 1

For the purposes of the following tasks you should assume the role of an Arts Administrator.

Read the following scenario.

Scenario

Up There is a successful touring performance company, specialising in musical theatre productions. The company performs well-known shows as well as some lesser-known works. *Up There* believes that musical theatre is for everyone and the company takes its sell-out shows to a range of venues.

As Arts Administrator for *Up There*, you are one of three full-time employees. The other full-time roles are the Technical Manager and the Artistic Director. All other roles, including the performers, are undertaken by freelance practitioners on a show-by-show basis.

Up There is a commercial company whose work is funded through ticket sales and the selling of merchandise. The company like to perform in popular venues where it can guarantee a good turn out and put 'bums on seats'!

The current production you are planning is a regional tour of a new musical, covering themes aimed to engage a younger audience with the company's work. The tour will take the show to venues that are new for the company, as well as those where the company has performed previously.

- 1 A key part of your role is planning.

You take direct responsibility for preparing rehearsal schedules.

Explain **one other** planning responsibility you are responsible for in preparing a new production.

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Most answers addressed this question accurately. Planning activities are those which involve forward calculations, timeframes and options to be decided, which extend beyond the everyday operational business of managing a performance company. All companies will require some licences, legal insurances and payroll systems to operate. These are routine business rather than planning and so not creditable. Budgeting, touring scheduling, venue booking, hiring transport and accommodation, and that there will be a planning process to market the show, were some of the acceptable responses for 1 mark. A second mark was given for a concise explanation to show why this planning aspect is necessary.

Question 2

2 You are also responsible for keeping the health and safety policy up to date.

Explain **two** areas of your health and safety planning where you would need to liaise with the other full-time employees.

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[4]

This question was mostly well-answered. The key to the response is in liaison, i.e. discussion and decision making, in health and safety planning *with the other full-time employees*. The scenario states these to be the Technical Manager and Artistic Director. Discussing performance schedules could be credited where not already cited in Question 1. Other creditable answers included checking that the company's legal certification is up to date, for example in First Aid, manual handling training, and electrical safety; but the Administrator will not check that equipment is maintained. This is the responsibility of the Technical Manager. A Risk Assessment of the safety of the performance by the Arts administrator could be creditable, as the Artistic Director's responsibilities are essentially creative. Reviewing DBS checks for those staff was accepted as a general safety administrative cover-all, although the scenario does not specify working with children; but for other contracted members of the company the Administrator would communicate with those employees individually and would not need to liaise with the full-time staff. Often candidates referenced 'DBS' without explaining the acronym, leaving it unclear that they knew what it means. 'DBS/CRB' was seen in several responses, showing at best only partial and not up-to-date knowledge. Venue checks were generally not accepted except where consultation with the Technical Director were referenced, regarding Health and Safety suitability, possibly with some Risk Assessment considerations. It is unlikely that routine inspection of fire exits, general access and other building checks on company or other buildings would require liaison as specified in the question. Some answers cited full risk assessments of individual venues. It is unlikely that this would be carried out by the Administrator, in consultation with other full-time employees or not, as this would be an extremely time-consuming and onerous task.

Where general risk assessments were cited in one point in an answer to Question 2 and a second point was made that could be carried out under that same Risk Assessment, only one point was creditable.

Question 3

- 3 As part of your role, you undertake marketing responsibilities. One responsibility is making decisions about where to advertise the show.

Explain **one other** marketing decision you will undertake as part of your role.

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The question asks for marketing decisions other than where to advertise the show. Marketing locations were sometimes given as an answer, suggesting this was 'how to market' the show, but the meaning is clearly 'where' and so not creditable. Some good answers considered focusing on the demographic of the audience, in which the use of social media was also sometimes cited and was credited. It may seem a fine distinction that use of a virtual medium is accepted a means to engage when a physical location is not, but the online devices which the target market uses which are typical of that demographic are a means to communicate a message, they are not a location. 'I would use social media' by itself was not credited, as there is no rationale to the choice and so lacks reasoning to qualify as a decision.

In a small company, choices about what marketing materials to use, such as posters and flyers, and decisions over preferred designs of those posters and other marketing materials might well fall to the Arts Administrator, but for a second mark some explanation of reasons for choices would be required.

Question 4

- 4 In order to understand if marketing activities are effective, you will report on the success of the marketing activities for this project.

Explain **two** ways you will measure the impact of your marketing decisions.

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Candidate responses often gained marks by measuring the change in rate of ticket sales after marketing activities had been undertaken. Audience numbers attending performances as evidence of effective marketing was also credited. Other points included the use of surveys, to seek audience feedback on what marketing activities they were aware of, and how this had influenced them to buy tickets. For this to be credited, the response needed to state the means by which the survey was carried out, for example, post-performance slips to complete in the venue, or online responses. Numbers following, likes and comments on social media posts and pages for the show were also credited fully where an explanation was given that this indicated the extent audience awareness of the touring show.

Points which extended or repeated answers to Question 3 could not be credited.

Question 5

- 5 As part of your role, you are looking to book venues where the company has not previously performed in order to attract a wider audience for your work.

Explain **one** consideration when booking a new venue that will enable you to attract a younger audience.

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There were a number of possibilities for successful answers to this question. Proximity to schools to attract a youth audience was often cited. Transport links, retail outlets and other social and entertainment facilities in the area which would attract young people were also creditable responses; also the popularity of the venue for other events for younger people who would be familiar with it and visit often, and so would also see the company's advance publicity when attending for other events.

Question 6

- 6 It is important for your company to maintain their loyal audience as well as to attract new audience members.

Explain **two other** considerations you will have when looking at a possible new venue, to know if they have the potential to attract existing audience.

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Most answered this question well, but care was needed not to repeat or extend points made in Question 5. The question asks specifically about how to attract existing audience to a new venue. Transport links could be credited where not cited in Question 5, facilities that would meet the expectations of the existing audience was a viable response; using the company's audience database information to assess proximity to other venues where the company has previously performed was also an effective answer. Also a viable answer was to review the recent history of shows performed in the venue under consideration to assess whether the venue has a profile presence among the target demographic audience. This could be given marks where it was clear this was related to the given audience in the scenario, and this had not been an answer credited in response to the previous question.

Question 7

- 7 It is essential that the show generates sufficient income and that the company upholds an excellent reputation.

As part of your checks you will closely monitor ticket sales.

Explain **one other** way you will be able to monitor the quality of the work.

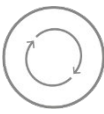
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Creditable answers to this question often referred to qualitative data such as audience feedback on the performance through surveys or online reviews. Candidates needed to be careful not to duplicate material from Question 6, where success of marketing was the subject of review. Monitoring published professional reviews in print and online media was also a potential answer. Where the response suggests a survey to be conducted, how that would be done would need to be clear to be credible.

	AfL	<p>An Arts Administrator's work does not assess the creative practices of the company, so they would not be involved in reviewing the development of the show in rehearsals, or in discussions with performers.</p> <p>While the Administrator would need to be involved in planning schedules, checking they are kept, and aware of merchandise sales, these are not measures of performance quality.</p>
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Question 8

8 The publisher of a new musical would like to sponsor your performance of this piece.

Explain **two** aspects of the agreement between *Up There* and the sponsor you would need to put in place to formalise this arrangement.

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A most direct point candidates often made in response to this question was to formalise the agreement in a signed document, to make sure all aspects of the sponsorship are understood and agreed by both parties. A second valid point was often that the agreement would include how the sponsor's name, logo and/or brand would appear in advertising, marketing and company literature, including the show programme, to acknowledge and promote the sponsor's support for the company; or alternatively the agreement could state that a sponsor who wished to remain unpublicised would not be mentioned.

Some candidates were not clear that a sponsor would not receive payment from profits or in kind, and would not normally specify how sponsorship funds should be spent. A creditable point was that the agreement could include feedback to the sponsor via interim and /or final progress reports on the success of the tour. This could be in sales, attendance data and budget accounts from all of which the sponsor could assess the value of their sponsorship of the company.

Question 9

Read the additional information and answer the following two questions.

Additional Information

Although you are an experienced Arts Administrator, this tour presents some additional challenges and opportunities for you and the company.

The venues you have not visited before are one example of this, as some of them are run by volunteers and they do not employ a full-time Arts Administrator.

9 Analyse the planning requirements you need to put in place to ensure the bookings to this type of venue are fully viable.

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The response to this question should seek to make sure all venues booked meet all necessary professional standards to proceed with the booking for a musical theatre show. This could take additional organisational actions in a situation where the company's professional Administrator might have to engage with venue management that might have a lower level of expertise. One positive opening to this question sought to establish first who was the most senior volunteer and to direct queries to them.

Responses more often began by setting out immediately to undertake extensive lists of work to complete a full list of legal requirements for these venues, and to carry out staff background checks. This would be impractical for an Administrator in a full-time post and could potentially be duplicating what might already be in place. A better response would be to prepare to ask questions of those volunteers to be contacted, to find out what essential requirements might already be in place. It is possible that a volunteer Administrator might have some skills in venue management, and might have developed business skills, as a retired or part-time worker, or be volunteering as a hobby, alongside a full-time job. There was scope within the scenario for candidates to establish for themselves the level of expertise found in the venue, and to answer accordingly. In one response seen the Administrator offered to become an unpaid overseeing volunteer Administrator to the venue. This was an imaginative and generous approach and, if accepted within the scenario, would give them the authority to carry out full venue legal tasks. It was questionable otherwise whether a performance company Administrator could manage volunteers and authorise legal interventions such as DBS checks, insurance and Health and Safety assessments for a venue; and whether an outside Administrator could authorise the expenditure for licences and insurances, as was sometimes suggested would be essential. 'PRS and PPL' were sometimes listed together without explanation to show that these acronyms were understood and without explaining why these might be necessary. As the scenario does not state whether the new musical work uses existing copyrighted music is not clear that a PRS licence would be required, and it would be for candidates to add that to the scenario if they so chose. It was often not clear also in discussion of 'PLI' that publicly-operating venues and the company are both required by law to have their own Public Liability Insurance. References to 'Employee Liability Insurance' were inaccurate and so could not be credited. Full venue risk assessments were sometimes included in lists of actions to be carried out by the Administrator. It was not clear that it was understood that an undertaking a building Risk Assessment is an extensive and very time-consuming task. Moreover, if the building was being legally operated as a venue it would almost certainly have a Risk Assessment record that could be checked, and updated if necessary, which is a much more limited task to achieve the same end. In a number of answers seen it was clear a shorter list with a more carefully targeted selection of key actions would have been a more useful answer. Some answers barely mentioned or not at all the key scenario aspect, that the company was seeking venues where a new musical theatre work could be performed. Good responses constructed their planning on this and the need to support some venues administratively.

Some candidates did not clearly distinguish between policies and procedures when discussing these matters, and understanding of legal requirements was sometimes uneven. Data Protection is a legal requirement and so not required to be a policy. There will be need for a Data Protection procedure when managing ticketing. Some answers usefully discussed this and suggested that the company's electronic or online ticket booking and issuing systems could be used for venues without their own, with a fee or percentage agreement between company and venue for access to the company's booking system. This showed good knowledge of technical and financial practices. A need to verify that venues had their own secure bank accounts for payments was also usefully discussed in some responses.

It was not clear in many responses how the company might respond where some general facilities were lacking but not legally necessary. Candidates should be aware that the reality of small-scale touring is that sometimes the offstage facilities will be meagre and the company may just have to make do. Some asserted that they would make sure all facilities would be put in place. More secure and more realistic responses identified potential and likely limitations and sought ways to overcome them, such as being prepared to lay dance floor skins on otherwise unsuitable flooring. More assured responses sometimes included the need to adapt to varying stage area sizes, and that these dimensions could be established in advance in dialogue with either a professional or a non-professional administrator, it was simply a matter of gathering some essential information by phone or email. Responses with a clear overview of the situation sought to be adaptable and to assess, from potentially available information, the degree of need and where gaps in essential requirements to put on a musical theatre performance might need to be covered. From this the scope of the task to support the venue could be assessed before setting out to do everything for a venue without an employed Administrator.

Question 10

Part of your marketing strategy has been to promote a high-profile celebrity who is performing in the show.

With just a few days to go, you are informed that the celebrity is making several demands for additional requirements backstage at each venue.

Some venues are not able to meet the celebrity's demands and in addition to this, other performers are raising concerns about not being treated fairly.

- 10 As the Arts Administrator, you have been asked to evaluate the options for the Artistic Director as a matter of urgency.

Evaluate your options from which you can suggest practical ways forward to the Artistic Director.

[18]

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This question has scope for candidates to set some of the details of the frame. For example, what demands are being made, and to what extent is this already a problem? What is the mood of the matter? Is the celebrity willing to discuss, or is entirely uncompromising? 'Several demands' suggests the mood is not positive, but here there was opportunity for a candidate to achieve marking credit by showing how an Administrator can use interpersonal skills in the manner of Human Resources manager, seeking to calm a situation by exploring the situation with the individual concerned, asking questions in the first instance: as in Question 9, a good first step, as seen in some responses, was to establish what were the points of issue. Good responses also recognised the need to defuse tensions. There is scope to describe the manner to be used, and some good responses stated they would ask the celebrity what they would want the company to do where venues do not have the facilities to fulfil what is being asked, somewhat putting the ball back in their court. Secure responses tended to evaluate carefully the likely effectiveness of approaches used. Some of the most secure responses recognised that there can be no good outcome where a celebrity departs from a show when the audience may have booked specifically to see that person perform; and that the reputational damage both company and celebrity would be disastrous if an internal dispute became publicly known.


Some answers stated the need to speak calmly and reasonably, listening to the concerns of all company members, and appealing to everyone for good will. This is a good starting approach and so is creditable, but to be more than an adequate response the candidate needed to develop more specific intent and concrete proposals to move the matter forward.

As the intention of Question 10 in this the paper is for candidates to show skills in dealing with difficulties, there are rarely simple solutions to the scenarios posed. It was evading the task to propose to fire the celebrity and use an understudy, and this could be given limited credit. Some responses also suggested also the unlikely possibility that the company had already planned to have a contingency of an understudy celebrity in place. A good professional first action sometimes seen was to contact the celebrity's agent or manager to request they discuss the problem with their client, although sometimes this was as a final afterthought point when clearly it was desirable to do this early on. Establishing the precise demands, reviewing the terms of the contract with the agent/manager to see what the celebrity's contracted entitlements were, and asking them to consult with their client if the contract did not cover those demands, was sufficient as an answer to bring an adequate solution reasonably within view. Some responses bringing in the Artistic Director to talk to the celebrity were somewhat evading the Administrator's responsibility to deal with offstage matters. However, there was potential to justify this as an informal route to a solution, i.e. that the Artistic Director might have a good working relationship with the celebrity and so might be able to remonstrate with them, but this was rarely cited as a reason.

Responses which considered seeking compromise, both with the celebrity and other cast members, were clearly following a route many Administrators would do in practice. The nature of that compromise was key to the quality of the answer. Offering the celebrity more money to placate them, while sounding reasonable, would exceed contractual terms, and could render the employment contract somewhat redundant, it would also impact on overall tour costings. Some properly reflected that it could lead to further demands. Increasing the contracted fee could not normally be authorised by an Administrator without company management and trustees' approval. It was an unrealistic solution to give the celebrity what they wanted while offering other employees the same privileges, often unspecified, when the scenario states some venues could already not provide them. Some solutions offering equal billing to all performers in advertising misunderstood the purpose of including a celebrity performer in a production.

Candidates needed to make clear that where all performers are under individual fixed contracts, one side militating against another simply requires the Administrator in the most professional manner to remind all to observe the terms of their contracts. However, it was a valid point that when there is company unhappiness, if it is possible to act to raise morale by offering extra benefits within existing budget constraints, the Administrator should do so. Most responses included this point creditably to some degree. The quality of detail, and of evaluative comment in particular, determined the marking level. It was recognised by almost all that that a celebrity will have a more favourable contract than the rest of the cast. Some correctly noted that the terms of a performer's contracts are confidential between company and employee and would not be discussed with the rest of the cast. An imaginative point in one a response seen included to pre-empt the situation with a contingency titled 'Diva demands'.

For a high level response, candidates needed to include most or all of the following: a structured answer with a clear sense of priorities in dealing with the matter, the Administrator needed first and foremost to be working to de-escalate the problem, communicating closely and positively with all concerned. Then to seek a positive outcome; to review contractual terms and engage with the celebrity's manager or agent to mediate with the celebrity; to seek to keep to the existing terms of contracts, i.e. that there would have to be extraordinary grounds for any renegotiation to be entered into; to recognise that the loss of a prominently publicised celebrity cast member would very likely be ruinous to the tour, losing many audience bookings and risking making the dispute public; that such negative publicity could cause severe long-term damage to the company, including loss of sponsorship and other support funding; to review what additional benefits might be provided both to celebrity and cast within venues, while recognising that performers generally accept that in touring venues the facilities are very often limited. It was not essential to define the terms of the demands but as stated above, this could aid the candidate in preparing to structure a viable response.

	<p>Misconception</p>	<p>Responses which suggested the company could fire the high-profile performer or that the performer could refuse to fulfil the contract misunderstood the nature of contractual terms. A fixed employment contract prevents an employer dismissing a contracted employee at will, or rewriting the contract on their own terms while it is in place. Similarly the contracted employee cannot leave contracted employment during the period of the contract. Only if one party to the contract has irreparably broken the terms of the contract can the other party leave; or the contract could be ended by mutual agreement.</p>
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I dislike this



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