

CCEA GCE - Performing Arts
(Summer Series) 2015

Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report

performing
arts

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Education (GCE) in Performing Arts for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk

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GCE PERFORMING ARTS

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit AS 1 Developing Skills and Repertoire

General Observations

It was evident that most centres had utilised the support materials and information provided at the Agreement Trial appropriately to assist with the completion of the unit, which was reflected in the layout and structure of the portfolios. A minority of centres did not adhere to the page limits or the presentation of coursework in Arial 12. The work submitted for moderation was well organised. Some centres' annotation of the coursework was precise and focused on the assessment objectives, which was most helpful to the moderation process. There was a range of disciplines offered; but Drama continues to be the most popular chosen discipline. A variety of repertoire was used to develop candidates' skills, most of which allowed the candidates to showcase their developing skills appropriately. The majority of centres provided clear recordings of candidates' three stages for both extracts on either DVD or USB. Most candidates were clearly identified at the start of their recordings, however, it would be beneficial if candidates were identified at the start of their final presentation, especially when in costume and in their group performance.

Administration of the Moderation Process

Work was submitted on time and paperwork was generally completed accurately.

- Centres are reminded that TAC 2 should be enclosed with the coursework sample, even when there is only one teacher assessor at the centre.
- All Candidate Record Sheets must state the chosen discipline of the candidate at the top of the form.
- All Candidate Record Sheets must be signed by the teacher and candidate.
- The internal standardisation box should be ticked on the Candidate Record Sheet, even when there is only one teacher at the centre.
- The teacher - assessor should check addition and transfer of marks to the OPTEMS.
- All teacher-assessors should make specific reference to the assessment objective descriptors in their annotation and the completion of the Candidate Record Sheets.
- It would be helpful to the moderation process if candidates identified themselves at the beginning of the final group performances, as camera angles and costume occasionally made identification difficult for the moderators.
- Bibliographies must be submitted as part of the assessment evidence and each source should be connected to specific sections of the portfolio through footnotes.
- Centres are reminded that the sample should be submitted in rank order.

Portfolios and Application of the Assessment Criteria

AO1 A summary of research and skills audit (12 marks)

Section1: Style and Genre within the chosen discipline

It was pleasing to see some different approaches to this section. The majority of candidates went for a time line approach, whereas some looked at a range of selected genres and drew out the development of the discipline's style within the genre across time, allowing for greater depth of research within the page constraints. The top candidates were able to make direct connections between the genre and the demands of the discipline in practical terms.

Generic and unfocussed use of the internet, as main source of research, produced responses which lacked depth, focus and made little reference to the main practitioners within the discipline. Overall, there still needs to be greater referencing of source material through the use of quotations and footnotes within the body of the work. Candidates would benefit from explicit teaching of how to reference work appropriately.

Section 2: Skills required within the chosen disciplines

The majority of candidates successfully identified and defined the skills required for their chosen discipline. The skills outlined in Section 3.1 of the specification should be referenced and used as a starting point for all disciplines. To achieve marks in the top bands, candidates need to go beyond a straightforward definition of the skills and draw on specific examples of how they are applied to show comprehensive evidence of research. This may be drawn from performance work or theory. Candidates' responses within Mark Band 4 were underpinned with knowledge and understanding gained from comprehensive research from a variety of sources which was explicitly woven into the body of their response.

Section 3: Current professional practice including the use of new technologies

This section requires candidates to research the current practice of professionals within their discipline and how technology is utilised. They should be encouraged to consider how a professional in their discipline currently prepares for and performs their role and promotes themselves within the industry.

The responses needed to focus more clearly on the candidates' discipline and, in the main, more in depth research into specific technologies relating to the candidates' discipline should be explored. There was a lot of generalised commentary on the use of apps and social media without any real sense of having explored the context for their use or their practical application by current practitioners within the chosen discipline.

A more balanced approach is needed, giving equal consideration to current practice and the use of new technologies. Candidates may benefit from using case studies/interviewing current professionals when approaching this section to give their work relevance and validity.

Skills Audit

Overall, the majority of candidates referenced their ability in the skills highlighted in Section 2 with examples from their current experience and a qualitative statement or rating regarding their skill level. Those in the top mark bands used detailed practical examples with explicit reference to individual skills required for the discipline and how they had applied them.

The skills audit showed the varying degrees of experience that candidates already had. In some cases, those with less experience showed an ability to draw on relevant skills gained through experience outside the performing arts, emphasising that the qualification is accessible to those new to Performing Arts.

Some candidates concluded their audits with a summary of skills to be developed and how they might do this through the rest of the unit, whilst others did this within the body of the skills audit.

It is important to note that the skills audit is not a retrospective task; candidates should complete this prior to embarking on the exploration of repertoire that forms the bulk of the unit. Candidates should also be encouraged to draw on their summary of research and, whilst the connections to Section 2 were evident, there is further opportunity to connect with developing their professional practice relating to style and genre and the use of technologies. This would enable a more holistic approach to the unit.

Areas for consideration:

- Evidence of research is a key objective descriptor for AO1, therefore candidates' sources need to be clearly referenced throughout each section.
- Sources should be referenced through footnotes and a summative bibliography.
- The inclusion of downloaded material passed off as the candidates own is not acceptable and carries penalties.
- Candidates should clearly state their chosen discipline within the title of each section.
- Research should be focused on the discipline; generalised historical research is not appropriate.
- Particular attention should be paid to the learning outcomes outlined for each discipline in Section 3.1 of the specification and the explicit and implicit skills associated with these.
- The use of case studies/interviews with current professionals from the chosen discipline should be encouraged to give more depth and focus to Section 3 of the summary of research.
- Detailed examples from research and candidates' own experiences relevant to the focus of each section should be encouraged.

AO2 A record of work (28 marks)

This section carries the bulk of the marks for the unit and should enable candidates to provide coherent and detailed evidence of the development of the skills required for their discipline. As such it is a personal record of their work, underpinned by the practical application of techniques to develop their skills. There was greater evidence this year of candidates focusing on specific techniques to develop skills, but there did tend to be an unevenness, with a more thorough approach to one extract over the other or more engagement at the beginning of the process which tapered off towards the end. A summative account of the approach to each stage (baseline, midpoint and preparing for final stage of assessment) gives candidates greater opportunity to access the assessment criteria than a narrative diary style account. Similarly, those candidates who used key headings to structure their response (for example, techniques used, progress made) had a more focused approach.

There was a wide range of extracts from existing repertoire chosen by centres, which in the main offered an appropriate degree of challenge to develop the candidates' skills. However, those candidates choosing dance, in some centres, are still devising their own repertoire when the rubric of the unit clearly requires the exploration of "two contrasting extracts of repertoire from a range of **existing** material." The use of existing material affords candidates the opportunity to develop a greater range of relevant skills relating to the professional application of the skills required for their discipline. Centres are reminded that the assessment criteria of the final assessment requires candidates to consider the aesthetic and technical factors in their final performance/presentation, which was not always evident.

Social, Cultural and Historical Research of the Extracts

The majority of candidates considered all three areas, but generally there was an over-reliance on downloaded material. Centres are reminded that the inclusion of downloaded material is unacceptable and carries penalties. All sources must be referenced within the body of the work. Those candidates achieving Mark Band 4 were able to coherently draw their own conclusions from the research carried out and apply to the practical demands of the extract and the implications on carrying out their performance or production role. An over-emphasis on previous productions was also evident with little contextualisation. It is important to state explicitly the actual extract being used, not just the work from which it is taken. Where more obscure pieces of repertoire were chosen this hindered the candidates ability to access the full range of marks available for this section.

Action Plans

Generally, the Action Plans were presented in an appropriate format with stronger responses detailing the specific actions required to achieve outcomes within clear deadlines. All Action Plans must include dates.

In some cases, there was a lot of duplication between the Action Plan for Extract 1 and the Action Plan for Extract 2. Whilst it is understandable given the overall process can be similar, the distinguishing factor is the specific demands of the extract itself and the move from working as an individual in Extract 1 to working with others in Extract 2. The Action Plan is a working document and therefore should clearly connect to the Evidence of Practice. Within some centres it was a generic document which bore little relation to the work recorded in their Evidence of Practice.

Evidence of Practice

The focus of the Evidence of Practice is the use of relevant techniques to develop skills which are then applied to the extract to achieve the desired outcome. Generally, there was a greater focus on techniques this year, however there was a lack of rigour evident and research into the techniques used in professional practice. In some cases there was an over reliance on techniques learnt from GCSE with limited progression evident between Extract 1 to Extract 2. The use of You Tube is still heavily used to inform candidates' practice and whilst this can be helpful in guiding candidates, they rarely were able to analyse in detail how it specifically helped them progress. Those centres where there had been a teacher led approach to developing rehearsal methods/techniques prior to embarking on the unit itself, enabled candidates to access a greater range of techniques to develop their skills set.

Overall a greater focus is needed on how progression was made through the different stages. Stronger candidates gave detailed examples, referencing how the skills required for their discipline within the context of the specific demands of the extract were developed using a range of techniques.

There was often an implicit understanding of how Extract 1 and Extract 2 contrasted from each other, however candidates should be encouraged to be more explicit in their Record of Work as to how of the contrasting skills were developed.

Consideration of own strengths and weaknesses

Most candidates made clear reference to their strengths and weaknesses during the process, with stronger responses giving clear examples to support the comments and also using their observations to inform future rehearsals.

Areas for consideration:

- The choice of extracts of repertoire should give candidates ample opportunity to demonstrate contrasting skills within their chosen discipline.
- All extracts for performance or production **must** come from existing repertoire.
- The Record of Work should clearly distinguish between the contrasting demands of Extract 1 and Extract 2 by making explicit reference to the skills required and working with others.
- In the Evidence of Practice candidates should clearly explain through practical examples from their own work how the techniques used enabled them to make progress.
- Candidates should avoid narrative accounts/diaries of rehearsals.
- Candidates should have access to a range of resources which will inform the techniques they can utilise to develop their skills.

AO3 (i) A risk assessment (4 marks)

Clear research into industry practice was evident across most responses in terms of layout and structure. Although, there was greater evidence of considering the risks associated with space, performers and audience this year and some direct reference to the specifics of the extract, there was not always evidence of thorough research into risk reduction appropriate to professional practice in the Performing Arts industry.

Areas for consideration:

- In order to gain marks within the top bands candidates need to use professional vocabulary, research and apply risk reductions appropriate to the performing arts industry and take account of the risks associated with both extracts explicitly.

(ii) A recording of performance/presentation (10 marks)

There were some excellent production candidate presentations this year, which gave a real indication of the candidates developing skills from baseline to final presentations, using practical demonstrations effectively to showcase their skills.

The majority of performance candidates were able to demonstrate their appreciation of technical/aesthetic factors through their use of costume/set/lighting/sound. The appreciation of technical and aesthetic factors was sometimes hindered by the choice of venue for the final performance/presentation.

Some centres approached Extract 2 by performing an edited version of a whole play and whilst this was a good lead in to Unit 2 and gave an opportunity to introduce the work of key practitioners, it does not always afford each candidate the opportunity to develop skills in depth. The time limit is also 20 minutes for all stages of **both** extracts, and whilst this approach has excellent learning opportunities, selecting a key section for final presentation would be more appropriate in meeting the rubric of the specification.

Areas for consideration:

- The recording should be in the presence of the teacher-assessor, with no interruptions, in a performance space that is conducive to the requirements of the candidate, their chosen discipline and the chosen extract.
- It is important to note that the final presentation should be summative in content in order to ensure candidates meet all the assessment objectives for their chosen discipline as outlined in the assessment criteria in Appendix 2 of the specification.
- It is advised that all candidates identify themselves at the start of their final presentations to aid identification during the moderation performance.
- The guidance for length of recording should be followed as outlined in Section 3.1 of the specification.
- Centres should check all DVDs/USBs carefully to ensure that the assessment evidence has been recorded/downloaded successfully prior to submission.

AO4 An evaluation (6 marks)

The majority of candidates submitted clear and effective peer and self-assessments. Those in the top bands were able to give detailed, perceptive examples to support the evaluation of their own and others' work and made precise reference to the impact on the audience.

It is important that those assessing production candidates focus on the impact of the final product and not the quality of the presentation.

An increasing number of candidates used one A4 page to produce a summative account of their progress across the unit, analysing their strengths and weaknesses and setting targets for Unit 2. Subsequently, candidates were able to view the unit holistically and reflect on their skills development as a whole and not just within the confines of the two extracts.

Areas for consideration:

- Peer and self-assessment should focus on the final performances/presentations, rather than the process.
- Summative detailed target setting for the future should not be limited to the specifics of the extracts performed within the unit, but the development of the performance/production skills of the candidate as a whole.

Summary

Overall the moderation team were pleased with the continued range of disciplines across both production and performance pathways being creatively delivered in centres. The variety of extracts and approaches presented reflected the candidates' and teachers' engagement with the demands of the specification. The Agreement Trial will offer further guidance on application of the assessment criteria. Centres are reminded that resources and sample materials are available online and that there is a Portfolio Clinic available.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 2 Planning and Realising a Performing Arts Event

Supporting Document

General Observations

The supporting documents produced for this series were again very wide ranging in the responses with some strong work from well prepared candidates. The document generally allowed candidates of different abilities to respond positively, with the majority of centres answering all sections and most candidates complying with the total word count for each section. Responses varied between centres and it was clear which centres had allocated an appropriate length of preparation time for the compilation of the document. The majority of candidates divided their word allowance appropriately for each section in order to address the different assessment objectives, as stipulated.

Section 2 is awarded the majority of marks for the document and therefore the choice of live or recorded Performing Arts Events is an important aspect of successfully delivering this unit. For the most part, there was a good choice of performances offered from which candidates are asked to draw ideas. Careful consideration should be given to the choice of events to ensure the choices allow candidates to experiment creatively in their chosen discipline. Performing Arts Events of a sensitive nature need to be given careful consideration by centres.

There was, again, a sense that at some centres there may have been a more superficial approach to the completion of the document. The approaches were sometimes lacking in clarity, particularly for section two, resulting in only a satisfactory outcome for a significant number of candidates. Weaker candidates tended to generalise their ideas which resulted in a lack of any real analysis.

It should be noted that the marks awarded for the overall document are more than those awarded for performance/production. Centres are to be reminded that exemplar materials for the supporting document are available at the Performing Arts microsite on the CCEA website.

The supporting documents must be completed under controlled conditions which are outlined in Section 3.2 of the specification. All documents must be produced individually and group responses are not acceptable. Sections should be clearly labelled and word counts must be stipulated at the end of each section with each section being regarded separately in terms of a word count. The notes of candidates should remain at the centre and should not be attached to the supporting document.

AO1 Section 1 - A Response to the Pre-Release Stimulus Material (8 marks)

- This was again the most successful section of the document.
- The majority of candidates included sufficient research into the historical context of the chosen performance style.
- Research of the playwright was often effective and detailed.
- The style/genre was considered appropriately by a satisfactory number of candidates.

- Artistic constraints were more fully considered than last year, particularly in terms of the skills of the group.
- Practical constraints were generally well considered.
- Attainment for the section was again in Mark Band 3 for the majority of candidates.

Areas for consideration:

- Some issues were experienced in terms of a lack of connection to the pre-release stimulus material.
- Some work was again significantly over the word count.
- A significant minority of candidates, in their research, concentrated on the chosen issue rather than the performance style.
- In general, more consideration needs to be given to the style/genre of the chosen material.
- Constraints should be drawn from the list outlined in Section 3.2 of the specification and the full list must be considered.
- All documents must evidence an individual approach.

AO2 Section 2 - Developing the Performing Arts Event (32 marks)

- A wide variety of Performing Arts Events were again represented in this section.
- The best responses presented an analysis of skills in each event followed by experimentation ideas drawn from the analysis.
- Most candidates considered the range of skills from the events in terms of their chosen discipline.
- Stronger responses identified and discussed two discreet events in a balanced way with each event being considered equally in terms of the skills of their chosen discipline.
- Consideration on the impact of the events for the audience was outlined in the stronger responses and carried through into thinking how their experimental ideas might help create impact for their target audience.
- The better discussions identified the ideas for experimentation and then expressed creative approaches to the experimentation process.
- Stronger candidates took a very individualised approach to experimentation.
- There was a slight improvement in the number of candidates who explicitly considered their strengths and areas for development.
- The reviews of the live or recorded events were generally more effective than candidates' ideas for experimentation.

Areas for consideration:

- The events reviewed for this section, including those which are recorded, must be intended for a live audience.
- Analysis of the events, in terms of the skills of the candidates' chosen discipline, should be linked to the skills outlined in the specification.

- Some candidates presented a superficial analysis of skills.
- Some centres took a group approach to experimentation which resulted in candidates not being able to access the full range of marks.
- There was sometimes an uneven approach to the two experimentation ideas which resulted in an unbalanced outcome.
- In a few cases candidates applied experimentation ideas to material other than their Performing Arts Event.
- Many candidates had not adequately explored and recorded their shaping ideas during the rehearsal process. This resulted in a generalised summary of rehearsal ideas.
- Although fewer than last year, a small number of candidates discussed experimentation ideas which were not related to their chosen discipline.
- A significant number of candidates' did not offer an explanation of the intended outcome of their experimentation ideas.
- Only a minority of candidates explicitly incorporated their strengths and weaknesses into the summary.
- Weaker candidates presented work which was often unbalanced and short of the word count.
- A number of candidates presented work which was a combination of the above issues which resulted in attainment in Mark Band 1 or 2.

AO4 Section 3 - A Rationale, an Evaluation and a Summative Statement (8 marks)

- There were some strong responses in relation to the final choice of experimentation.
- Stronger responses provided a justified rationale for the choice of the final idea for realisation.
- The best candidates offered a clear **analysis** of their own and others' contributions.
- The summary of the experience was understood and generally handled well by the majority of candidates.
- The best candidates made **personal** links to future opportunities and employment.
- The summary of the experience of working on the event was generally well handled.

Areas for consideration:

- Analysis of ideas for experimentation and realisation again proved to be challenging with accounts being presented in mainly descriptive terms.
- Some candidates outlined the rehearsal process rather than fully define their final idea for experimentation and realisation.
- Less satisfactory responses described how the group rehearsed together rather than expressing ideas on the group contributions to the Performing Arts Event.
- A significant minority of candidates were only able to make tenuous links to future employment opportunities.

Performance/Production

General Observations

Once again the team of examiners were very pleased with the overall quality of performance and production observed during this second examination series of GCE Performing Arts. The work presented was of a good standard overall, with some excellent work in evidence at some very strong centres.

There was a wide range of disciplines on offer with a great variety of material also presented. In general the choice of material was very suited to the ability of the candidates and was carefully selected to reflect the requirements of the pre-release stimulus material. There were centres that chose challenging material but this did not always suit the ability of all candidates and some were therefore disadvantaged.

All relevant paperwork was completed and submitted for the required deadline. Centres should be reminded that they are required to identify, on their examination record sheet, the style/genre of their Performing Arts Event. This is an important aspect of the preparation for the examination process as it indicates to the examiner in advance the chosen style/genre of the piece. It is suggested that significant detail should be included in this section of the record sheet in order to assist examiners in marking to this bullet point in the assessment criteria for AO3 (Section 3.1 of the specification).

Centres were very accommodating and welcoming which was greatly appreciated by the examining team. The performances and presentations took place in a conducive atmosphere with audiences in attendance for the most part. Audiences were supportive and they helped create the desired atmosphere for the event. The candidates were mostly well prepared and the events were, in the main, very successful.

AO3 Working independently and with others to deliver performance skills/production ideas

- Candidates, in the main, worked independently and as a group to present very interesting ideas which were derived from live or recorded Performing Arts Events.
- A number of candidates worked very well in performance of ensemble work which helped build their confidence and enhance their performance skills.
- Generally the performances were clearly related to the concept of “Time” contained in the pre-release stimulus material.
- Some centres offered very challenging material which was commendable.
- Performance candidates, in the main, were successful in working together to present their ideas as a cohesive entity.
- The final outcomes, at the majority of centres, had the feel of a Performing Arts Event.
- It was also generally apparent that production candidates had worked effectively with their groups to reflect the production needs of the event in their presentation and production ideas.
- Nearly all production candidates presented their ideas with clarity and detail.

Areas for Consideration:

- Material of a challenging nature may not suit the abilities of all candidates and it is worth considering a range of materials to ensure access for all.
- Some very tenuous links were made to the pre-release stimulus material.
- A small number of centres presented dance candidates who were not fully integrated into the overall Performing Arts Event.
- Performances were generally of the required duration, however, there were several very short production presentations.
- Production candidates need to present all requirements for the unit as outlined in the specification.

A performance/presentation that conveys the chosen style, form and genre of the event

- In most centres there was a general overview given of the chosen style and genre on the examination record sheet.
- The approaches taken to the selection of existing material and the choice of style/genre were all acceptable; however, it is apparent that a clearly defined style/genre gives full access to the second bullet point contained within the assessment criteria.
- There was a good range of genre chosen with key recognisable features presented in performance and production.
- Performance candidates produced good quality work, in the main, using a range of influential practitioners to shape their work.
- Where centres had explored the style/genre in detail, the performances were more innovative and memorable.
- The range of style and genre on offer was extensive and proved to be very appropriate and in keeping with the concept of “Time”.
- Most centres pulled the concept through their performances with tangible links being made to the concept throughout.
- The vast majority of centres chose to present their work with set, costume, lighting and sound which all contributed to the mood of the performances and created the atmosphere of a Performing Arts Event.

Areas for consideration:

- In Mark Band 4 the requirement is a “performance/presentation that fully conveys the chosen style, form and genre of the event and produces fit for purpose outcomes.” It is important, therefore, that this aspect is clearly defined on the examination record sheet.
- Some centres had less defined links with the concept; examiners expect the event to express explicit links to the pre-release stimulus material.
- Material should have a recognisable form, style/genre. Some material presented was from a non-performance source including adaptations from novels.
- One centre presented devised material which does not fulfil the requirements of this unit.

Communication of ideas to the audience through application of personal technique

- The communication of ideas was very carefully considered in both presentation and performance.
- The most successful candidates displayed mastery and understanding of their chosen discipline.
- The vast majority of performers were well prepared for the event and some performances indicated a very skilled approach to the communication of ideas.
- Production candidates, for the most part, presented their ideas succinctly and clearly to the examiner, very often in the form of a PowerPoint presentation which was a very appropriate way of communicating their ideas.
- Some strong production candidates offered a clear insight into their role and outlined effectively the technical processes which led to the final performance.
- Well directed performances advantaged the candidates and created impact for the audience.

Areas for consideration:

- Candidates must present a range of skills in order to fully access the marking criteria which relates to *personal technique*.
- Skills presented should represent the range outlined for the chosen discipline in both Unit 1 and Unit 2.
- Some production candidates were much stronger in their presentation ideas than in the realisation of designs or plots. A balanced approach to the presentation and realisation of production disciplines will best fulfil the requirements of the unit.

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit A2 1 Planning For Employment

General Observations

A very pleasing first series for A2. It was evident that most centres had utilised the support materials and information provided at the training events appropriately to assist with the completion of the unit. The work submitted for moderation was well organised and there were some beautiful well considered promotional portfolios which were professionally presented. The majority of centres should be commended on the rigorous execution of the audition/presentation and interview process, which gave candidates a meaningful relevant experience of industry practice. However, in some instances the audition/presentation and interview were not carried out as a continuous process but filmed on different occasions over a period of time. This does not follow industry practice or reflect the spirit in which the specification was written. On the whole the audition/presentation material selected was appropriate. Most candidates were clearly identified at the start of their recordings but there were some issues with recordings not being available for moderation, due to technical faults with the recordings. In most cases the candidates adhered to the prescribed page limits and font size as outlined in Section 3.3 of the specification. The majority of centres used annotation effectively, focusing on the assessment objectives, which was most helpful to the moderation process.

Administration of the Moderation Process

The majority of work was submitted on time and paperwork was generally completed accurately.

- Centres are reminded that TAC 2 should be enclosed with the coursework sample, even when there is only one teacher assessor at the centre.
- All Candidate Record Sheets must state the chosen discipline of the candidate at the top of the form.
- The internal standardisation box should be ticked on the Candidate Record Sheet, even when there is only one teacher at the centre.
- The recordings of the audition/presentation and interview and show reels/demo CDs should be in an accessible format and included with the sample.
- The audition/presentation and interview should be conducted on one occasion and as a continuous process in order to reflect industry practice. Recordings should not be edited.
- All sections of work should be annotated to reflect the teacher-assessors application of the assessment criteria.

AO1 A Written Report (12 marks)

Section 1: Skills and Training

There was a range of approaches to this section. Generally, candidates identified 3 appropriate pathways to develop their skills in Section 1. There were some candidates who viewed this section as a repetition of the Skills Audit from Unit 1 in AS and whilst there is an opportunity to frame their response within the context of the skills acquired, the focus should be on how 3 distinct training routes would develop their skills further. Stronger candidates were able to connect with how the skills developed within the chosen training routes would make them more employable within their discipline.

Section 2: How to Gain Employment

Within Section 2 there was a more generic approach to the role of agents and unions. Candidates should be encouraged to focus on those outside agencies most appropriate to their discipline rather than the Performing Arts Industry as a whole. Centres are reminded that all sources should be referenced and acknowledged through footnotes. Direct inclusion of downloaded material is unacceptable and carries penalties.

Section 3: Employment Plan

Section 3 gave candidates the opportunity to investigate 3 jobs related to their discipline. This requires them to research actual existing jobs within the current workplace and consider their suitability for each.

The centres that took a holistic approach to the report made it a more relevant document. In these cases candidates were able to make connections between the training routes outlined in Section 1 with the jobs available in Section 3.

Overall, the candidates who used the research to underpin their personal pathways, skills and aptitudes created a more coherent and comprehensive report.

Areas for Consideration:

- The research should be put into a personal context relating to the candidates discipline and skills with a focus on how to gain employment within the industry.
- All sources should be acknowledged through the use of footnotes and a bibliography.
- Candidates should include at least one job relating to performing if they are following the performance pathway.
- Section 3 must draw on existing job opportunities that are relevant to the candidates chosen discipline rather than generic job descriptions.

AO2 A Promotional Portfolio (12 marks)

The moderation team enjoyed viewing a wide range of Promotional Portfolios and were pleased by the experiences candidates had presented.

Overall, candidates engaged creatively to produce their promotional portfolios. Some candidates had gone to a lot of effort to co-ordinate all aspects of their portfolio in order to create a cohesive personal style. It was also pleasing to see candidates utilising their skills and experiences from other areas of the curriculum, for example, in the production of websites and the inclusion of MIA films in their showreels and credits. Whilst the quality varied it was clear that candidates had the opportunity to develop a portfolio to promote themselves within the industry. However, further research is needed as to the format of some aspects of the portfolio. In particular centres should note that the assessment evidence for all disciplines requires 3 elements as outlined in Section 3.3 of the specification. Often a headshot was not submitted separately but just included as part of the CV. There were also some showreels that were too long and were not edited to showcase a range of experiences.

Areas for Consideration:

- All aspects of the portfolio should reflect professional practice, underpinned by focused relevant research into current industry standards.
- Opportunities for feedback on draft promotional materials would help inform the candidates' evaluations.
- Candidates should be encouraged to choose the most appropriate format for their discipline, with a demo CD being more apt for musicians than a showreel.
- Demo CDs should include a track list.
- Where online show reels/ website links are submitted, clear instructions on how to access the candidates work needs to accompany the sample.

AO3 An Audition and interview or presentation and interview (24 marks)**Audition/Presentation**

The majority of candidates followed the Drama discipline. Most audition pieces selected were fit for purpose and enabled the candidates to showcase their skills. Contrasting pieces were well chosen and fitted with industry practice. However, in a few cases the extracts were too short or too long and some pieces were too challenging for the candidates. At this level it is expected that a classic monologue would be performed in the appropriate accent. There is more leeway to

change the accent with contemporary pieces but centres are encouraged to draw out the rationale behind the candidates interpretation during the interview process.

It was pleasing to see well prepared production candidates who complemented their presentations with a range of industry relevant documents and PowerPoint presentations. In the interest of parity, with performance candidates, centres should ensure production candidates to make a formal presentation.

Interview

In interview candidates were asked a range of questions, mostly from the suggested questions on the CCEA microsite. The majority of candidates were well prepared but some were a little over rehearsed. Whilst preparation for the interview is encouraged, learning answers by rote does not reflect industry practice. Those achieving in the top bands were able to fully explain, in practical terms, how research had influenced their interpretation of the material presented. Those in the lower bands acknowledged their research this was more generic in nature and lacked depth.

Occasionally, some candidates' auditions/presentations and interviews were imbalanced with one aspect of the process being stronger than the other. Further guidance on how to apply the mark bands in this instance will be given at the Agreement Trial.

Areas for Consideration:

- The audition/presentation and interview should be teacher led as outlined in Section 3.3 of the specification.
- Recordings of audition/presentation and interview should be continuous and not edited.
- Questions should reflect the rigour of A2 study and allow candidates to access the assessment criteria by addressing the use of research to inform the final outcome and the application of skills and knowledge that reflect professional practice.
- The assessment should be conducted formally with no interruptions.

AO4 An evaluation (12 marks)

The evaluation requires candidates to reflect on every aspect of their portfolio and their audition/presentation and interview. The majority took a logical approach to this, using the model provided by CCEA, which goes through each aspect in turn. However, this tended towards narrative and descriptive accounts which did not warrant marks in the top band. In order to fully access these mark bands, candidates need to take account of feedback. Therefore, it is vital that there is an opportunity for meaningful feedback to be given to the candidates during the process. Feedback can be given by teachers, peers and other sources, including current practitioners. There also needs to be a review of the audition/presentation and interview so that candidates can support their evaluation with detailed examples.

Areas for Consideration:

- Opportunities for feedback and reviewing the recording of the audition/presentation and interview should be embedded into the delivery of this unit.

Summary

Overall the moderation team was pleased with most centres' approach to the Unit, which showed a good understanding of what was required, particularly as this is the first year of its delivery. Further guidance on the application of the assessment criteria will be exemplified at the Agreement Trial. Centres are encouraged to make use of the resources available on the CCEA microsite and to avail of the Portfolio Clinic.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit A2 2 Performing to a Commission Brief

Record of Work

General Observations

The records of work produced for this series were of a generally good standard overall and it was evident that candidates had enjoyed their research of professional practice and their completion of tasks for the administration role they had undertaken. The document generally allowed candidates of different abilities to respond positively. The work produced was also clearly relevant in terms of exploring professional contexts within the Performing Arts Industry.

Responses varied between centres and it was clear which centres had allocated an appropriate length of time for the preparation and presentation of the record of work. More consideration needs to be given to the “summary of findings” as this section is worth as many marks as the “evidence of tasks.”

The majority of candidates completed all sections but there were also a significant number of candidates whose work was incomplete.

Research Report - Section 1

- Research was generally well completed in terms of the social, cultural and historical context of the chosen Commission Brief.
- The majority of candidates expressed links from their research to the Commission Brief.

Areas for consideration:

- A significant minority of research was not fully linked to the Commission Brief and some candidates made no mention of the brief at all.
- For the most part, links from research to the final ideas for performance/production were not explicitly expressed.

Research Report - Section 2

- Research of the financial and marketing practices at two venues was generally well approached with sound detail included in the summary.
- Candidates who had made personal contact with venues seemed to gain a great deal from the experience.
- Screen shots were used to exemplify ideas on marketing and the better candidates made secure references to the screen shots.

Areas for consideration:

- There was clear evidence of over dependence on exemplar material.
- Information which is accessed from websites, including screen shots, should be referenced in an appropriate way.

Summary of Findings

- Strong candidates reviewed practice for their administration role at two venues with a balanced approach to the summary of practice at each venue.
- Candidates who had made personal contact with venues seemed to gain a great deal from the experience.
- Some candidates discussed the approach at the venues then considered the tasks; others threaded their ideas on their tasks through the reflection of practice at the venues. Both ideas worked but the latter tended to more sophisticated.
- The better candidates made links from their findings to all three administrative tasks.

Areas for Consideration:

- Some candidates relied solely on internet research which was acceptable but this may have impacted on the final outcome.
- Although the information on practices at venues was generally sound, a significant number of candidates ended up with a mark of 4/16 as they had not made the links from their findings to their own administration role.
- Some candidates did not consider all three tasks in the light of findings which resulted in less marks being awarded.

Evidence of Tasks

- There was generally a sound approach to the generation of tasks with some very professional and creative work in evidence.
- Most of the work presented was in Mark Band 3 and nearly all candidates presented tasks of a similar standard.
- The research work at venues had clearly influenced the outcome of tasks and the better candidates were able to use ideas to influence their own approach.
- The examiners really enjoyed marking the tasks and appreciated the amount of work which some candidates had undertaken in their completion of tasks.

Areas for Consideration:

- There were some issues about the over use of exemplar materials, particularly for Front of House and the Health and Safety Officer. The replication of exemplar materials will result in a loss of marks.
- Some candidates presented incomplete work with only two of the three tasks being presented. This resulted in a Mark Band 1 outcome despite the quality of the submitted items. “Support materials” for the Education Officer role was the task which was most often omitted.
- Candidates should consider further the presentation of tasks in the light of “professional practice”.

Evaluation

- This section was completed to a generally satisfactory standard but the outcomes tended to present a broad sweep rather than specific detail.
- The analysis of the outcomes of their administrative role was the most precise aspect of the overall evaluation.
- Some of the better evaluations were able to present the required detail within word count.

Areas for Consideration:

- This proved the most challenging of the sections as there was generally a descriptive approach rather than an evaluation/analysis of the whole process.
- The word limit needs to be adhered to as many documents were over the word count for this section.
- Candidates must present a precise evaluation with all points covered if they are to access mark band four.
- More consideration needed to be given to group negotiation of ideas and the ability of individuals and groups to make decisions, explore problems and find solutions.

Performance/Production

General Observations

The team of examiners were very pleased with the overall quality of performance and production observed during this first examination series of A2 GCE Performing Arts. The work presented was of a good standard overall; with some highly creative work in evidence from some really strong candidates.

There was a wide range of disciplines on offer with a great variety of very effective devised material in evidence. In general, the choice of brief was very suited to the ability of the candidates and the creation of material drawn from the brief reflected the requirements of the pre-release stimulus material. There were centres that presented challenging material which was commendable and for the most part, candidates rose to that challenge.

All relevant paperwork was completed and submitted for the required deadline. Centres should be reminded that they should identify which brief has been chosen and this should be made evident on the centre's examination record sheet. This is an important aspect of the preparation for the examination process as it indicates the chosen brief to the examiner in advance of the visit.

Performances took place in an atmosphere which created the feel of a Performing Arts Event with audiences in attendance for the most part. Audiences were supportive and they helped create the desired atmosphere for the performers. The candidates were mostly well prepared and the events were, in the main, very successful.

The Candidate Assessment Forms were completed in advance; however, centres should note that the chosen discipline of the candidates should be clearly identified on the form.

Engagement with the Commission Brief

- The wide variety of options within the Commission Brief allowed candidates to devise a variety of interpretations which gave them the opportunity to perform or produce to their particular strengths.
- The majority of the candidates chose to deal with social problems targeting a Key Stage Four audience. The least popular option was the exploration of performance practitioners.
- It was evident at some centres that groups had really grasped the Commission Brief and executed their ideas to a very high standard.
- In the best examples of work the performers and production candidates were fully engaged with the brief and produced material which was well developed. This gave the candidates an opportunity to achieve the top mark range for their interpretation of the Commission Brief.
- Some work was very meaningful and truly conveyed the spirit of this final unit to the audience.

Areas for Consideration:

- At times the devised material was not developed enough to enable the candidates to reach the highest mark range for their interpretation of the Commission Brief.
- In some cases the content was underdeveloped and superficial and the performance was under rehearsed. This made it difficult for the candidates to access the highest mark range.
- In a very small number of centres the work presented was uneven due largely to the fragmented nature of a short scene style of presentation.
- Centres should be reminded to realise the brief for a specific target audience, this ensures that the work is focused and achieves the desired impact.

Level of Skills Development

- Candidates generally rose to the challenge and demonstrated their skills with personal style and meaning to great effect.
- Some performers really demonstrated a very high degree of skill throughout their performances which was a result of effective preparation and rehearsal.
- The production candidates showed an extremely competent ability for the most part, indicating great insight into their chosen production field.
- Costume design candidates showed an awareness of both the practical and aesthetic requirements of their performers with some very clever ideas for quick costume changes emerging from some centres.
- Some lighting candidates showed very in-depth knowledge of the various technical apparatus involved and this was clearly evident in their presentations.
- Sound technicians, for the most part, showed a real enthusiasm for their chosen discipline and this was reflected in the variety of software they utilised.

Areas for consideration:

- Some music candidates struggled to maintain vocal clarity and pitch and general strength of projection was an issue in a number of singing candidates.
- At times the performers demonstrated a good level of skill development but did not have the level of content in the material to access the highest mark range.
- Character portrayal did not always suit the style or content of the piece which meant that the meaning and mood was not conveyed as strongly as it could have been.
- Some of the multi roles could have been developed further to express the full range of performance skills.
- Not all production candidates had produced evidence of all the required documents for their chosen discipline with Health and Safety information lacking in a number of presentations.

Quality of Final Performance

- Performance spaces were generally well set up with effective use of staging and lighting to enhance the presentations.
- Appropriate performance spaces, at some centres, also helped set the tone and mood of the event giving a very professional overall impression.
- The best performances provided the stretch and challenge needed for pupils at this level.
- The deepest sense of mood and meaning was created in centres who presented work which was carefully crafted and creatively performed.
- For the most part, the themes and plots that candidates developed for performances were original, engaging and entertaining.
- In general the drama candidates' scripts were clearly original allowing performers to display a variety of vocal and movement skills.
- Production candidates enhanced the work of performers by providing, in the main, design and technical enhancement for the events.

Areas for consideration:

- In a few instances overall meaning and mood of the piece was not conveyed as strongly as it could have been.
- While beginnings of performances were often strong and very much suited to the brief, as the performance developed, they sometimes lost effect and meaning.
- Technical effects were not always fully integrated into the performance and were sometimes used for no obvious reason.
- The overall impact and meaning was not always apparent and a clearer focus on intent would sharpen the work at some centres. More time spent on determining their focus and how they should deliver their ideas would benefit all candidates.
- On a few occasions, performances were overly complicated and as a result the meaning and message was diluted.
- Most music candidates chose to perform pre-existing material; the originality aspect of the performance was therefore less apparent.

Contact details

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