



CCEA Level 1 Certificate in Performance Skills  
CCEA Level 2 Certificate in Performance Skills

Summer Series 2019

## Principal Moderator's Report

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*(Level 1 and Level 2)*



## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2019 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 section on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# LEVEL 1 AND 2 CERTIFICATES IN PERFORMANCE SKILLS Vocationally-Related Qualification (VRQ)

## Principal Moderator's Report

### Level 1 and Level 2

#### Introduction

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that centres have a shared and accurate understanding of the assessment criteria for Performance Skills and that centres apply that shared understanding to the assessment of their candidates. As the subject continues to grow, the role of moderation becomes increasingly important as a means of ensuring that the CCEA standard is being applied consistently and fairly across centres.

In carrying out moderation for the summer 2019 series, it was encouraging to see, yet again, the pleasure and benefit young people derive from this qualification. Teachers reported, in centre after centre, how they had seen their learners grow in confidence and ability as they worked through the requirements of the course. The most common disciplines seen by moderators this year were, again, drama and music for which both individual and group performances were presented. Other disciplines included dance, DJing, and drumming.

This report is intended to offer feedback to centres that will help them in planning and delivering the course again for the 2019/20 series, in line with the assessment criteria given in the specification.

#### The Assessment Criteria: Level 1

##### Unit 1: Working in the Performing Arts

Unit 1: 2.2 Know what opportunities there are for progression in the performing arts

Centres are advised to provide candidates with the opportunity to research and explore different progression opportunities in studying performing arts. Exploring further qualifications and the use of case studies proved very effective for some centres.

##### Unit 2: Develop Performance Skills

Unit 2: 1.2 Assess present level of practical skills

The use of skills audits proved a popular choice and worked well for the candidates in accessing their skills level.

Unit 2: 1.5 Demonstrate safe working practices within their chosen art form.

Attention should be paid to the safe working practices within the candidates' chosen art form. Where candidates demonstrated knowledge of the importance of warm-up and cool-down activities for drama/dance and for vocal warm-up techniques for singers this proved beneficial.

(See also section on Level 2, below. Most of the points made for Level 2 can be applied also to Level 1)

## The Assessment Criteria: Level 2

### Unit 1: Working in the Performing Arts Industry

Unit 1: 1.1 Describe a performing arts organisation, its function and relation to other areas of the industry

Candidates used a range of formats very effectively to meet this assessment criterion, including mind maps, PowerPoints and essays; however, while the criterion was, in general, well addressed, the requirement for candidates to describe how their chosen performing arts organisation relates “to other areas of the industry” was poorly covered in many centres and was sometimes not addressed at all. In some cases, candidates used screen shots of web pages to exemplify the relation of their chosen performing arts organisation to other areas of the industry. While this is perfectly acceptable, it is important to remember that the criterion requires the candidate to **describe** and so candidates should include written text with their screen shot to outline the links between their chosen organisation and other areas of the industry.

Unit 1: 2.1 Describe a job role from the performance area of employment and how it relates to other roles in the same and different areas of the industry

Candidates explored a good range of appropriate performance-based roles including actors, singers, dancers, disk jockeys, comedians and magicians. Candidates should be encouraged to explore the relationship between performers and those who have production roles such as directors, set designers, costume designers and makeup artists. Many candidates included job descriptions taken from the internet; this is acceptable only if the candidates also include written text to illustrate their understanding of the roles they have identified and how those roles relate “to other roles in the same and different areas of the industry”.

Unit 1: 2.2 Describe a job role from the arts administration or production area of employment and how it relates to other roles from the same and different areas of the industry.

Candidates explored a range of job roles in production including, for example, director, costume design, makeup artist, front of house, and health and safety officer. Some centres approached this as a PowerPoint presentation while others created their own table to include information such as skills required to carry out the chosen role and who someone in that role would have to work alongside. Approaches such as these helped candidates to structure the information they had gathered. When outlining the salary typically associated with their chosen role, it was pleasing to see an increasing number of candidates giving figures for employment within Northern Ireland. This helps to make the course more directly relevant to the learners and should be encouraged.

### Unit 2: Develop Technique for Performance

Unit 2: 1.1 Assess present level of practical skill in chosen art form

In meeting this criterion, candidates assessed their skills level through the use of a skills audit. The use of a key or colour code was popular and was very effective in helping candidates to present information clearly.

Unit 2: 1.2 Recognise current strengths and weaknesses

Candidates who explicitly used the outcomes of their skills audit to identify areas of strength and weakness were able to demonstrate clear understanding of areas they could focus on for improvement. Some centres designed peer assessment forms to allow candidates the opportunity to receive feedback from their peers; this proved effective and was considered by the moderation team to be an example of excellent practice.

### Unit 2: 1.3 Demonstrate the ability to develop and apply new skills

Candidates used a range of technologies to work on skills they had identified as needing improvement in order to help facilitate progression. The use of apps for this purpose is a growing trend and is reflective of how technology is utilised throughout the arts industry. Some candidates used images and/or PowerPoint to show themselves practising, rehearsing and taking part in workshops to develop new skills. As always, when candidates present such visual information, it is essential that they also include written text through which they can demonstrate their understanding.

### Unit 2: 1.4 Demonstrate safe working practices within a chosen art form

Most candidates focused on personal safety and wrote about, for example, vocal warm-ups, stretching and hydration. Candidates should be encouraged to think of safe practice more broadly and to take into account the relevance of such things as clothing, costume, set, lighting and sound all of which can be important in staying safe within given art forms.

### Unit 2: 2.1 Explain how participation in practice sessions can improve skills

The majority of candidates who chose drama as their chosen art form focused on workshop style sessions where they improved their skills through exploring techniques linked to Stanislavski, Brecht or Littlewood. Candidates who chose music as their art form looked at different styles and genres of music. They focused on how they developed key musical techniques in their chosen instrument. Overall, there was a wide range of formats used by candidates to demonstrate the use of practical sessions to improve their skills, which proved acceptable. These ranged from report writing, PowerPoint slides, annotated pictures and diary accounts.

### Unit 2: 2.2 Identify how to use action plans and schedules to acquire new skills; and evaluate present level of technical skill.

It was pleasing to see the range of activities on offer in order to help candidates develop within their chosen art form. A number of candidates, however, failed to address how the activities referenced in their action plan would help them improve. Candidates should outline the purpose of the activities and link them to areas they have previously identified as weaknesses. More successful candidates made clear links between their action plan and Unit 2: 1.2 (Recognise current strengths and weaknesses). The schedule for improvement should then be informed by the action plan, which was the case for most candidates. This section requires the candidate to engage in self-assessment and to reflect on how they have improved.

## The Assessment Criteria: Levels 1 and 2 Unit 3: Rehearse and Perform

### Unit 3: 1.1 Identify the art form

Most candidates identified art forms involving performance. Where candidates choose to identify an art form that does not explicitly involve performance, such as costume design, they must be given the opportunity to meet the criteria under Unit 3: 2.1. This could be done by giving the candidate the opportunity to discuss their role with an audience. This discussion should be filmed for assessment purposes.

### Unit 3: 1.2 Research performance material for the chosen art form

This criterion is intended to enable candidates to identify the range of possible types of performance possible within their chosen art form before choosing the specific type of performance they will rehearse and present (see Unit 3 1.3). In many cases, however, candidates researched the requirements for a performance they had already decided upon – this represents a misunderstanding of the criterion.

### Unit 3: 1.3 Investigate the requirements of the material before selection is made

This criterion builds on Unit 3: 1.2. Having identified the range of possible types of performance possible within a chosen art form, candidates now research the requirements of these possible types and then select the one on which they want to focus. As with, Unit 3:1.2 and 1.1, many candidates ignored other possibilities and focus on a performance they have decided upon from the start of the unit. In doing so they are not fully meeting this criterion.

The approach to investigating the requirements of the performance varied across centres and mostly reflected on the practical constraints of the production. Centres should encourage pupils also to consider any social, cultural or historical information that may link to their performance and their target audience.

### Unit 3: 1.4 Plan a rehearsal schedule taking into account the demands of the performance

Generally, rehearsal schedules met the assessment criterion and proved to be fit for purpose. Where candidates had included opportunities to receive and act on feedback, this enhanced the overall work.

### Unit 3: 1.5 Rehearse performance material using technical skills

Candidates made good use of the rehearsal log and it was evident that a range of techniques had been embedded as part of the rehearsal process in order to allow skills to develop. A mixture of individual rehearsal strategies and workshop-style sessions were evident across the centres. Some candidates identified how current technology could help them improve, which was forward thinking and to be commended.

### Unit 3: 1.6 Demonstrate safe working practices during rehearsal and performance

Overall, candidates ensured they addressed the assessment criterion for this section by providing photographic evidence, which was often supported with annotations. Where candidates referenced legal health and safety requirements this demonstrated that research had taken place and informed the candidate's understanding. Centres should ensure that time is spent on the colour code for the fire extinguishers as this was often overlooked.

### Unit 3: 2.1 Perform the material using technical and performance skills; this should include:

(a) sustaining concentration; (b) demonstrating projection; (c) demonstrating timing during a performance; (d) engaging the audience

Candidates performed a mixture of self-devised plays, scripted performances, dance numbers, musical concerts, DJing, comedy routines and talent showcases. Where the centre had opted for a live moderation there was a great sense of occasion and excitement.

Centres are reminded that the candidates should address each of the four areas listed above in their performance. Candidates delivered a wide range of performances that explored a range of themes and issues. Some notable performances included:

- a self-devised piece focusing on safe driving,
- a self-choreographed dance performed by a duo focusing on equality,
- a comedic twist on the children's classic, 'If you go down to the woods today',
- a traditional Irish music group,
- a pop/rock boy band,
- a signed version of hits from The Greatest Showman, and
- a comedy sketch focusing on a family going on holiday.

The moderation team thoroughly enjoyed the performances and noted a very high degree of commitment in terms of the performances. It was clear that a lot of hard work had gone into the productions.

Unit 3: 2.2 Evaluate performance and skills used with a view to improvement, and 2.3 describe the technical skills you used

This criterion was successfully addressed by most candidates and particular attention was paid to how the performance engaged the audience. Centres should encourage candidates to evaluate both their areas of strength and areas for improvement.

## **Administration**

Moderation of Performance Skills is frequently an inspiring and rewarding experience for the moderators as they watch young people challenge, express and enjoy themselves, developing valuable life skills as they do so. The moderation team is grateful to centres for the warm welcome it received from staff and pupils. The facilities provided and the organisation and presentation of the required paperwork was consistently of a very high order. The following points are offered as steps that might be taken to build on the success of this year's moderation exercise:

- It can be challenging for moderators to identify candidates who are part of the moderation sample during performances. Some centres helpfully assisted the moderators by including photographs of the relevant candidates in the portfolios and/or had the candidates introduce themselves stating their candidate number at the beginning of the performance.
- It is helpful to moderators when portfolios have been annotated fully by teachers. During the drafting of the portfolio, annotation is a mechanism by which teachers can feed back to, and communicate with, the candidates. Annotation of the completed portfolio is an opportunity for the teacher to communicate with the moderator and to clearly identify where s/he feels the candidate has met the relevant criteria. As minimum, teachers should complete the section of the portfolio which allows page references to be provided indicating where criteria have been addressed.
- Centres should ensure that rehearsal footage is made available for the visiting moderator on either USB or DVD and that each candidate is identifiable with labelling in the video or the inclusion of a head shot with their candidate number noted.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

- **Specification Support Officer: Nola Fitzsimons**  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension: 2235, email: nfitzsimons@ccea.org.uk)
- **Officer with Subject Responsibility: Christine Moorhead**  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension: 2345, email: cmoorhead@ccea.org.uk)