

Cambridge Technicals

Performing Arts

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificates in Performing Arts
05850, 05851

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diplomas in Performing Arts
05852, 05853

OCR Report to Centres January 2018

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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Cambridge Technicals

Performing Arts 05850 – 05853

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in Performing Arts 05850

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Performing Arts 05851

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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Unit 1 – Prepare to work in the performing arts sector

General Comments:

Unit 1 is a 120GLH synoptic unit intended to be assessed at the conclusion of the programme when learners have developed a clear and unique vocational route into the performing arts and when their knowledge and understanding of the industry has been acquired.

The Portfolio

The exact format of the portfolio is not stipulated. It will depend on the creative or technical area chosen by the learner and can be in note form, this includes the report which although benefiting from structure such as an introductory paragraph and some concluding comments could also be in note or bulleted form. The writing style can be a formal 'report' style portfolio or more informal written evidence.

There is one job advertisement on which the proposal is based; this is the stimulus that will change from series to series.

The 'pitch' and audition/presentation

The 'pitch' to camera and the audition/presentation should follow on fluently from one to the other. It is not expected that these elements will be filmed on separate occasions and then edited together. This series saw a greater number of centres recording this as required. The intention is to support the candidate to present an audition in the context of a response to the externally set advert.

Centres are allowed to add lighting, costume or make-up but this is not compulsory and will depend on candidate choice of material and response, however, these technical elements must not interfere with the fluency referred to above.

The audition piece should not include other actors even if these are passive and/or silent. An individual response is required.

If equipment needs to be operated (i.e. lighting, sound) during technical presentations this must be done by the candidate and not by a third party being 'cued'.

Teachers must not ask or in any way 'prompt' the questions that form the basis of the 'pitch'; these are intended to be responded to by the candidate. It is for the candidate to decide whether these are answered in order or whether they are integrated into a more holistic approach.

The camera should be in a fixed position.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

1. Research should be undertaken to provide an understanding of the context for the employment opportunity.

The chosen vocational route should be clearly expressed and the report should be relevant to this.

The promotional intent should be appropriate for the chosen vocational role.

Performing Arts terminology should be used accurately.

The wider contexts for the role, and the employment opportunity should be appreciated so the report is in line with a relevant viewpoint.

Knowledge, skills and techniques should be drawn from the wider learning opportunities of the course, as this is a synoptic unit.

2. Clear references should be made to the advertisement.

Knowledge and understanding of the role, and its place in the project, should be demonstrated.

Experience should be outlined to support the explanation of how skills gained have been acquired and how they can be further developed by taking part in the project.

Possible progression routes should be highlighted.

Ideas should be communicated in an engaging manner.

3. The audition piece or technical presentation should be delivered with confidence and demonstrate relevant knowledge, skills and techniques.

There should be clear connections between the practical demonstration and the wider context of the project.

Centres may find the following helpful when preparing for the next series:

- The portfolio can be written in a formal or informal style
- The word count is to provide a recommendation for the amount of learner work we are expecting to see, and work presented for assessment that is either significantly lower or higher than this may not do as well.
- The pitch should be in line with professional practice and not be 'prompted'.
- The pitch should be directly to camera and flow on from the pitch..
- The audition piece or presentation should be directly after the pitch, and part of the same recording.
- It is not intended that the portfolio will be read aloud as the pitch, the pitch and audition should follow on from each other, resulting from the broader information and context of the portfolio.
- The advert should be fully considered to inform the portfolio, pitch and audition. The knowledge and understanding and skills and techniques demonstrated should have relevance to the advert/employment opportunity.

Unit 2 – Proposal for a commissioning brief

Overall there was a good response to this paper. Candidates produced some very high standards of work and levels of understanding. There was a noticeable improvement in understanding and some evidence of synoptic learning from other units coming through.

The main messages for centres is to ensure that:

1. Candidates consistently relate their answer back to the scenario. Each element of their answer needs to be relevant to the commission brief and mindful that churning out generic knowledge that is not relevant, is not included. This will not achieve additional marks unless used as a comparison or to support their rationale.
2. Candidates who followed the question paper breakdown seemed to produce more fluid responses.
3. Please encourage candidates to use the appendices as much as possible. This is a useful tool. Those that did had more word count to ensure a better quality of rationale for their decisions.
4. Please ensure that the legality, risk assessment, budgets and health and safety aspects are covered in depth (use the appendices to attach relevant information, charts etc.). These are important aspects of the learning. They need to be relevant to the scenario, not generic.
5. To be current, GDPR could now be considered in the delivery of candidates learning.
6. This paper allows opportunity for candidates to practice and show their referencing skills.
7. **CANDIDATES WORK MUST BE INDEPENDENT.** There were a couple of instances where candidates were working to assisted templates or had worked in groups. This opens the centre to plagiarism investigations. There is a natural template given as the candidate works through the exam paper itself.

Unit 3 – Influential performance practice

There was a range of responses to this paper. Overall, it was pleasing to see some great examples of independent work which is reflective that the candidate truly understood the meaning of the question.

The differences in response seem to lead to the candidates understanding of the question itself. In question 1 some candidates wrote more about the practitioner's journey than how the practitioner influenced others or supports and gives rationale either for or against the statement. Some responses showed knowledge and understanding of the person's practice but did not tackle the question of influence sufficiently.

To be clear, the candidate needs the knowledge about the practitioner but it is not this knowledge that is being tested. It is the understanding of 'how and why' the practitioner is being used as an example to evidence the influence. We are looking for what was the practitioner's effect on or by the influence? - Not a regurgitated history about the practitioner. At level 3 we are testing the understanding and use of knowledge, not directly, the knowledge itself.

Centres should be brave to encourage candidates to research their own examples of practitioners and not stick to just using the practitioners studies that they have covered as their base learning in class. Of course they can use these examples but there is also a multitude of other practitioners out there that will extend their interest and learning.

The practical elements were on the whole of a good quality. Here are a few observations to clarify how the candidate needs to respond to question 2:

- A **brief** commentary can be used to introduce these but this must be short, to the point and not a pitch or a repetition of the written response. Commentary is not marked and should therefore be to clarify the contrast between the two pieces.
- The practical submissions **MUST be a demonstration of physical performance work** (for example; acting, singing, dancing or instrument playing), not a power point presentation. The verbal 'pitch' is only relevant to unit 1.
- **There must be no group work submitted. INDEPENDENT RESPONSES ONLY** please.
- Encourage candidates to work to their individual strengths, technical ability is marked on this paper as well as how well their intention, in response to the statement, has been addressed.

Unit 32 – Arts Administration

General Comments

The purpose of this paper is to show understanding of the necessary practicalities of managing a professional performance company. Responses were centred in the middle range with a minority of high end scripts. The scenario of an arts administrator in a tour company specialising in children's entertainment provided a context for the questions set. The expectation is that candidates will know that the demands of arts administration has a standard set of responsibilities but that the practice varies according to the nature of the company and its audience. The majority of respondents grasped this in the answers seen. The early questions structured more towards the standard tasks were mostly well answered. Centres had clearly prepared candidates to show specific knowledge of a range of administrative functions in professional performance.

The longer questions offered candidates the opportunity to show range and depth in knowledge and understanding of the arts administrator's role; some well-planned answers were seen. Quality of language is important. Marks were awarded only where there was clear knowledge addressing the question in the terms in which it was asked, and for a second mark for any point in Q1-8 clear understanding supporting that knowledge was essential. Similarly in Q9 & Q10 marks could only be awarded where there was full clarity in expressing the functioning of the arts administrator within the company. The best answers went beyond broad understanding and into the detail of the many tasks that fall into this role. To express this there are other possible formats than developed prose. For example, some detailed understanding was seen which was expressed in carefully expanded bullet points.

Q1: Most answers understood that Risk Assessment is more than 'to keep people safe', which was not creditable. One mark was awarded for a definition beyond restating the term itself; a brief explanatory reason was sufficient for a second mark. Risk assessment must recognise that in a dynamic theatrical working environment risks will continue to exist; and that there is a formalised process whereby risk is recognised, evaluated and managed to reduce hazards to a minimum within which the task can still be delivered efficiently.

Q2: Most candidates achieved some or all marks for this question. There are a range of other legal safety requirements in any venue. The need for fire safety policy and clearly marked exits was often cited, as was the need for a first aid-trained member of staff. For a second mark for each of these points a reason expressed as a brief explanation was essential. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certification checks were very frequently cited. This was acceptable, although it is not clear in the given scenario that 'children's entertainment' would involve direct contact with children.

Q3: This was usually answered successfully. The answer must specify how a venue may be considered to be likely to attract young audiences. Similarly to Q7, it is what positioning venue has to enable it to attract that audience rather than what the audience might do of its own accord. However a venue which has an existing young audience base was a viable answer for one mark. A second was awarded for a credible suggestion for the venue's actions to attract that audience.

Q4: Most responses attained most or all marks. There is a variety of information a marketing department would need. Most cited ticket sales and positive audience feedback. A second mark for each point was given for explanation: in the case of these two, that the level of ticket sales was high enough to achieve good future audiences, and positive feedback meant that audiences were likely to return to see the company again. Alternate reasons often cited were profit margins against cost to the company of booking the venue. All of these points indicate understanding of the general viability of the venue as a future performance location.

Q5: Most candidates showed some understanding of the demands of this question, which asks for an example of records kept by the venue which would demonstrate a duty of care. Possible responses that could be credited included payment records, data protection practices showing that records were no longer kept for staff who had left, medical needs of staff members, risk assessment records, the company's accident book, and insurance policy documents; one of these could be cited to attain one mark; a reason for this record-keeping would attract a second mark. Two marks were awarded where the item was identified and with a valid explanation of how this shows duty of care, where it was implicit in the answer that it was kept as a record by the company.

Q6: Both checks to the company members and the venue were accepted as possible or likely before technicians could work at a venue. Two examples had to be given; for full marks a brief explanation showing accurate understanding was required for each one. There are a range of valid practical checks that a tour manager may undertake, all with the purpose that the show will be able to get in, perform and get out safely and workably. Most responses gave relevant and appropriate examples. Where risk assessment was cited as one example, any health and safety assessment activity that would take place as part of that process could not be accepted as a second example.

Q7: Most answers recognised that a target audience must be known by the venue to market to that audience by a variety of means, some online in current times, and were credited accordingly. Dates and times of performances were also given in some answers and credited as necessary; images, reviews and review comments and promotional ticket deals could also have been answers to this question.

Q8: "an Arts Council event" was accepted both as an event showcasing Arts Council-funded work, and as a company undertaking an Arts Council-funded tour, and answers which addressed either relevantly could be credited; also answers stating an aim to target diverse audiences which are specifically referenced in Arts council policies.

Q9: The more developed answer needed to be shown here addressed the preparation for a variation on the company's usual practices. This required applied knowledge to be demonstrated which would adapt standard practices in a new performance window. The expectation is that for a maximum of 18 marks the task would consider all essential aspects of production from inception to delivery to the venue; and that an administrator would understand all the functions of other key roles, knowing how to review progress and what is necessary to stay on schedule as the production progressed. Most candidates took some account of the needs of performing at an outdoor festival. In the upper range there were some very detailed and organised answers including a sense of production timescales. There were answers seen which included pre-event planning for necessary activity after the performance had taken place, which could be credited as part of the overall planning of the arts administrator, although more general discussion of events after the performance would be outside of the terms of the question.

Q10: As the logistical challenge of Question 10 intentionally has no readily definable solution. There were a wide range of answers seen. Effective responses showed administrative thinking and knowledge exercised in an organised approach, which recognised that the core of the answer lies in identifying and evaluating the implications of the changes that must be made within a narrow set of options. It was to be anticipated that the number of very confidently structured responses was likely to be limited, but a broad number of secure answers was seen also. The best answers recognised that the arts administrator has to work within the constraints of a situation where realistically the main choices were to cancel or find logistical solutions to adapt and perform at the rescheduled event. Financial considerations had to be central to the reasoning for the answer to be credible. Good answers showed depth of understanding in considering the range of implications these options would be likely to have upon the company. Not all answers seen made a recommendation, although the given scenario was clear that one would have to be made; an either/or response left a degree of uncertainty about how to go forward.

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