

# Pearson BTEC Performing Arts



**Lead Internal Verifier**  
**Newsletter**

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Issue 3

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## In this edition:

Welcome to the third edition of the BTEC Performing Arts Lead Internal Verifier Newsletter.

The Senior Team at Pearson have had a busy summer and autumn, with Awarding for the external units (two units for NQF Level 2, and two for the new 2016 Level 3 Nationals) and preparing for the externally set tasks for the new academic year, which sees an additional two externally assessed units for the Level 3 Nationals this summer.

At present our Senior Standards Verifiers have finished standardising their teams of Standards Verifiers for the roll-out of SV allocations for the January to May SV window. We are also currently training an additional workforce of specialist SVs to undertake allocation for Production Arts programmes.

Also in hand is the production of Sample Marked Learner Work for a range of external and internal units, and support materials for centres delivering the new Level 2 Tech Awards which started first teaching in September 2017, with many centres coming on board for the new qualifications.

This edition of the Newsletter will focus on some of the current hot topics our teams have been dealing with in response to questions from centres. We hope you find this information useful.

### Contributors

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### NEW!

#### Internal Assessment: Senior Standards Verifiers Annual Sector Reports

New this year is the publication of detailed centre-facing reports by our Senior Standards Verifiers. The reports have been available on the Pearson website since October and include a wealth of useful information on delivery and assessment of internal units, based on observations and feedback from Standards Verifier during the last year. The reports contain sector updates, guidance on best practice in the delivery and assessment of key internal units and advice on standards verification processes.

The SSV reports can be downloaded [here](#) by clicking on the link to 'SSV/SEE Reports'.

In the meantime, don't forget to access the Lead Examiner Reports for the externally assessed units assessed in 2016/17. These can be found in the External Assessment section of the specification pages on the Pearson BTEC website for the 2016 Level 3.

# 1

## BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts: *Sources of information and support for teaching and assessment*

The Tech Award is a 120 GLH qualification comprising of three Components, two which are assessed internally and the third through an external assessment. The qualification is aimed at KS4 learners wishing to develop skills in acting, dance and/or musical theatre and progress to level 3 following a vocational route.

There is a wealth of guidance and information available on the Pearson website to introduce this qualification which many centres are already using as a successor to the NQF BTEC Level 2 Award (2012).

 A number of these documents are secure access, so you will need your Edexcel Online login.

<b>Specification</b>	<p>The three Components (in the Tech Awards these are no longer called 'units'); information on qualification structures, assessment, grading and quality assurance.</p>
<b>Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)</b>	<p>Example of what the externally set task will look like. Live external papers will follow the design/structure of the SAMs, with the theme and focus of the set task changing with each series. The SAMs should be used in teaching and learning when preparing learners for the external unit, for example as a 'mock' exam.</p>
<b>Get to know the course videos</b>	<p>Produced and presented by the Subject Advisor, Paul Webster, these informative videos describe the new Components as well as the similarities between the two qualifications and where content compares. Paul also provides suggestions for innovative approaches to delivery and assessment of the Components.</p>
<b>AABs and SMLW</b>	<p><a href="#"><b>Authorised Assignment Briefs (Component 1 and Component 2).</b></a> These are contextualised for Dance and Acting pathways. Can be used 'off the shelf' with minimal adaptation such as choice of practitioners, texts, repertoire, etc.</p>

	<p>Sample Marked Work has been produced with examples of assessed learner work at Pass and Distinction, for Dance, Acting and Musical Theatre pathways. These also demonstrate different ways learners may produce evidence for assessment of the Learning Aims.</p>	
<p><b>SOWS, FAQs, Course Planners</b></p>	<p>Example Schemes of Work and Course Planners assist with initial planning and implementation of the new Tech Award. The Subject Advisor has produced an FAQ document answering commonly asked questions from teachers.</p>	
<p><b>BTEC Teaching Support</b></p>	<p>On this webpage, centres can download the BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook as well as the forms and templates needed to manage assessment and internal verification processes. The page also contains links to other services and support including the Assignment Checking Service, myBTEC and OSCA.</p>	
<p><b>BTEC Tech Award Guide to Resources</b></p>	<p>Samples from the full resource packages for Component 1 Learning Aim A are available from the Pearson BTEC website. The samples provide teaching and learning materials linked to the published Scheme of Work for this Component, covering Acting, Musical Theatre and Dance specialisms, and can be downloaded <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	

## Hot off the press

Work is currently underway to allow Level 2 learners on the Tech Award to specialise in production arts. The specification and SAMs are being updated and it is expected that the additional content for the three Components will soon be available to enable learners to undertake the qualification through a Production/Design approach. Further announcements will be made when the updated specifications are available.

Paul Webster recorded an online 'Getting Ready to Teach the New Level 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts' event. The full recording of the event can be accessed [here](#).

# 2

## NQF BTEC Level 3 Nationals Unit 2 Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance

### *Using Professional Dance Repertoire*

When delivering Unit 2 of the 2016 Level 3 Nationals to dancers, to address Learning Aims B and C, learners will develop skills in one style and apply those skills in rehearsal and in a performance based on existing performance material.

Selecting appropriate professional repertoire for your learners is important and the decision will be based on various factors: the expertise of the department, later projects planned for the programme and the ability of the cohort. Centres often ask why it is not possible for tutors and/or learners to choreograph original material for this unit, and the answer is that firstly, exploration and development of existing material allows learners opportunity to engage with the work of practitioners and undertake research to support their analysis and interpretation of the material. Secondly, a piece of work that has been 'seasoned' through public performances will help ensure learners are both supported with tested material that has been, if you like, 'quality assured' in the public arena, as well as providing potential for stretch and challenge.

Mastering the stylistic qualities of the work contributes greatly to the higher grades, so choosing a style and repertoire that suits your learners will be important. If you have a cohort whose preferences indicate an eclectic mix of styles; committing to one style and then spending time developing the stylistic qualities through technique classes is more supportive than dividing the allocated time between different styles to accommodate everyone. Allocating a sensible amount of time to teaching and learning before assessment begins will help when picking the right piece of repertoire for the learners.



Reproducing the exact professional repertoire as the choreographer intended is a high demand and when planning delivery for Learning Aim C the assessor may want to return to the unit content for Learning Aim C which states 'based on existing material'. Suitable extracts from the professional work could therefore be learnt and difficult movements can be adapted to accommodate the skill base of the learners. Adaptations to the choreography should be informed by decisions made by learners and/or teachers through their understanding of the choreographer and the original work.

Using the same or similar aural accompaniment to the original production is also important, especially with the work of certain choreographers, where the music played an integral part in the creative process and the movement is inextricably linked to it. For example, the works of Christopher Bruce use specific musical accompaniment that is integral to the meaning and aesthetic of his pieces. In the climax of *Ghost Dances*, the choreography connects to the music in becoming progressively faster alongside it. The movement becomes a frenzy of emotion, hope and desperation the faster it becomes. Without the accelerating speed of the music, the intentions



and the climax would not be achieved.

The final performed piece should therefore be based on the professional repertoire with evidence of a connection to the movement components and constituent features. Though existing repertoire is a vehicle for assessment, adaptations to the original will occur. Avoid using the style of the dance as the sole connection to the original choreography, as there are other dance units in the programme which provide this opportunity. The important thing is that learners are experiencing the demands and intentions of the original choreography.



# 3

## Standards Verification: Top Tips for Lead Internal Verifiers

### **Consider standards sampling when planning assessment:**

The standards verification deadline date is **30th May** for all BTEC Level 1 – 3 programmes in Dance and Performing Arts and Production Arts. Please note this is the deadline for the Standards Verifier to have completed and submitted their report, and not the deadline for centres sending the postal sample. To allow for sampling well before the deadline, ensure you have completed units available early in the academic year so that timely standards verification sampling can take place.

### **Send all your Assessment Plans to your SV:**

You may have different cohorts completing the same course but with different assessment plans, for example where there are different year groups, or where the programme has different pathways. You may also have a few different sized qualifications with smaller size qualifications nested within larger titles. Each programme you run should have an Assessment Plan and it will allow your standards verifier to arrange for sampling much quicker if all the plans are sent when requested.

### **Send copies of work:**

Please do not send SVs original evidence. Also, it is not necessary to send paper copies of work: if learners have produced work electronically, you may send the SV links to where the work is stored/hosted. Similarly, many more centres are now sharing files and video evidence using cloud storage, Google Drives, Dropbox, Vimeo, etc. This saves on costly postage, paper wastage and can save assessors valuable time when preparing samples.

### **Use Parcelforce:**

Use the Pearson Parcelforce account that your exams officer should have access to. This means that the sample can be tracked and that it is insured.

### **[Instructions on using Parcelforce](#)**

### **Send clear Learner Identification for Audio / Video footage:**

Please ensure learners can be clearly identified by your SV and that identification is sent with your sample. Any information is greatly appreciated and will save time answering emails or phone calls from the SV.



Good practice in providing identification of learners includes:

- labelled screenshots
- timings, entrances and exits, locations on stage / in studio
- written descriptions including role, appearance
- learners introducing themselves, in costume, at the start of the video

### **Select your videos wisely:**

If you have recorded every single session the learners have completed over the year, select the videos that you have used to justify the assessment decision and send only these to the SV. Ideally you should be planning to video record milestone skills development sessions/workshops for skills development units, and milestone rehearsals (for example, early- mid- and dress- rehearsal stage) as well as the assessed performance, and only sending these as evidence.

### **Read your previous year's SV Report:**

When preparing for the sample, ensure you have re-read the SV Report from the previous year. Make sure that any essential actions and/or recommendations have been followed-up.

If following the first sample you are asked to submit a further sample, or if last year you were Not Yet Fully Sampled (NYFS) make sure you have access to the SV report and read it fully, making particular note of the remedial actions required for the second sample and the SV's rationale for these actions. Work with your SV to clarify any issues so that you know exactly what to do to ensure a release: your SV is there support you so don't hesitate to email them if you need any clarification.

### **Have fun with Teaching and Learning:**

Putting learners under assessment conditions for the entirety of the course can cause unnecessary pressure for both learners or for assessors. When programme planning, reduce the assessment period and have fun with teaching and learning. You can do anything you want during this time to ensure your learners are best prepared for formal assessment: skills development, introducing concepts and approaches, mini-projects, mock assessments, etc. The BTEC units/components give you the freedom to explore and prepare learners for shorter, more concise assessment periods, assessing them when they are ready.



## **BTEC Performing Arts Lead IV Newsletter**

**Next Edition:**

**BTEC Production Arts:**  
Approaches to practical  
assessments: learners taking  
responsibility for managing their  
own evidence portfolios

**NQF Level 3 Unit 5 Individual  
Performance Commission  
and Unit 7 Employment  
Opportunities in the Performing  
Arts: FAQs**

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