

Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

June 2015

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Music

Unit 1: The Music Industry (21512E)

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General Comments

June 2015 was the third time that this paper has been presented and it seems clear that many centres are settling into the format of the paper when preparing their learners for the examination. Again, it was pleasing that the majority of learners attempted a response to all of the questions on the paper including the two longer response items. Learners are, on the whole, giving the impression of being comfortable with these longer questions. It was felt that learners were less strong on the 'explain' questions this series. In January we commented that learners seemed well prepared for these and clear attempts to provide an explanation in order to gain the second mark were seen. These attempts were less prevalent this series so we will reiterate the advice to centres in this report in the hope that learners can offer their best possible response in the examination.

Section A

The first five questions proved accessible to most learners. Question 1 was usually correctly answered, questions 4 and 5 were correct a little less often.

Question 6 was attempted by most learners with a good number getting the correct answer of Musician's Union or MU. A few learners put 'music union' which, although close to the correct answer was considered incorrect as the specific name of the organisation was required.

6	Name the organisation an orchestral performer might belong to that provides legal advice.	Q06	1
Musician's Union (MU)			
(Total for Question 6 = 1 mark)		Total	1

Question 7a drew less correct responses than might have been anticipated. The correct response was journalist, blogger or reporter. A number of learners gave the responses of A&R, promoter, publisher or manager which therefore showed a less clear understanding of these roles than was hoped. These roles form an integral part of the specification. It is important that learners know not just the job titles, but the responsibilities of each role too.

7 The following are extracts from job advertisements in a music magazine.

Identify the job roles described in the extracts.

Extracts	Job roles
...the job will involve attending gigs, writing reviews of performances and writing copy...	Job 1 music journalist
...we need someone to join our tour support crew. Duties will include helping set up and take down music equipment. This job involves manual handling...	Job 2 live sound technician

Q07a 1

Q07b 0

(Total for Question 7 = 2 marks) Total 1

Question 7b was correctly answered by the majority of learners. Incorrect answers were usually close to correct with responses such 'equipment manager' or 'de-rigger'. Learners should be reassured that questions such as these will refer directly to the specification and will therefore expect terminology drawn directly from this document.

Question 8 was often well-answered and many learners had a clear understanding of this area of study. Popular responses included selling music through CD sales or on the internet via sites such as Spotify or iTunes, having music performed in a public place such as a shop or having another artist perform or cover a song. A few learners gave answers that involved the music being played on radio, film or TV which were given as examples in the question and therefore were not valid responses. Another common error was the suggestion that the artist could 'sell' the song to another without clarifying a format such as sheet music or CD.

8 A composer can generate royalty payments from having their music played on radio, film or TV.

Q08-1 1

Q08-2 1

Identify **two** other ways that royalty payments can be generated for a composer.

1 producers re-mixing or sampling their tracks

2 If other artists perform their tracks live or do covers

(Total for Question 8 = 2 marks) Total 2

Question 9 was not answered well by a number of learners. This question asked learners to name an organisation that was relevant in a given scenario. Correct responses were commonly police or fire brigade as well as security and the local council. Some learners gave answers that were not organisations at all but were individuals instead. Learners should be encouraged to watch out for questions requiring an organisation to be named so as to be sure to give the correct type of response.

9 Name **one** organisation a new venue might consult in order to comply with health and safety regulations.

Q09 1

Council, Police

(Total for Question 9 = 1 mark)

Total 1

Question 10 was an accessible question that was generally well answered by learners. Learners were asked to identify one way that a vocalist could find out about an audition. A range of correct responses were commonly offered, including social media, posters, newspaper and via management or agent. TV and radio were not considered normal practice and so were not considered correct responses. Responses that just said 'an advertisement' were also considered not specific enough to warrant credit.

10 Identify **one** way a vocalist could find out about an audition.

Q10 1

by looking for adverts in music magazines e.g. 'Stage'

(Total for Question 10 = 1 mark)

Total 1

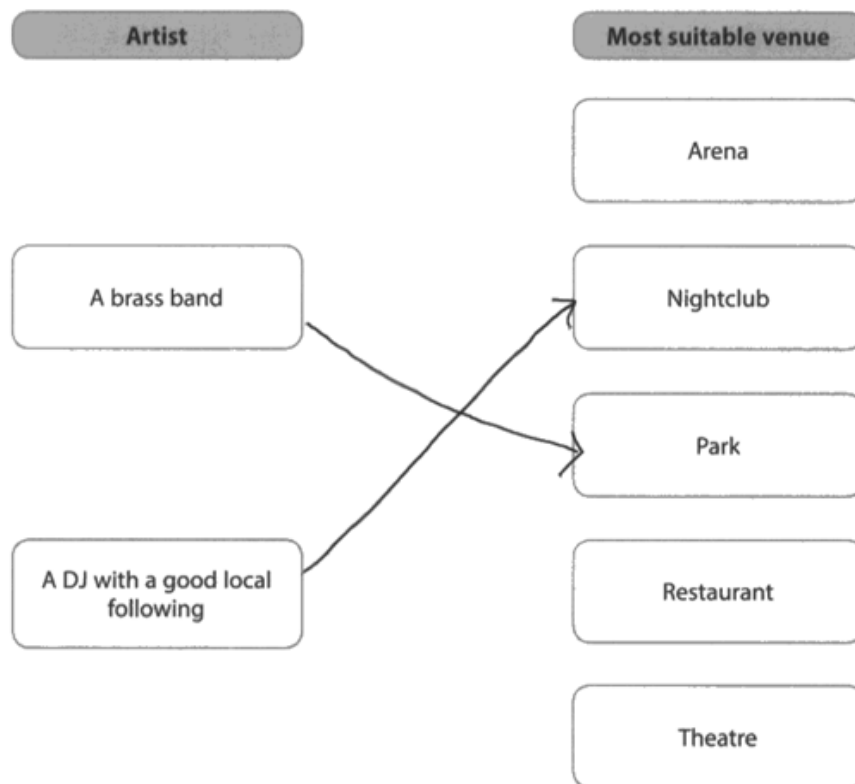
Question 11 required learners to connect up boxes to indicate suitable venues for a brass band and a DJ. The majority of learners answered this question correctly. For brass band, both 'park' and 'theatre' were allowed as correct responses. The most common incorrect response was to link brass band with 'arena'. A few learners connected up the boxes using more than one line per artist which invalidated their answer. As this format of question has appeared before in this examination, it might be helpful to ensure that all learners understand to only use one single line to connect up the boxes unless otherwise instructed.

11 It is important to ensure that artists perform in appropriate venues.

Q11

2

Draw a line to connect each artist to the **most suitable** venue.



(Total for Question 11 = 2 marks)

Total

2

Question 12 proved a complex question for learners. Although some strong responses were noted, many learners provided generalised comments such as 'to get the best sound'. Occasionally learners provided unrealistic scenarios such as the equipment might set on fire if not upgraded.

This was the first of several 'explain' questions requiring an extended response. In order to access both marks the learner needed to identify a reason and then support that reason with an explanation. Learners need to be aware of the expectations of the term 'explain' to fully access both marks in this type of question. As mentioned above, a good number of learners did not attempt an explanation in this or other 'explain' question in this paper. The second mark should be accessible to many learners, however, so it is hoped that centres will continue to encourage learners to address these questions with a view to accessing both available marks.

It may help to encourage learners to consider the **consequences** of their first point. E.g., *to ensure compatibility with others in the industry* (1 mark)...so work can be transferred between users without problems (1 mark).

12 Explain **one** reason why it might be important to upgrade home studio software regularly.

Q12 2

so that the quality of your work
can keep getting better along with everyone
elses so that your mastering will not
sound bad compared to others, this will
make sure you still sell music.

(Total for Question 12 = 2 marks)

Total 2

Question 13 was a straight-forward question asking learners to identify one responsibility of a drum technician. Successful responses often included tuning the drums or setting them up for the performer. Some responses were not specific enough for credit, e.g., 'make sure everything is working' does not provide any information specific enough to be considered as answering the question. It was not uncommon for learners to attribute other job roles to a drum technician such as setting up mics, managing sound levels or playing in time with the band.

13 For one band, AJ has to act as a drum technician.

Q13 1

Identify **one** of his responsibilities.

Making sure the drums are in tune.

(Total for Question 13 = 1 mark)

Total 1

Question 14(a) allowed learners to address the benefits of recording in a professional studio rather than with a home studio set-up. This question was well answered by many learners. The most common correct responses concerned advantages of better quality/ amount of equipment and also the assistance/ advice of the studio engineer. Better sound-proofing or lack of extraneous noise was also a popular response. Some learners seemed to confuse a recording studio with a record label, offering responses relating to being discovered, or having better promotion or publicity from recording in the professional studio. It might be beneficial to ensure learners understand the differences between these two to avoid such confusion in the future.

14 Bands who want to get signed by record companies come to AJ's studio to record their demos.

Q14a-1 1

Q14a-2 1

- (a) Give **two** advantages of recording a demo in a professional studio rather than using a home studio set-up.

(2)

1 Better ~~quatt~~ quality of sound thats recorded

2 Get professional advice whilst recording

Question 14(b) was another 'explain' question. Learners were often able to achieve 1 mark for stating a task that AJ should complete in preparation for a recording session with the band. Many learners gave responses involving setting up microphones or other equipment, for instance. Comparatively few learners went on to attempt an explanation of why AJ might do the task. Had more learners even attempted to gain the second mark it is considered that many would have been able to access it successfully, but many learners did not offer any kind of additional response above the initial task.

Common correct responses usually gave the reason '... so that the band can get straight on with the recording and not waste valuable time' or 'so that time isn't wasted fixing equipment'.

Centres are encouraged to continue to provide opportunities for learners to identify this type of question as well as practice in providing a response that is aimed at achieving both marks. The mark scheme for this and previous papers provides many examples of correct responses which may assist centres in preparing examples for their learners.

- (b) Explain **one** task AJ should complete at the studio in preparation for a recording session with a band.

(2) Q14b 2

1. Making sure the ~~so~~ all equipment is prepared, tuned and ready to be used, so there is no disruption when the band arrives and ~~other~~ therefor they will be able to make a more efficient use of there time

Question 14(c) was one of two 4-mark questions requiring two 'explain' responses. Learners were required to explain one positive and one negative factor for a band signing a recording contract with a major record label. Although many learners scored well in this question, it did serve to highlight this as an area of some confusion for some of learners with a number of misconceptions.

Correct positive points often noted involved the potential for increased publicity or exposure as well as improved facilities or advice and support. The link between increased publicity and increased fan base and/or sales was often noted by learners. Correct negative points mostly centred on loss of artistic control or the need to pay a proportion of earnings for the record label. For both parts of this question there were a number of learners achieving two marks in one or other part as the explanations seemed easier for learners to offer on this question.

(c) Explain **one** positive and **one** negative factor for a band in signing a recording contract with a major record label.

(4) Q14c 4

Positive

If you sign with a major record ~~label~~ label, your credibility and status would skyrocket. This would allow them to make alot of money and become famous quickly.

Negative

The negative of signing would be that your flexibility of time would be little, you will be always doing something. This would mean that you would be in the studio, or you will be touring, it would be a full on experience.

(Total for Question 14 = 8 marks) Total 6

Question 15 was one of two extended response questions in the paper and was worth 8 marks. It was once again very pleasing to find that most students attempted an answer with at least 1-2 marks accessible to nearly all students. The quality of response to these longer questions has also shown improvement over the last two series with a greater proportion of students able to access marks in the 2-4 mark range than before.

This question required learners to evaluate whether it would be better for an individual to combine their small and not overly successful recording studio with another in a similar position or whether it would be better to remain separate. Most learners understood the scenario with many offering a good range of reasons to support either position. 1-2 marks were accessible to many learners. Providing a greater range of relevant points covering both sides of the situation was likely to result in marks in the 4-6 range. Higher marks were gained by those who gave a greater breadth of reasons and who extrapolated valid points to include a range of possible consequences of a position. Examples of this can be seen in the sample response for this question.

15 Tash has suggested joining together with AJ to form one larger studio. Both of them already have some bookings for the next six months.

Q15

5

Evaluate whether it would be better for AJ and Tash to combine their businesses or to remain separate.

Firstly, if AJ and Tash were to join together it would be good because they would have more bookings ~~when they put each of the~~ put together so more people can find out about them. They will gain one larger studio which will result in more space for newer equipment which will allow them to create ~~more~~ different sands, ~~and they~~ ^{equipment} will also be better quality as they ^{together} can put the money from their old places ^{for} the equipment. Having a larger studio will also make ~~their~~ ^{them} publishing look better because when they put posters out for publicity ^{and} the picture of a bigger and more up to date studio will attract more people. However, if there were to ~~they~~ ^{they} come together it could result in a loss of business because people will be confused as to who to go to and where. It could also result in them going into debt as they would invest the money for a larger place and plan to pay it back from the money given by the bookings, however they could cancel at anytime, leaving them in debt.

They would also have to put out a lot of media attention for a new place and so that people know who and where they are, but this will cost a lot of money and there is no guarantee people will see it and know they have moved.

On the other hand, if Tash and AJ were to stay ~~together~~ ^{apart} then it would be good because AJ could stay with his part time job and not have to worry about reorganising his home life for his job. They would be able to stay in ~~their~~ control of their company which is good because it means that nothing would get changed or edited. Their bookings / customers will know where they are and they might not want new equipment and a bigger studio and so if they did move they could lose all on their bookings because they don't want change or ~~can't~~ ~~see~~ live too far away from the new place. However, ~~sticking~~ staying apart could be bad because AJ is part-time and still has to organise everything and carry out many job roles which could make him very tired and as a result the level of work he creates could decrease which results in a loss of sales and bookings. If they stayed apart it would be very hard to get more attention and getting mentioned in the media is a very ~~too~~ expensive job and because they are so small and only work part time, people may go to bigger places instead.

(Total for Question 15 = 8 marks)

Total 8

Question 16 asked the learner to give two reasons why an artist might hire a manager. Learners generally showed a good understanding of this subject and offered a range of useful responses to the question. Popular valid responses included finding venues, negotiating contracts, giving advice and networking. Some learners suggested that the manager would help make musical decisions which was not considered a valid response. It was also not enough to say 'to

manage her' as this offered no useful material above that already provided in the question.

16 Give **two** reasons why Neda might hire a manager.

- 1 To help her manage things such as money and royalties.
- 2 To give her help and guidance ~~question~~ with her rights.

(Total for Question 16 = 2 marks)

Total

2

Question 17 concerned invoices, requiring learners to identify two pieces of information that should be included aside from names and contact details. Many learners gave thoughtful responses to this question with popular correct answers, including date/time, amount due and where or how payment should be made. Some learners failed to take proper note of the question stem, giving answers such as name and address or venue address which could not be credited as these answers were discounted in the question. Some learners did not know this information, resulting in a range of speculative responses such as what type of music was played, how long Neda had been performing and how Neda felt during the gig.

17 Neda has performed her first gig at the local arts centre and needs to send an invoice in order to get paid.

Q17-1

1

Names and contact details are included on invoices.

Q17-2

1

Identify **two** other pieces of information Neda should include on her invoice.

1 How much she is getting paid.

2 The dates/times of when she performed.

(Total for Question 17 = 2 marks)

Total

2

Question 18 was the second of the 4-mark questions consisting of two 'explain' type questions. The learner was asked to explain two benefits that the internet may offer a musician trying to break into the music industry. Clearly this was a subject area that many learners were able to relate to. Some learners missed out on marks from not giving enough detail with suggestions that a musician

might make money by putting their music on an unspecified website or one that does not generate income. Most learners, however, offered good reasons such as the ease of reaching a large number of people, the opportunity to potentially make money on sites such as iTunes or Spotify and the chance that the musician might get noticed by a person of influence.

Some responses lead more easily to the second 'explain' mark but often there was no clear evidence that learners were attempting to gain this second mark by offering any kind of further explanation and few learners gained the full four marks out of the four available for this question.

18 Neda knows that the internet can be important when starting out in the music industry.

Q18 4

Explain **two** benefits the internet may offer musicians trying to break into the music industry.

1 It allows them to advertise their music internationally as the internet is not restricted to locals and this means that her music will be seen by more people.

2 She would be able to sell her music online through digital distribution and this means she will be able to sell more of her recordings than if she just sold them physically.

(Total for Question 18 = 4 marks)

Total 4

Question 19 was a short question requiring the learner to identify the role of A&R. Talent scout or scout was also allowed as a correct response. Learners were clearly divided between those who knew the answer and those who took a guess. Responses such as producer, manager or agent were not uncommon.

19 Neda has been contacted by a record industry professional whose job is to discover new singer-songwriters.

Q19 1

Identify this person's job role.

Talent Scout

Artist and Repertoire.

(Total for Question 19 = 1 mark)

Total 1

The final question on the paper, **Question 20**, was the second of the 8 mark extended response questions. Again, most students attempted an answer and nearly all were able to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the situation as described in the question.

Question 20 asked learners to compare the merits of buying second-hand PA equipment compared to hiring equipment. Many learners addressed the main issues in their responses which were often clearly structured. Common responses discussed the second-hand equipment having a potential for being less reliable or producing a sound that was less desirable than the hired equipment, although some learners did note that this was not necessarily the case. It was quite common for learners to make comments concerning one or other option being more or less expensive but these were not usually deemed worthy of credit unless clarified with a time reference. Stating that it was cheaper in the long run to purchase the second-hand equipment or that hiring equipment would be expensive in the long term were both excellent points to make.

Learners accessing the higher marks of 7 or 8 tended to present a range of ideas numbering upward of thirteen or so ideas that might explore 2-4 key points.

20 Neda needs some PA equipment for her gigs but only has a limited budget. She can either:

Q20

8

1. Buy some cheaper second-hand equipment

or

2. Hire some better quality equipment.

Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

~~One~~ The advantages of buying second hand equipment are that she will save money and won't go over her budget which she might need to spend on something else. The equipment will still work sufficiently. If she buys the equipment then it's hers to keep so she can use it in gigs later. ~~if she hires better~~ The disadvantages of buying second hand equipment are that the sound quality and lighting may be poor. If it's been used then it's more likely to get broken. ~~If the~~ The equipment could stop working during the gig because it's cheaper and worse quality. If it breaks and she has to repair the equipment or to get new equipment it will actually be more expensive anyway.

The advantages of hiring better quality equipment is that she knows the quality

of the sound will be good and ~~anything~~ everything will work well. People are more likely to go to more gigs if she has good equipment because the performance will be good. If something breaks and needs repairing then the people she hired equipment from may be able to fix it for free whereas if she bought cheap equipment it's her responsibility. The disadvantages of hiring better quality equipment are that it may be more expensive and she then will go over her budget. The equipment ~~isn't~~ isn't hers to keep so she will have to keep hiring it for her gigs which will be very expensive long term. She may not hire the equipment on time or the equipment may not be available for hire when she needs it so she'll end up having to cancel the gig.

Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, learners should:

- Be sure to read each question as carefully as possible to avoid misinterpretations that can lead to irrelevant or uncreditworthy responses;
- Be sure to name an organisation rather than an individual role when the question asks for such;
- Try to include specific detail in responses rather than answer with a general statement;
- Note the differences between a recording studio and a record label;
- Appreciate that questions asking them to 'explain' require not just the identification of a correct point, but an explanation, for instance the consequences of the point they are making;
- Practice 'explain' answers to be familiar with the expectations of future sessions;
- Continue to avoid repeating the question text as an introductory paragraph in 8 mark questions;
- Try to identify and explain as many relevant points as they are able in the 8 mark extended response questions. Relating one point to another rather than just listing points is encouraged;
- Continue to attempt all questions on the paper.

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