

Unit 38: The Music Freelance World

Unit code:	H/600/6922
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to develop some of the underpinning knowledge and the skills required in order to work effectively as a freelancer in the music industry.

● Unit introduction

Most people working in the music industry will have self-employed (freelance) status at some time in their career. Apart from a few large companies, the music industry consists of small companies with many self-employed people working as musicians, producers, songwriters, administrators and a host of other professions. The skills needed to work as a freelancer are common to all these areas, and are vital not only to creative and commercial success but also to survival as a freelance practitioner.

In the twenty first century it is not uncommon for musicians to have portfolio careers where, instead of working a traditional full-time job, they work multiple part-time jobs with different employers. This unit has been written to give learners an understanding of the freelance way of life within the performing arts industry. The unit covers the areas that will be of most concern to those supporting themselves in such an environment. It does not provide everything learners will need but does introduce them to the basic approach and provides the framework for working freelance. It also introduces the importance of finance to someone who is working in the performing arts industries.

No matter how much we create or how many good business ideas we have, we will not be successful unless we are able to let other people know about them. This unit gives learners an awareness of the importance of marketing and image. It emphasises the importance of continual self-development and how essential it is to communicate clearly. Taking a professional approach to working in the industry is as essential as having a good product to market, and the unit outlines the qualities that industry professionals expect of people working with them.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the financial and management issues of self-employment
- 2 Know the skills and knowledge required for self-development as a freelancer
- 3 Know professional approaches to employment
- 4 Know about entrepreneurial approaches to image, market and opportunity.

Unit content

1 Know the financial and management issues of self-employment

Financial: eg pension, National Insurance, tax, pay, expenses, business plans, funding, profit and loss, cash-flow, invoices, book-keeping

Self-management: eg planning, goal setting, time management, contracts, working within a team when required, delegation, taking responsibility, networking, resources required (personal, office, equipment, materials, financial, human)

2 Know the skills and knowledge required for self-development as a freelancer

Skills and knowledge: qualifications; experience; opportunities; relevance; equivalence

Self-development: eg taking training courses, networking, attending trade fairs/seminars/conferences, self-critique, targets, action plans, realistic goals, interpersonal skills, motivation, values

3 Know professional approaches to employment

Personal professional approach: punctual; prepared; reliable; committed; conscientious; networking; communicating; negotiation skills; up-to-date CV; being a professional member of an industry organisation eg Musicians' Union or the PRS for Music

Health and safety: safe working practices; safety equipment; safety procedures; risk assessment; professional health

4 Know about entrepreneurial approaches to image, market and opportunity

Entrepreneurial approaches to image: eg stationery, brochures, promotional material, logos, website, social media accounts, writing a CV

Entrepreneurial approaches to market: eg market research and analysis, advertising, press releases, trade journals, identities, gaps in the market, unique selling point

Entrepreneurial approaches to opportunity: eg using skills in a number of different environments, eg DJ-ing at a number of venues, session musician also taking on other ventures (teaching, community projects)

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 describe financial and self-management considerations needed for freelance work in the music industry [IE, SM]	M1 explain financial and self-management considerations needed for freelance work in the music industry	D1 comment critically on financial and self-management considerations needed for freelance work in the music industry
P2 describe self-development requirements within the music industry [SM]	M2 explain self-development requirements within the music industry	D2 comment critically on self-development requirements within the music industry
P3 describe the importance of a professional approach to being freelance [IE, SM]	M3 explain the importance of a professional approach to being freelance	D3 comment critically on the importance of a professional approach to being freelance
P4 identify successful personal marketing and image materials.	M4 describe successful personal marketing and image materials.	D4 justify successful personal marketing and image materials.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit is closely linked to *Unit 39: The Sound and Music Industry*, which is concerned with the structure of the industry, while this unit is about good professional practice as a freelancer. Learners must be made aware that the unit's topics are practical and essential to survival as a self-employed person. Innovative delivery can make this unit vibrant and interesting.

The emphasis should be on the realisation that freelance work is possible and sometimes preferable. However, there are many pitfalls of which learners need to become aware. Deliverers can highlight these, for example, explaining how some performers and songwriters have had great creative success but have fallen foul of taxation and bad contracts.

Learners should be encouraged to discuss issues of employment and the performing arts market where the interaction with professional freelance workers would be particularly useful. Guest speakers can be utilised where possible. They could be people who are entirely freelance, or people who carry out freelance work in addition to some part-time, steady work. This would give learners different examples of working practices.

Learners wishing to work as freelancers need to have an up-to-date and accurate CV and/or online profile. Learners need to understand the importance of a CV and/or online profile and the ways in which these must be tailored to fit the job for which they are applying. Tutors could provide learners with a number of job adverts to which they may tailor their materials.

Copyright and contractual issues should be emphasised. Although the explanation of taxation, pensions, VAT and funding might require some mathematical work, emphasis should be on broad issues rather than details and formulae.

As in *The Sound and Music Industry* unit, there is great scope for innovative delivery, which can involve role play and negotiation. One example would be group work involving the setting up of a hypothetical freelance business. Learners could practise their communication skills by taking part in business meetings and negotiating on behalf of their business.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit.
<i>Know the financial and management issues of self-employment.</i>
Whole-class activities – lectures and discussions on financial and self-management.
Assignment 1: Starting My Business – P1, M1, D1
Assessment feedback.
<i>Know the skills and knowledge required for self development as a freelancer</i> Whole-class activities – lectures and discussions.
Assignment 2: Self-development – P2, M2, D2
Assessment feedback.
<i>Know professional approaches to employment.</i>
Class and small-group activities – professional approaches, professional bodies, health and safety.
Assignment 3: The Music Industry – Being a Successful Professional – P3, M3, D3
Assessment feedback.
<i>Know about entrepreneurial approaches to image, market and opportunity.</i>
Whole-class activities – lectures and discussion groups.
Assignment 4: The Music Industry – Having a Successful Image – P4, M4, D4
Assessment feedback.

Assessment

Evidence required for this unit will be generated through discussion and by demonstration while carrying out project/assignment work. The discussion elements of the unit can be assessed from notes and written material, but learners should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the issues by behaving in an appropriate manner and being punctual and reliable in performances and presentations.

Video evidence of discussions with professional practitioners could supply action plans for self-development, etc. Business plans and portfolios of marketing ideas can also contribute to assessment.

It is quite possible to set one assignment that will allow learners to meet a selection of any of the assessment criteria.

For learning outcomes 1 and 2, learners are likely to provide a description of the financial and managerial considerations needed to work as a freelancer. For P1 and P2, they should describe common financial expressions and self-development requirements. For M1, learners will need to refer to specific financial forms and their uses (such as tax returns). For M2, learners will describe the concepts but may not relate them to their personal aims and objectives. Learners working at merit level are likely to relate the financial and self-management considerations to real-life examples and will go into greater explanation of the considerations they might, for example, refer to a specific job role they would like and then explain the self-development requirements for this role with an explanation as to why they are required. For D1, learners should identify how their own practice should change as their freelance careers take off. For D2, this should also include music-specific issues such as how they will maintain their personal musical development needs. Learners at this level will provide examples of financial and self-management considerations and then comment on them critically. It is likely that learners at this level will relate the issues to their own experiences or projects. They will use the correct terminology and vocabulary and will show an in-depth understanding of these terms. They might suggest how awareness will affect their working patterns, and provide evidence of what could happen if proper financial procedures were not followed.

For learning outcome 3, learners will describe the importance of showing a professional approach to working. For P3, their approach will be accurate but fairly basic. Learners will describe these things possibly in the abstract rather than in relation to themselves. For M3, learners will give examples of why it is important to be professional but these will tend to be in the positive. They may refer to the situations of visiting speakers or even people on whom they have conducted research. For D3, learners will comment critically on the importance of a professional approach. Again, they will refer to consequences in detail and these consequences may provide examples of a 'worst case scenario'. Learners at this level will also give details of how they can be professional in a specific job role or position and state why these qualities are required.

To meet grading criterion 4, learners will need to generate some personal marketing or image material. For P4, learners will identify what marketing and image materials they would hope to produce themselves. For M4, learners will go beyond a wish list and sketch out their material and describe it. For D4, learners will create a detailed and impressive marketing and image materials alongside a clear rationale of why their materials are fit for purpose.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Pearson assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Starting My Business	You are about to start your own business as a gig/ concert promoter. In order to prepare yourself for the launch of your business, you need to research all the financial and self-management issues that you think might arise.	Portfolio of evidence comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a written report or a presentation • video (if giving a presentation).
P2, M2, D2	Self-development	A local radio station is running a series of programmes about <i>Working in Your Own Business</i> . One of the programmes features people doing freelance work in the music industry and you have been asked to take part in a discussion.	Portfolio of evidence comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • video/audio recordings.
P3, M3, D3 P4, M4, D4	The Music Industry – Being a Successful Professional	You have been commissioned to produce an information booklet which will provide advice for young people who are interested in working freelance in the music industry.	Portfolio of evidence comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information booklet • examples of your own personal marketing and image materials.

Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC Music and Music Technology sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Music and Music Technology suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
		The Sound and Music Industry

Essential resources

Learners will need access to appropriate professional practitioners for discussion and debate. Many of the industry organisations supply information on their websites and can provide guest lecturers.

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	looking into financial and self-management requirements
Self-managers	setting personal systems for gathering information.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	exploring regulations and requirements, researching financial and development mechanisms and solutions
Creative thinkers	developing systems and procedures to minimise confusion
Reflective learners	considering the requirements of others
Team workers	working with other professionals
Self-managers	setting goals and managing expectations
Effective participators	actively securing information by deadline to quality.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	researching materials on the internet and generating evidence
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching materials on the internet
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching and selecting appropriate materials on the internet
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	researching and selecting appropriate materials
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	researching and selecting appropriate materials
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	researching and selecting appropriate materials
English	
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching and selecting appropriate materials
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	providing written evidence against grading criteria.