BTEC LEVEL 2

Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community



We are CVQO

LEARNING GUIDE

for completing Units 12-14

Academic year 2021–22

BTEC
Approved Centre from Pearson

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Outline to the learner

1.

The Pearson BTEC Level 2 in Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community qualification can be taken alongside your youth organisation's training. Your training will cover a major proportion of the guided learning hours recommended for each unit and will complement the skills you have already acquired through your youth organisation.

Where possible, the assessment criteria have been mapped to activities you carry out as part of your organisation's syllabus. This is referred to as recognised prior learning (RPL). Where the assessment criteria cannot be covered by these activities, CVQO has produced assessment tasks for you to complete.

2.

The qualification is broken down into a number of units:

Unit 1 Developing Effective Teamwork Skills is a **mandatory** unit that **all** learners must complete. There are 14 other units to choose from so you can select the context for your own personal development.

- To achieve the Extended Certificate you must complete 3 units in total (the mandatory unit and 2 others)
- To achieve the Diploma you must complete 6 units in total (the mandatory unit and 5 others)

3.

There are three ways that you can complete your assessed work:

- New from Sept 2021, you can access the unit content via online learning packages and complete all assessments in Moodle.
- You can download an e-workbook and once completed upload it to your Moodle account (details will be provided when you register for the qualification)
- You can complete a written workbook and hand it to your BTEC/VQ Officer, bandmaster, teacher or instructor who will post it to our head office.

4.

However you decide to access the assessment you will have a learning guide or online learning content that will assist you in answering the workbook questions. They follow the same layout and are broken down into the same units, topics and tasks to make it easier for you to pinpoint the information you need for each section.

5.

Completing a Level 2 qualification will allow many young people the opportunity to progress to Level 3 qualifications and beyond. Good luck with completing yours!



Appeals

1

When your work has been assessed, you have the right to appeal if you are unhappy with the grade or feedback you have received.

2

If you wish to appeal, you should email **appeals@cvqo.org**

3

The email should include your name and VQ number in the subject line. In the body of the email, you should state the unit number(s) and task number(s) you wish to appeal against and briefly give your reason for the appeal.

4

Your appeal will be investigated by CVQO and you will be informed when a decision has been made.

Important information

The following notes will help you complete the assessed tasks for the units you have selected to study:

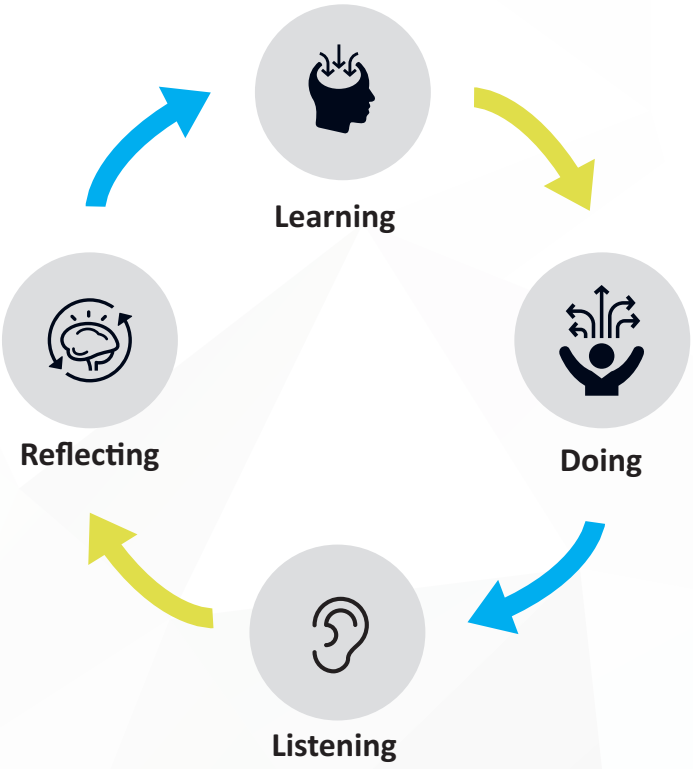
- You will have to complete a series of tasks based on the criteria given for each unit. These tasks may require a written/typed response or they may be practical.
- Make sure that you have read the criteria and fully understand the task before attempting it.
- You can enhance your work by using the resource material provided. You can also use other materials such as the internet, online forums and text books. If you do this, you must use quotation marks and name the source.
- You must pass each task to successfully complete the unit.

Reflection

Every experience that you have, be it as a member of your youth organisation, as a student in school or in your personal life, has the potential to help with your personal development.

Being able to reflect on an experience either positively or negatively and ask questions such as *'What went well?'*, *'Why did that happen'* or *'How could I change that next time?'* are key as they help you to really understand what happened and learn from it. This process is useful to use even if something didn't go as well as you would have hoped.

The tasks for this qualification naturally encourage you to reflect.



Icons

Throughout the learning guide, the following icons are used to draw your attention to specific things that will either help with your learning and understanding, or will be formally assessed.

Icon	Description
	Learning Learn the subject theory.
	Doing Put into practice what you have learnt.
	Listening Ask yourself how you performed. Listen to feedback from others, i.e. your tutor or peers.
	Reflecting Learn from the experience to improve next time.

Icon	Description
	**Learning outcome** Each unit has a series of learning outcomes which indicate the knowledge you are expected to demonstrate when you complete the accompanying tasks or activities.
	**Literacy** This will assess your understanding of the task and demonstrate the quality of your English skills, particularly your use of correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.
	**Task** This requires a written response which links to each assessment criteria (AC).
	**Activity** This requires you to complete a practical activity.
	**Case study** This contains useful information that will help you to better understand how to respond to the various tasks.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own. In other words, copying. If you do copy the work of another learner, you will risk having your work cancelled.

Collusion

Copying, or working together with other learners, resulting in the same answers will result in your work not being accepted.

Referencing

Whilst you should try to use your own words in your workbook, there may be some tasks where a quote from somewhere else is acceptable. This is allowed, but must be shown by using quotations marks, for example, **"The purpose of the Fire and Rescue Service is to save life and reduce the damage done to property by fire."** You should also note the reference of where you have taken the quote from, for example: **CVQO learning guide, page 12**.

Celebrating British values

CVQO is committed to exemplifying British values in the way we operate as a learning provider. Within the learning environment, we encourage learners to explore and to understand what it means to celebrate British values by recognising the ideas and beliefs of the individual as well as the group. For example, when taking part in a lesson, you should respect the viewpoints of the other learners and give them the opportunity to contribute to any discussion that might take place.

More specifically, British values are defined as including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.



Unit 12: Planning and Creating a Music Product

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Unit 12

Planning and Creating a Music Product

Creativity lies at the heart of the music industry and the ability to plan, develop and deliver a successful music product is a highly sought-after skill.

In this unit, you are required to create a music product such as a recording or live event. You will experience the full creative process starting with developing your initial idea and following this through to completion and delivery, having the opportunity to showcase many of your skills. You will also reflect on the success of both the product and your contribution to the creative process.

To complete this unit you must work as part of a group with support from a tutor to develop and create a music product. You must clearly evidence your own individual contribution throughout the process.

On successful completion of this unit you will:

1. **Understand how to plan for the creation of a music product**
2. **Understand how to market and promote a music product**
3. **Be able to contribute to the creation of a music product**
4. **Be able to review a music product and the creative process**

In Unit 12, there are:

- Five tasks which require a written answer.
- You need to understand what the command verb is telling you to do before answering the questions.
- Additionally, you should read any case studies as they will help you understand and to complete each task.

- This unit requires a **minimum of 25 hours rehearsal time** carried out under direct supervision and independently. You will need to complete a practice log to evidence this.
- Your tutor will need to upload recorded evidence of your final music product

LO

Learning Outcome 1

Understand how to plan for the creation of a music product

This learning outcome requires learners to plan the creation of a music product. This will demonstrate their practical understanding of the requirements.

Event planning



When planning an event of any kind, it is always good practice to put together a basic outline of how you are going to create your chosen event. One of the most important things to remember is that everything must have a timescale and a deadline.

In planning an event you will need to consider the type of **music product** you want to create and a number of **other factors.**

The type of music product

You need to decide exactly what kind of product you are going to plan for. It could be:

1. **A traditional performance.** You may choose a concert, recital, gig, or themed event.
2. **A recorded product.** This could be a 'live' recording or maybe a recording created by sequencing.
3. **An online product.** You may choose to create a podcast, or a presentation for a website.

Other factors to be considered

Target audience



Who is going to attend your event? You may plan your event for friends and family, or you may choose to open it out to the wider public. If so, you need to consider factors such as age (what may appeal to a younger audience may not appeal to older people – think rock versus classical music).

If you are charging for the event you will need to consider the cost of the tickets and whether this is accessible for your chosen audience (some people have limited or very tight budgets, others are not concerned by the costs involved).

You may also need to consider the ethnicity of your potential audience; a concert of, for example, reggae or bhangra may not appeal to all.

Artistic intention



Is this going to be a high quality and very polished event? Or is it an event for a group of young performers just starting out, maybe even performing in front of an audience for the first time. Is it a showcase of talent or a much more low-key event? You may set out to entertain, or maybe even challenge your audience.

You will also need to consider the content of your event. What pieces are going to be played? Will there be a varied and interesting programme? Will your event involve a large or small group of performers? Will there be opportunities for solos?

Type of venue



Whereabouts are you intending to hold your event? Is it in a large venue that holds hundreds of people? Or somewhere much smaller that holds maybe less than twenty people? Is it an indoor or outdoor venue? Does your intended venue have sufficient space for the performers and audience?

Equipment and resources



This applies to both physical and human resources. What equipment will you need? This could include instruments, music stands, amplification and microphones. Are certain pieces of equipment only available in certain venues? Are all the performers you require available? Is the conductor or band leader available?

Time constraints



How much time do you have to practise before the event? Will this limit the repertoire that you can use? How long is the concert going to be?

Budget



What are the costs involved? How much does it cost to hire the chosen venue? Do you need to pay any performers? Are there any costs in relation to performing rights? Will the ticket prices cover the costs? Are there any transport costs?

Legalities



Do you need to pay to perform your chosen pieces (check this out with the Performing Rights Society)? Have you considered any health and safety implications? Will you need to produce a detailed risk assessment?

Creating an appropriate plan

Case study

Ella is a saxophonist and member of a six-piece youth jazz band, and they have decided to put on a small scale jazz concert within the next twelve months. This will be their first concert. The case study below shows the range of factors that must be considered. These are highlighted in **blue**.



Ella

Ella and the five other band members plan to play a range of contemporary jazz music that will appeal to their **target audience**. The performance will be their first as a band and they want it to be of **high quality** as well as being an enjoyable evening for their audience.

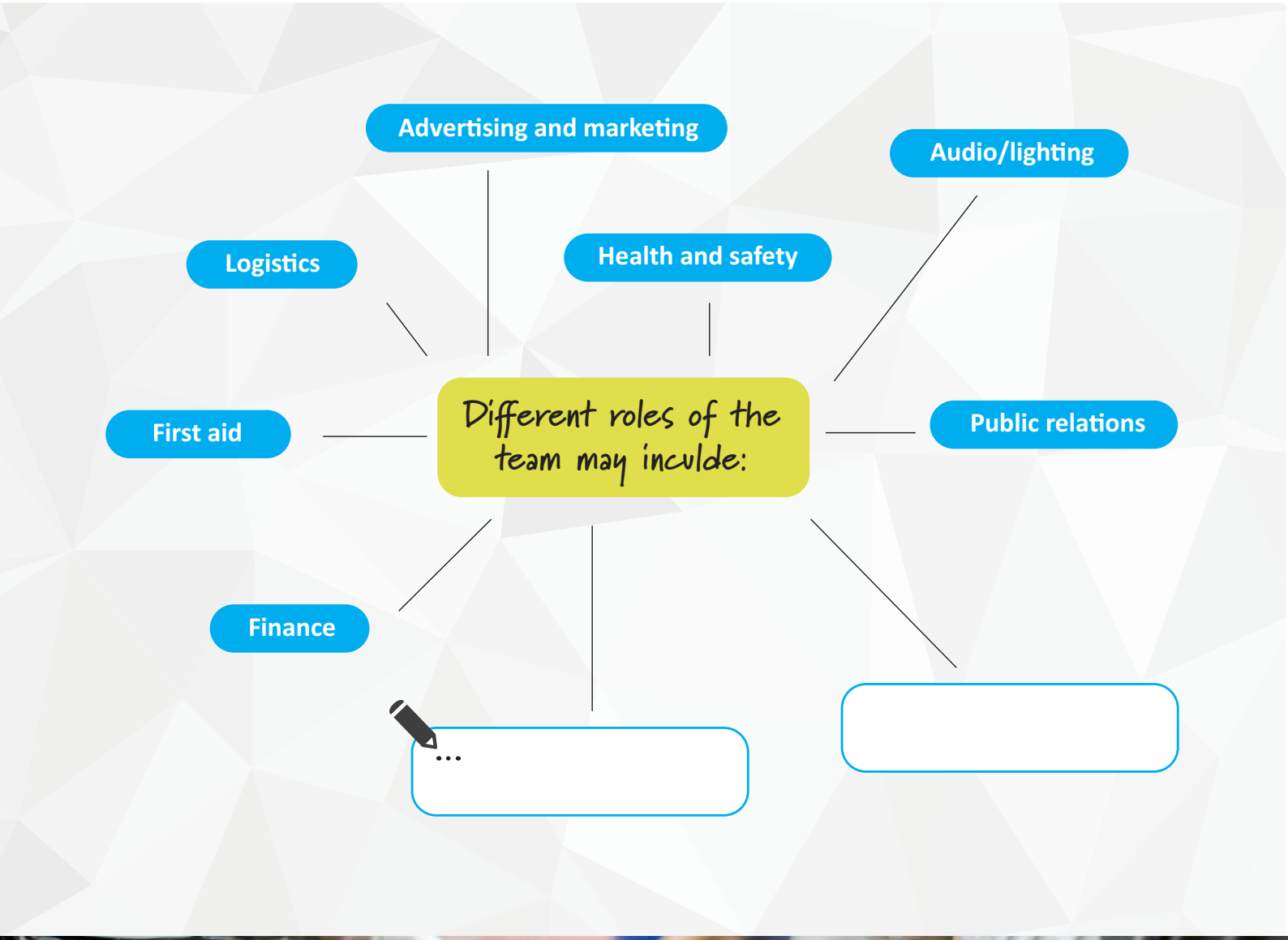
The band will need to work hard to **practise and perfect** their sets within the **time** they have available. The band are planning to perform to approximately 150 people and so they will need to find a suitable **venue** that has enough room for their instruments and equipment on stage, as well as seating for their audience.

Everyone has an individual role to play, not only in the band, but in planning the event and they will have to work as a team to prepare and produce the concert. One of Ella's responsibilities is to source some extra **resources** that they will need, within the **budget** they have allowed themselves. This will include banners and special lighting for the performers' music stands.

After making initial decisions the next stage is to produce a detailed plan for your event. To do this, you will need to consider the following:

Format, size and scope of the project	**Consider what your event is going to look like:** • How many people are going to be involved? • Who is your target audience? • What are you hoping to achieve through your event (e.g. recruitment, publicity, or maybe just a celebration)?
Success criteria	**Consider how you will judge if your event has been successful. Will this be based on?** • Will it be on the number of tickets sold? The profit made? • The quality of the performances? The enjoyment of the participants or feedback from the audience?
Identification and allocation of roles	**Planning your event will help you to work as a team and allocate different roles.** • Who can source any additional items you need? (e.g. music stands or a public address system) • Consider if transport will be required? Who can provide it and at what cost? • Does anyone have the skills required to promote and market your event?
Timeline	**You need to consider how long you will need to make your event a success. This will be different for every team.** • Do you have weeks or months to prepare and be ready? • How much rehearsal time to you need? Do you need to rehearse more to be ready?
Deadlines and review points	**Having a timeline will help significantly. You can then identify key deadlines and check that everything is going to plan.** • Your team may need to set target dates for rehearsals and book the necessary resources. • Do you have a target for ticket sales?
Contingency planning	**It is good practice to include some planning for if and when things don't quite go to plan!** • How would you cope if a key performer was no longer available? Or if you suddenly had a change of venue? • Consider what may happen and how your team would respond.

There are many different tasks to complete and roles to undertake when planning your music product. The music product you are completing will determine what roles are needed. **There are a few listed below and there is space to add in your own.**





Task 1: Describe the necessary planning requirements for the creation of a music product

(AC 1.1)

For this task you will need to **DESCRIBE** the planning requirements for your product.

First of all *identify* and **DESCRIBE** the music product you intend to create. You must then *produce a plan* that includes the following:

- How your product matches your intended **audience**
- How your product relates to your chosen **venue**
- How your product makes good use of the **available resources**



For example when you are describing the venue:
"My local community centre would be ideal because it is in the centre of the community" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"Holding the event at the local community centre would be ideal as it is accessible by foot or public transport and provides suitable parking. There are two rooms of different sizes to choose from and both have availability. They both have excellent facilities for the audience and the performers (including the stage and preparation and warm up space)" **would be an acceptable answer.**



When you have a basic outline of your event, you should take the time to plan the finer detail and consider *why* your decisions would be appropriate for your music product.

Task 2: Identify required roles, actions and deadlines for the creation of a music product

(AC 1.2)

To complete Task 2, you need to **IDENTIFY**:

- the *required roles* needed for your music product
- the *key actions* that need to be taken
- the *key deadlines* from initial meeting to reviewing your event



For example when you are identifying a required role:
"planner" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"someone to plan the music programme" **would be an acceptable answer.**



You should work through the process of **how** you will create your music product. The detailed list will almost create a 'to do' list.

Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **How would you define an online product?**
- **When planning an event, you would need to consider your target audience, the artistic intention and the type of venue. What two additional factors would you need to consider?**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 32.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO

Learning Outcome 2

Understand how to market and promote a music product

This learning outcome requires learners to present their understanding of how a music product can be marketed and promoted.

Marketing and promoting your product

SOCIAL MEDIA POST



There is little value in spending all this time planning for your event if there is no audience. In many ways, marketing and advertising are key to the success of your event. If there are costs involved with the hire of your chosen venue, then selling sufficient tickets becomes even more important.

>> MARKETING >> FLYERS

>> COST EFFECTIVE >> POSTERS >> PRESS RELEASE

>> FRIENDS AND FAMILY >> SOCIAL MEDIA

Key areas

Marketing activities

What can you use to encourage people to support your event? Word of mouth will only go so far! Posters and fliers (hand bills) are very easy and relatively cheap to produce, but they need to be well designed, and contain all of the necessary information. You also need to consider where the posters will be displayed and how many you need to produce. Ideally your posters need to be displayed where the maximum number for people will see them so that interest in your event will be generated. Many locations will display your poster without charge if they are approached in the correct way (think of libraries, schools, dentists, doctors etc.). Distributing fliers is less straightforward; they need to be placed where people can easily pick them up.

If you have a local newspaper or radio station you may choose to produce a 'press release' which they can use. This is a statement about the event with as much detail as possible; if you are lucky, they may wish to interview you for more information. This would be a good opportunity to also promote your organisation within the local community.

One of the best ways to publicise your event is through the use of digital assets. Placing details of your event on your organisation's website is a good starting point. Developing a campaign using Facebook (or other social media) is probably the easiest way to reach large numbers of people, although you will need to ensure that you follow the agreed protocols for your organisation.

Target markets

Although you would ideally like as many people as possible to attend your event, you need to be realistic about the kinds of people you are most likely to attract. You may choose to just target your marketing on families and friends, although this may limit the size of your audience. You need to consider exactly what your music event consists of, and then target people most likely to attend. Some people who would attend a concert of 'Songs from the Shows' may not appreciate a concert of folk music, or a marching band. This element links to the identification of your target audience as part of your initial planning.

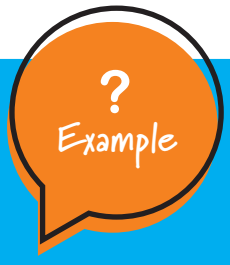
Budget

Some forms of marketing are either free or have little cost. You need to decide how much you can afford to spend on marketing your product; this may be dependent on your other costs, so there is a careful balance to be achieved. You need to ensure that any money you spend on marketing is both targeted and cost effective.

Task 3: Describe the ways a music product can be marketed and promoted (AC 2.1)

You should now consider how your music product can be marketed and promoted.

DESCRIBE two methods that you are going to use.



For example:
"I will approach my local radio station to advertise my music product" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"I will contact my local radio station and provide a press release that they can use to advertise my music product. I will also ask if they would be willing to interview me to talk about the event and answer any questions they have. I will also provide them with electronic flyers that they can advertise on their website and social media" **would be an acceptable answer for one marketing method.**



Take a moment to think carefully about what methods of marketing and promotion will attract the target audience for your music product.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO **Learning Outcome 2 - complete** ✓

LO

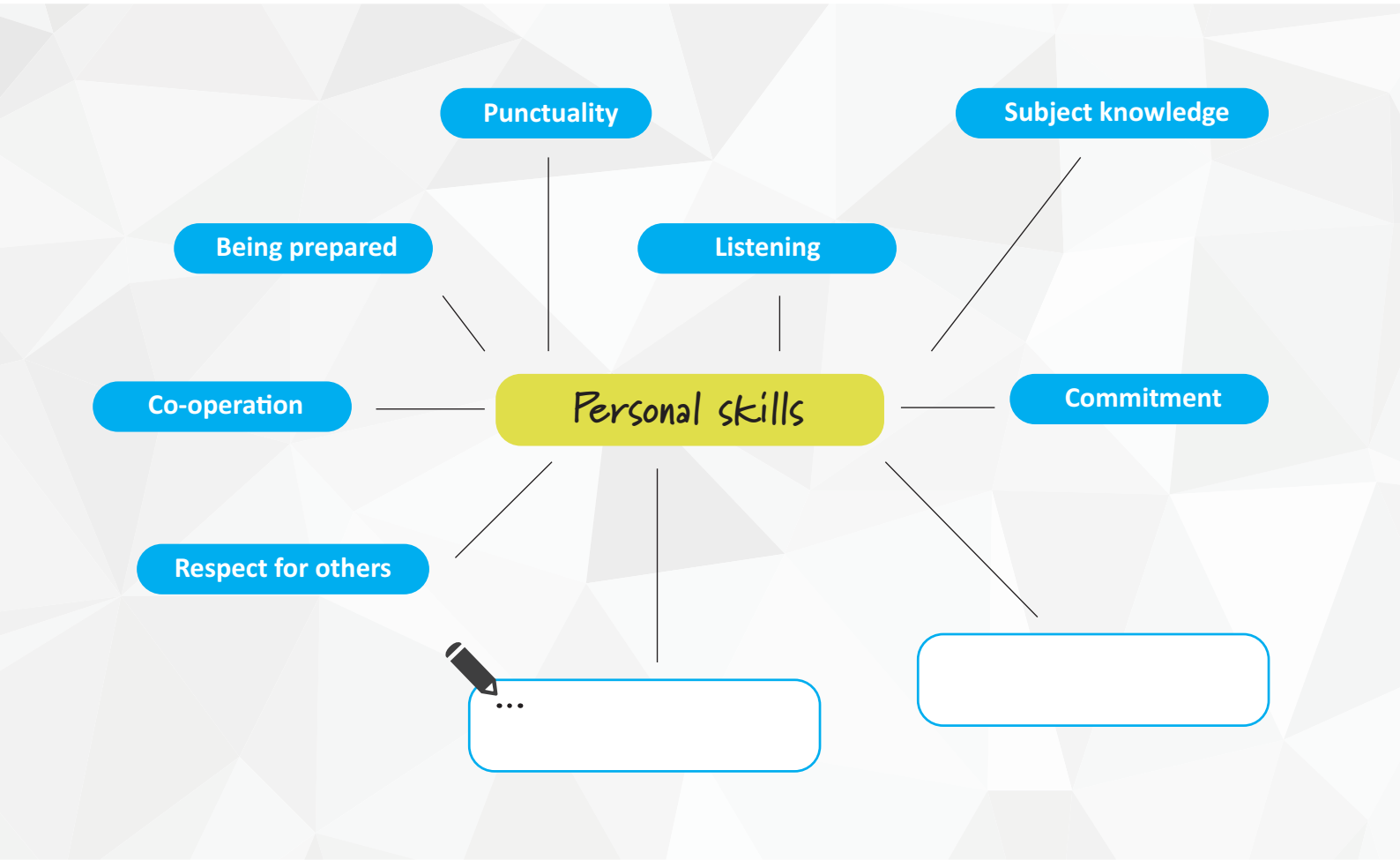
Learning Outcome 3

Be able to contribute to the creation of a music product

This learning outcome requires learners to take part in the developmental process for creating and delivering a music product. This will demonstrate their individual contribution and ability to communicate with others, work within a team and use their management skills.

Creating and delivering your product

In order to contribute to the creation of a music product working with your group, you will need to have a number of personal skills so that you work well together as a team. Some have been included below, but there are also blank spaces for you to record any additional skills you can think of.



WHY are these personal skills so important when creating and delivering a music product?

Personal skills are important for many reasons. There are three examples below:



Personal skills can then be split into one of three categories: **teamwork skills**, **personal management skills** and **communication skills**.

Take a moment to think about your skills and how you have contributed to creating and delivering a music product.

In terms of your **teamwork skills** consider:

- in what way have you contributed to rehearsals?
- what has been your contribution to development meetings?
- have you attended all rehearsals and meetings?
- what research and development work have you contributed?
- what was your role in selecting, developing and refining musical material?
- in what ways have you experimented and tried out ideas?
- how have you responded to the ideas of others?
- how have your musical skills improved through this process?
- in what ways have you reviewed progress and adjusted plans?
- what was your role in planning the format of the final event?

In terms of your **personal management** consider:

- your personal timekeeping
- your organisation to bring the correct equipment
- are you prepared?
- can you work independently outside of planned session?
- are you working safely?

- your ability to keep to deadlines
- your personal discipline

Communication skills are also important, and you need to ensure that you are able to:

- respect the opinions of others
- support others
- give and accept constructive feedback
- liaise with others (e.g. performers, technicians, venue staff)
- use appropriate technical language
- communicate accurately and with attention to detail when writing
- use the appropriate body language
- communicate with the audience in both verbal and non-verbal ways

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Task 4: Create a music product



(AC 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3)

You must **IDENTIFY** three individual ideas that **you** contributed to the group and go on to **EXPLAIN** the positive impact that they had.

Part a.
What exactly was **your** contribution in the development and delivery of the product?

You should **IDENTIFY three** individual ideas that you contributed and go on to **EXPLAIN** the positive impact they had.

Part b.
You should **IDENTIFY** one communication skill, one teamwork skill and one personal management skill that you demonstrated throughout the development process. You should then **EXPLAIN** how each skill helped to develop the product.

Part c.
You should now **REFLECT** on how well you followed the creative process. How did your rehearsals go? Were there any gaps in your planning? (for example, did you have enough time)?

To support this task:

- **<u>You</u>** must complete and submit a practice log to evidence a minimum of **25 hours** rehearsal time (VQF657*).
- **<u>Your tutor</u>** must complete a tutor testimony (VQF656*) and provide evidence of the completed music product.
- **<u>You</u>** must then sign, date and leave a comment on the tutor testimony form **and** submit it with your work to be assessed.

**Both templates can be found in your workbook.*



For example in Part b:
"Co-operation was important to work together effectively" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"Co-operation was important so that we worked together effectively. I was able to listen to others in my team, share my ideas and opinions with them and then plan how to deliver the music product. We were able to share the workload" **would be an acceptable answer.**



Remember this task is all about YOU. Thinking about **your** experience and contribution will help.

Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **Can you think of an example of a teamwork skill, a personal management skill and a communication skill?**
- **Why is teamwork so important in the process of creating and delivering a music product?**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 32.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO **Learning Outcome 2 - complete** ✓

LO **Learning Outcome 3 - complete** ✓

LO

Learning Outcome 4

Be able to review a music product and the creative process

This learning outcome requires learners to take responsibility as an individual for reviewing their own contribution. This will help them to improve in the future.

Reviewing your product and the creative process

Being involved in the creation and development of a music product can be beneficial in many ways:



S. BETTEY

Testimonial | Learner perspective

This activity helped me develop my confidence. I improved skills such as focus and concentration when preparing for the final performance. Teamwork was also developed by listening to my other ensemble members. I also became very organized by showing up to rehearsals at the correct time and with the right equipment.



F. GOLDING-WILLIAMS

Testimonial | Learner perspective

This activity helped me generally. This is because for some activities you need weeks and weeks of practice so you need to take your time with it. I found this whole experience fun and challenging and I also worked as hard as I could. Hard work is what enabled me to have a successful product. I loved working on the final piece and watching myself back on YouTube as I knew then what I needed to improve on for the future.

Being able to review your final product and learn from what went well, and what could have been improved is an important part of this process.

You need to be able to take a step back from what you have achieved both as an individual and as a member of a team. There are **three** key areas to consider.

1

Reviewing the product

- How good was the final product in terms of quality of the performance and the overall event?
- How did the final product measure up against your initial success criteria?
- What was the response of the audience?
- What feedback was there from the audience?
- What elements could have been improved?

Use the space below to make a few initial notes. They will help you later on.



2

Reviewing the planning and development process

- How effective was your planning for the event?
- How good was your time management?
- How successful were the professional relationships?
- How effective were you working with others?
- How effective were your individual contributions?
- How effective were your contributions as a member of a group?
- How effective was the use of the resources?
- What constraints did you encounter and how did you resolve them?
- In what ways did you adapt and review your plans?
- What lessons have you learned for the future?

Use the space below to make a few initial notes. They will help you later on.



3

Making improvements

- In what ways could the final product be improved?
- In what ways could the process be improved?
- What improvements could be made in response to audience feedback?
- Could any of the working practices used be made more productive or efficient?
- How could you improve working with others?
- How could you more effectively deal with obstacles and constraints?

It is important to consider your own thoughts and ideas about how you performed. You will need to give your own opinions about how you achieved the goal of planning an event.

Use the space below to make a few initial notes. They will help you later on.



Task 5: Review own contribution and propose improvements for the future (AC 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3)

There are three parts to this task. You should use self-reflection and feedback from peers to help you to review your own contribution and propose improvements for the future.

Part a.
You need to review your **final music product** and **IDENTIFY three** strengths and **three** areas for improvement.

Part b.
You need to review your contribution in the **creative process** and **IDENTIFY three** strengths and **three** areas for improvement.

Part c.
You need to review your contribution to the final music produce and the planning process. You should now make proposals for **three** areas for personal improvement that you will implement in future projects.



Remember this task is about YOU. How well did **you** perform and what can YOU do to improve in the future.

Complete every part of the task to complete the **full** review that is needed.

LO Learning Outcome 1 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 2 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 3 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 4 - complete ✓

Answers

LO 1 Understand how to plan for the creation of a music product

Q1: A podcast, or a presentation for a website.
Q2: Other factors may include, equipment and resources, time constraints, budget or legalities.

LO 3 Be able to contribute to the creation of a music product

Q1: **Teamwork skills** include attending and contributing to rehearsals. **Personal management skills** include self-discipline and working to deadlines. **Communication** skills include listening to others and showing respect.
Q2: To achieve the goal, to work effectively and efficiently.

Additional reading

Should you wish to know more about this subject area then the following resources may be useful:

www.bandzoogle.com/blog/5-steps-to-creating-an-effective-music-marketing-plan

www.billetto.co.uk/blog/how-to-plan-concert/

www.keithstead.com/and_more/musicians_corner/how_to_oac.html

www.lifestyle.howstuffworks.com/event-planning/10-tips-for-musical-event-planning.htm

www.openmicuk.co.uk/advice/how-to-plan-an-event-or-showcase/

Additional units of interest

As part of this qualification there are 14 other units of study. A number of them have clear links with planning and creating a music product and include:

Unit 13: Solo Music Performance
Unit 14: Working as a Musical Ensemble

LO Learning Overview

Criteria reference	To achieve the criteria the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	Task	Evidence (page no.)
Learning Outcome 1: Understand how to plan for the creation of a music product			
1.1	Describe the necessary planning requirements for the creation of a music product	Task 1	WB Pages 4-5
1.2	Identify required roles, actions and deadlines for the creation of a music product	Task 2	WB Page 6
Learning Outcome 2: Understand how to market and promote a music product			
2.1	Describe the ways a music product can be marketed and promoted	Task 3	WB Page 7
Learning Outcome 3: Be able to contribute to the creation of a music product			
3.1	Contributed ideas that have a positive impact on the creation and delivery of a music product	Task 4 Part A, VQF 656 **and** VQF 657	WB Page 8 **and** 14-17
3.2	Demonstrate appropriate communication, teamwork and personal management skills when creating and delivering a music product	Task 4 Part B, VQF 656 **and** VQF 657	WB Page 9 **and** 14-17
3.3	Follow the developmental process for the creation and delivery of a music product	Task 4 Part C, VQF 656 **and** VQF 657	WB Page 10 **and** 14-17
Learning Outcome 4: Be able to review a music product and the creative process			
4.1	Identify strengths and areas for improvement of a music product	Task 5 Part B	WB Page 12
4.2	Identify strengths and areas for improvements of a planning and development process	Task 5 Part A	WB Page 11
4.3	Use strengths and areas for improvement identified to propose improvements to future working practices	Task 5 Part C	WB Page 13



Unit 13: Solo Musical Performance

We are CVQO

Unit 13

Solo Musical Performance

Developing a career as a solo performer takes lots of dedication, versatility and practice. Soloists spend vast amounts of time exploring repertoire and honing their technical and interpretive skills so that they can give flawless and consistent performances every time.

In this unit, learners will learn how to select appropriate musical material for a particular performance context. They will develop their technical and interpretive skills by undertaking a practice routine that will enable them to present a solo performance to an audience. They will also explore the required preparations that are needed when planning and presenting a solo performance.

On successful completion of this unit you will:

1. **Be able to plan repertoire for a solo performance**
2. **Be able to prepare for a solo performance**
3. **Be able to perform music to an audience as a soloist**

In Unit 13, there are:



- Two tasks which require a written answer.
- You need to understand what the command verb is telling you to do before answering the questions.
- Additionally, you should read any case studies as they will help you to complete each task.



- This unit will require a **minimum of 30 hours** rehearsal time carried out under direct supervision and independently. You will need to complete a practice log to evidence this.
- Your tutor will also have to complete a tutor testimony to evidence your achievement.

LO

Learning Outcome 1

Be able to plan repertoire for a solo performance

This learning outcome requires learners to select pieces of music for a performance to demonstrate their ability to choose and justify pieces.

Choosing the right music



A solo performer requires high levels of technical ability using their instrument or voice. In order to do this, musicians need to be able to develop practice routines which involve self-discipline and perseverance. It is also very important to choose the pieces you are going to perform very carefully.

When choosing the right music the most important things to remember are:

- to select pieces that will showcase your technical and musical ability
- to select music that you can play well
- to select music that is appropriate for your target audience and venue
- to select music which will give a balanced and contrasting programme

Do not choose music that is not rehearsed well or that will take longer than the time you have available to prepare.

The easiest way to do this is to make a list of your best pieces, i.e. those that you feel best represents your ability. More often than not these will be pieces that you like and get a great deal of satisfaction from playing or singing.

From that list, you should then select your final choices which you will then be able to prepare in order to present polished performances. The selection of your final programme should be well considered and carefully thought through.

- **Why do I like this specific piece?**
- **How does it help show off my level of proficiency?**
- **Will it demonstrate my musicality?**

Building a balanced programme

As you begin to consider which pieces to play for your solo performance, it is a good idea to think about how to balance your programme. For instance, if you play four pieces that are all similar in style, then they can sound very 'samey' and your audience may become bored. To begin this process, you should carry out some background research and listen to recordings of the pieces you might include your programme. You should select pieces which stretch your skills and abilities; choosing pieces that are too easy may not give you the challenge you need to produce an exciting and musical performance.

Try to choose a mixture of different types and styles of pieces. One way of structuring your programme, for example, might be to start with a lively piece which will grab the audience's attention. You could then follow this with a contrasting slower piece. The third piece could be something really straightforward, but that you know you can play well. Your final piece should be something strong and spectacular which leaves the audience impressed with your overall performance.

When planning your repertoire you will need to consider:

- **How to create a contrasting and balanced programme**
- **What venue and equipment do you have available?**
- **Who will be your audience?**
- **What genre, style and mood will you choose?**
- **What preparation time do you have?**
- **What accompaniment requirements do you have?**

Task 1: Plan repertoire for a solo performance

(AC 1.1 & 1.2)

After identifying your chosen instrument and details for your solo performance there are two parts to the task.

Part a.
You need to **IDENTIFY three** pieces of music that are appropriate for the performance context.

Part b.
You now need to give **at least one** reason to **JUSTIFY** *why* your repertoire is suitable for the **audience**, the **venue** and your **level of technical ability**.

Example

For example, for technical ability:
"I chose straightforward pieces to play that would not need additional practice" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"I chose pieces that would challenge me to use a range of techniques to showcase my technical ability. I practice these pieces regularly, can perform them well and with confidence, and always receive positive feedback" **would be an acceptable answer.**

Top Tip

When you are **JUSTIFYING** your repertoire (Part b.) there are **three** parts to your answer.

You must include details on why your repertoire suitable for the **audience**, the **venue** and **your level of technical difficulty**.

Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **A balanced and varied programme would keep your audience engaged. True or False?**
- **Name two points you would need to consider when building your programme**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 54.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO

Learning Outcome 2

Be able to prepare for a solo performance

This learning outcome requires learners to demonstrate their solo performance skills by undertaking the necessary preparations for a performance.

Practice techniques

The phrase you must familiarise yourself with as a musician, is as follows:

"Amateurs practise until they get the music right. Professionals practise until they can't possibly get it wrong".

We are all familiar with the phrase '**practice makes perfect**', but if you follow a few simple techniques, your playing will improve significantly in a relatively short period of time.

Where a lot of inexperienced musicians sometimes go wrong is that they confuse 'practising' with simply 'playing'.

There are many constraints placed on young people today, especially with the amount of coursework and homework which needs to be done for school or college. Sometimes it can feel like doing thirty minutes practise a day is just not feasible.

One answer is not to waste your very valuable time by running through the bits you can already play – practise the parts in a piece that you find difficult or cannot play.

>> TONE >> TECHNICAL EXERCISES

>> MOTOR SKILLS AND CO-ORDINATION

>> WARM-UPS >> STUDY >> TIMING

>> DEXTERITY >> SOUND >> SPEED

Samples

When practising, you need to identify what passages in a piece are causing you difficulty and what you need to do in order to fix the problem.

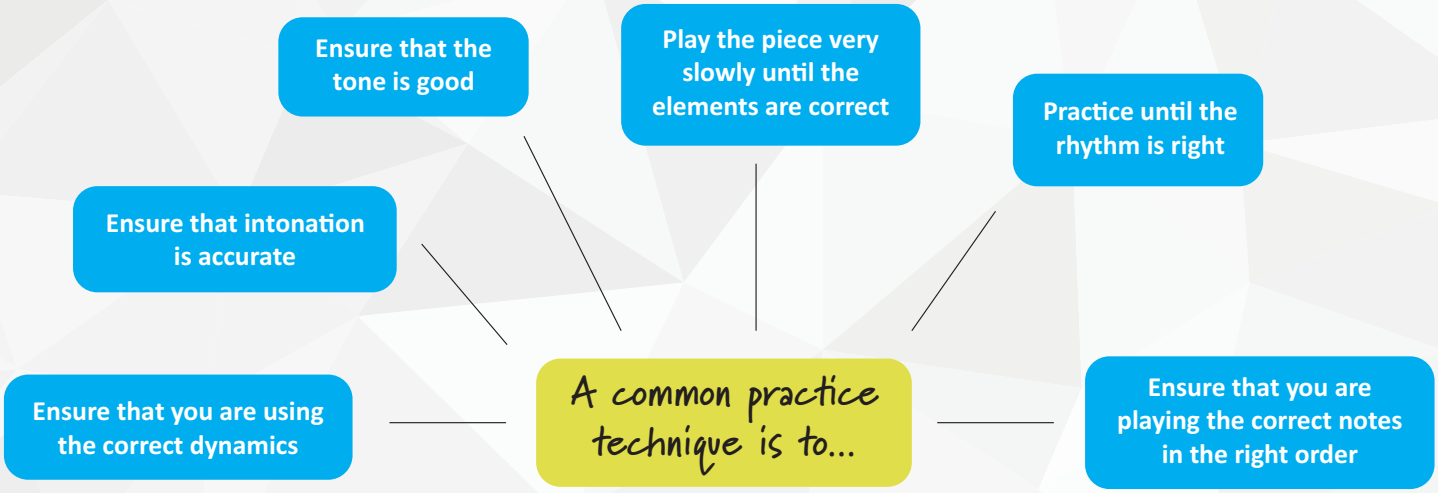
Practice techniques can vary according to your instrument. With wind, string and brass instruments for example, a lot of time and effort is put into improving the tonal quality. This is achieved by playing long notes, developing breathing techniques and introducing vibrato.

Scales may seem a little dull, but knowing your key signatures and how to play the scales on your instrument is a good way of making sure that you will be able to use the correct finger placement as well as being more likely to remember which accidentals you need. Professional musicians, however good they are, still practice their scales!

Percussionists spend a long time strengthening their weak hand (opposite to the one they write with). This can be done by doubling the workload in the weak hand and allows the performer to play as evenly and confidently in either.

For singers, techniques may focus on articulation, developing the head and chest voice, improving breath control and learning how to pitch intervals correctly.





You could try to play or sing passages using different rhythms. This enables you to play intervals both slowly and quite quickly. Doing this, will enable you to really concentrate on the parts of a piece that are giving you trouble. The long-term benefit is that by practising in this way, you will improve your technical ability and instrumental control.

Once you have mastered the practice techniques, try increasing the tempo at which you play the piece. Most performers try and play something twice as fast as they should. That way, when they actually come to perform the work, they are more than capable of playing it at the correct speed.

The biggest downfall of any performer is lack of self-confidence. In order to overcome this, you must spend time with your instrument one-to-one. Develop your technique until you are 100% confident that nothing can go wrong, irrespective of the performance environment.

Do not make the mistake of thinking you can get away with 'iffy' bits. You might be able to if you are playing in your bedroom, but when you are sounding Last Post at a memorial service, there simply is no room for error. Everyone will notice if you make the smallest slip.

Practice techniques help us to discipline ourselves into fault-finding and correcting errors. It is vital as a performer that we learn to evaluate ourselves and our abilities. By concentrating on various practice techniques, the overall technical control of your instrument will improve, as will your aural skills (listening). You will also be able to identify problem areas much more quickly and therefore your time will be used more effectively.

Undertaking a practice routine

>> REVIEW PROGRESS

>> SKILLS AUDIT >> SET YOURSELF TARGETS

>> MAKE PROGRESS >> IMPROVE SKILLS

>> REFINING PRACTICE >> ADJUSTING PRACTICE

Benefits of effective practice routines

- They focus the mind
- They remind you of what you need to practice
- After a few weeks, practice will become habitual
- They help you to overcome weaknesses in your technique
- They help you to develop good aural skills

Practice dos
Plan what you want to achieve (small achievements at each practice session)
Make time to practice for about 10-30 minutes
Start with something you know well as a warm up (2 minutes)
Practice scales and arpeggios (5 minutes)
Perform exercises or technical studies slowly at first and then increase in speed
Break difficult sections down into smaller pieces - one bar at first, then two or three bars together, and finally a whole section of music
Always perform with a sense of musicality (even scales and warm-ups can be beautiful!)
Sight read or improvise a melody to create something new
Finish with something you can do well; pretend it is a final performance of a piece

Practice don'ts
Avoid getting distracted by friends or other musicians (practice should be an individual activity unlike a rehearsal)
Don't perform an entire section over and over when the error is in one particular bar alone (save time and break it down instead)
Try not to shy away from anything that is difficult. Do not just perform music you know well (or how else will you improve?)
Don't stand or sit with bad posture even when you are practising (your breathing and breath control will suffer and you will develop unnecessary aches and pains)
Avoid leaving practice to the week before a performance. Learning new music is a detailed process that is more than just being able to play the notes

Scan me!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqVTF9GOtrE

Task 2: Identify practice techniques that can improve own performance skills (AC 2.1)

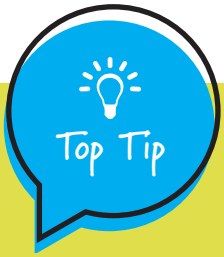
For this task you should **IDENTIFY three** practice exercises or techniques that could improve your performance skills.

The practice exercises or techniques you **IDENTIFY** below *must* be relevant to your instrument identified and the music chosen in Task 1



For example:
"I practise by playing a piece through three times" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"I begin by practising my scales and arpeggios, then move onto technical exercises, followed by techniques to improve my tone" **would be an acceptable answer.**



Think about how **you** can improve your performance skills.

What exercises/techniques do you use currently?

Preparing for a solo performance

Using a **practice plan**, you should keep a diary of your preparation for the solo performance. You can use this to record targets that have been set (either by you or by your tutor) and the progress you have made towards reaching each one. You should take into account all aspects of preparation for the performance, including **technical** factors and **physical** or **mental** considerations.

A practice plan is in the form of a table which asks you to identify specific targets (musical, technical or physical) and then gives you space to record the progress you make in preparation for your solo performance.

The targets you set will be **specific** to your instrument or voice. Below are a few examples for you.

Technical preparations



- Preparing instrument or voice e.g. in working order, warm-up
- Preparing sheet music, backing tracks, etc.
- Contingency planning e.g. spare strings, reeds, etc.
- Setting up
- Liaising with technicians and venue staff

Physical preparations



- Relaxation exercises
- Concentration techniques
- Exercises for controlling nerves
- Rehearsing with accompanist
- Dress rehearsal and sound checks
- Verbal communications e.g. introductions
- Presentation and stagecraft e.g. entrance and exit of stage, bows, etc.

Musical preparations



- Memorise the Last Post for a Remembrance Day performance
- Perform bar 10-17 at the correct tempo (120 bpm)
- Pitch all intervals correctly for 'Ave Maria'
- Use the correct sticking in the central passage of 'Roll on Friday'
- Ensure the fingering in 3rds in bar 42 is tight and not messy
- Play my solo piece using dynamic contrast and staccato articulations
- Tidy up the lip slurs in 'The Swan'
- Improve my tone quality using long note exercises
- Improve my breathing technique by singing long sustained phrases

Task 3: Prepare for a solo performance

(AC 2.2)

There are two parts to this task.

Part a.
You should **COMPLETE** an initial skills audit.

You should read through the list of judgements provided and take a moment to reflect. Do you have the necessary skills to deliver your chosen music for your planned performance?

If you highlight any areas for development, you can refer to them in part b.

Part b.
Following on from your initial skills audit, you should now **PRODUCE** a practice plan detailing *how* you are going to prepare for your planned solo performance.

Set yourself three suitable targets and evaluate the progress you have made for each one.

? Example

An example entry of a musical target would be:

Musical skill target	By when	Progress made
I want to be able to play the fast passages in bars 64 to 96 of Pachelbel's Canon more accurately and up to speed.	30 Sept	I set my metronome to 85 so that I could play at a steady tempo. I tried increasing to 90 but I can't play the semiquavers neatly enough at this speed.

Top Tip

Setting yourself a target with help provide focus for the practice sessions.

You can set yourself targets or your tutor can set some for you.

Task 4: Carry out technical and physical preparation for your solo performance (AC 2.3)

There are two parts to this task.

Part a.
In preparation for your solo performance you will need to evidence **30 hours** rehearsal time using a practice log (**VQF 660***).

**You will find this template at the back of your workbook.*

Part b.
You should now **WRITE** a reflective account detailing *why* the *technical* and *physical* preparations you detailed in Task 3 were appropriate to help you prepare for your solo performance.

Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **Relaxation exercises and concentration techniques are what types of preparation?**
- **Name one technical and one musical preparation a soloist may practice**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 54.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO **Learning Outcome 2 - complete** ✓

LO

Learning Outcome 3

Be able to perform music to an audience as a soloist

This learning outcome requires learners to demonstrate their competence in performing to an audience as a soloist.

Case study

Ella is a saxophonist and member of a six-piece jazz band. Over the last twelve months the band have put on two concerts.

The case study below shows the preparation that is involved.



Ella

Ella is really passionate about playing with her band and has improved significantly over the last year. Ella has invested the time to **practice and perfect** her musical skills and has planned out a detailed **practice timetable** to **build her skills** in preparation for the performance.

Ella set herself a number of **specific targets** and **worked hard** to achieve them. **Feedback** from her tutor was essential and Ella **regularly tested the performance** of pieces on family and friends, **asking for advice**.

Not only did Ella's skill level improve, her **confidence** grew significantly as the pieces became more familiar. Previously Ella had struggled with nerves and **tried hard to control** them before every performance. **Being conscientious, taking the time and effort to prepare and warm up before any performance, hydrate and focus on tone and expression** were all factors that helped.

Ella is working on an improvised solo for the next performance.

Performance preparation

There are all sorts of different preparatory routines you will use as a performer – and often you do not even realise you are doing it!

Make sure your uniform or stage costume is pressed, clean and tidy. If not, you end up going on stage feeling a bit scruffy and not altogether with it. If you look good, you feel good and if you feel good, you play well. It is that simple.

Check to make sure your instrument is in working order. Play a couple of bars to confirm this.

Warm up - properly!

Take yourself off into a corner and play a few notes.

- If you are a wind or brass instrumentalist, play long notes. This will warm up the instrument gradually and slow down the accumulation of water inside the instrument.
- If you are a percussionist, loosen up your wrists and arms. Practice stick work in a mirror.
- Singers should warm up their vocal chords by singing different pitches and intervals and get the articulators (teeth, tongue, lips) going.

Control your nerves

If you suffer from nerves, this is often a good thing as they give you the edge as a performer. Nerves make you more aware of things around you as your senses are on red alert.

- There are two different types of nerves - good nerves and bad nerves! The difference between the two is simple. With good nerves, you have butterflies in your tummy. With bad nerves, you will be hot and sweaty and will probably feel sick. Most young performers have good nerves as it is often only when we mature into adults that we develop a fear of consequence and failure.
- Take long, deep breaths. Apart from having a calming feeling, this allows more oxygen into your body feeding those cells overrun with adrenalin. When we are stressed, we hunch our shoulders and hold our breath. If you breathe, more oxygen reaches your brain, and therefore you will have higher levels of energy. Low levels of energy cause an imbalance between the left and right side of the body. Catastrophic if you are a drummer!

Eat a banana!

These have very high levels of potassium and sustain your energy levels for longer.

Think positively

You cannot go onto the performance platform thinking you are going to mess it up even before you have started! Once this begins to happen, you lose all faith in your ability to perform. Examples below of poor self-talk:

- Will I split the high note?
- Will I play the wrong notes?
- Will I forget to breathe?
- Will I get the words mixed up?

There are a number of **physical** actions that can potentially damage your performance so should be avoided. Two of them, **Don't eat or drink high sugar foods or drink** and **don't rush around** are detailed on the following page. You may think of others that are specific to your own instrument.

Don’t eat or drink high sugar foods or drinks

Consuming these types of foods result in one thing – dehydration. If you are nervous, you will naturally have a dry mouth – a nightmare for wind and brass players and vocalists alike. You do not want to make this worse by drinking a can of coke just before you walk on stage or step off. Sugary food and drink will also give you an instant sugar rush as your body tries to process the extra glucose. You will feel energised and elated for a while, but when the glucose is all gone you will experience a ‘sugar crash’ which will leave you feeling sluggish, irritable and tired.



Don’t rush around

If you use up all your energy by running around backstage or just before you step off, you will have nothing in reserve for the performance. You will be out of breath, you will not get enough oxygen to your brain and the nerves will get increasingly worse. Be organised and be ready.

Make sure you have everything you need well in advance of the performance and be there in plenty of time. You will still be nervous, but hopefully these will be the good nerves instead of the bad ones.



No two performances will ever be the same, but that is what makes it a wonderful and exciting experience. And it does not matter if you make a mistake. What matters is how you recover from it.

Drink plenty of water

If you feel thirsty, that is your brain’s way of telling you that you have gone too long without fluid. Water is essential for proper circulation in the body and flexibility of the blood vessels. Most importantly, it helps regulate your body temperature. Just imagine a car engine running without water in the radiator. It would simply overheat – just as you will during the performance (if not before).



Solo performance

Performing as a soloist is quite a daunting thing to do, especially playing in front of an audience. There is no quick solution to this and you will need to give yourself plenty of practice playing to people. Some of the skills you will need to demonstrate we have already looked at in the ensemble performance section of this learning guide.

Additional skills required as a soloist in addition to **pitch, rhythm, intonation and pulse** are:

Use of expression

This is the main way we can communicate with our audience and is conveyed mainly by using the dynamics and phrases of a piece. It is quite difficult when you are playing a military side drum to be expressive as the instrument is quite unforgiving. However, you can play loudly and softly so the audience understands the direction and all music is written in phrases.

Confidence

This is something that will come with ability and practice. There are times when self-doubt creeps in and you may find yourself thinking, “If I get through this it will be a miracle.” The solution is to know your pieces back to front and inside out. Know them so you can’t possibly make a mistake and then you will have nothing to worry about.



Activity 1: Perform music to an audience as a soloist (AC 3.1)



To complete the next part of the unit, you must perform contrasting pieces of music as a soloist with competent technical and interpretive skills.

To provide **evidence** of this **you** must:

- Perform at least **three*** contrasting pieces of music as a **soloist** in front of an **audience**.

**Each piece must be a minimum of 2 minutes in length. It is not necessary for you to perform all pieces at once as they may be presented over time.*

To provide **evidence** of this **your tutor** must:

- Take a video recording of the performances.
- Complete a tutor testimony (**VQF658***) to give you feedback and to provide evidence of your solo music performance.

**The template can be found at the back of your workbook.*

LO Learning Outcome 1 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 2 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 3 - complete ✓

Answers

LO 1 Be able to plan repertoire for a solo performance

Q1: True.
Q2: Answers may include: venue, audience, genre, time required or accompaniment requirements.

LO 2 Be able to prepare for a solo performance

Q1: Physical preparations.
Q2: Preparing sheet music or others are listed on page 46. Memorising notes or others listed on page 46.

Additional reading

Should you wish to know more about this subject area, the following resources may be useful:

Reading
Each instrument will have its own set of technique development materials that can be found in libraries, music shops and periodicals. For the health and wellbeing element of the unit, learners will find periodical journals on exercise useful, along with the material listed below.

Textbooks
De Alcantara P – Indirect Procedures: Musician's Guide to the Alexander Technique (Oxford University Press and Clarendon Paperbacks, 1997) ISBN 9780198165699

Paull B and Harrison C – The Athletic Musician: A Guide to Playing Without Pain (Scarecrow Press, 1997) ISBN 9780810833562

Robinson L et al – The Official Body Control Pilates Method – For Fitness and Health, Sport, and at Work (Macmillan Paperback, 2002) ISBN 9780330393270

Websites
https://gb.abrsm.org/en/exam-support/apps-and-practice-tools/
https://gb.abrsm.org/en/exam-support/coping-with-nerves/
https://store.trinitycollege.com/

Additional units of interest

As part of this qualification there are 14 other units of study. A number of them have clear links with planning and creating a music product and include:

Unit 12: Planning and creating a Music Product
Unit 14: Working as a Musical Ensemble

LO Learning Overview

Criteria reference	To achieve the criteria the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	Task	Evidence (page no.)
Learning Outcome 1: Be able to plan repertoire for a solo performance			
1.1	Select pieces that are appropriate for the performance context	Task 1	WB Pages 4-5
1.2	Justify pieces of music chosen for the performance context	Task 1	WB Pages 4-5
Learning Outcome 2: Be able to prepare for a solo performance			
2.1	Identify practice techniques that can improve own performance skills	Task 2	WB Page 6
2.2	Undertake a practice routine to improve identified performance skills	Task 3	WB pages 7-8
2.3	Carry out the technical and physical preparations appropriate for the chosen solo performance	Task 4 **and** VQF 660	WB page 9 **and** 13-14
Learning Outcome 3: Be able to perform music to an audience as a soloist			
3.1	Perform contrasting pieces of music as a soloist with competent technical and interpretive skills	Activity 1 **and** VQF 658	WB page 10 **and** 11-12



Unit 14: Working as a Musical Ensemble

Unit 14

Working as a Musical Ensemble

Very few musicians work in isolation and being able to work as part of an ensemble is an essential skill for any musician. Musical ensembles come in many different forms such as orchestras, choirs, brass bands, rock bands, military bands, etc., but no matter what form the ensemble takes, the skills required are the same.

In this unit, you will explore the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles. You will need to form your own ensemble and select, plan and rehearse musical material and eventually present a performance as a group. In addition to developing your musical skills, you will also develop the necessary organisational, teamwork and professional skills required to be a successful ensemble musician.

On successful completion of this unit you will:

1. **Know the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles**
2. **Be able to prepare for a performance as part of a musical ensemble**
3. **Be able to perform as part of a musical ensemble**

In Unit 14, there are:



- Three tasks which require a written answer.
- You need to understand what the command verb is telling you to do before answering the questions.
- Additionally, you should read any case studies as they will help you understand and complete each task.



- This unit requires a **minimum of 35 hours** rehearsal time carried out under direct supervision and independently. You will need to complete a log to record these hours.
- Your **tutor** will also have to complete a tutor testimony to evidence your achievements.

LO

Learning Outcome 1

Know the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles

This learning outcome will be in preparation for the practical part of this unit. Learners will have the knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles.

Playing in an ensemble



Most performing musicians make their living by playing in ensembles. Musicians play in a wide range of musical ensembles. For example, a string player may perform as part of an orchestra, in a string quartet or as part of the backing group for a singer. Many musicians work as session players and perform as part of a musical group with whom they do not regularly play.

Different roles within an ensemble

There is a wide range of musical ensembles. Three examples are mentioned above (an orchestra, a string quartet and a backing group) and within each of these, there will be many different roles. For example within an orchestra there would be a Conductor.

Use the space below to list at least five different roles that you can think of. They can be from any form of ensemble. These notes will help you later on.

...

Ensemble Musicians' Roles and Responsibilities

Roles

Orchestra



- Conductor
- Instrumentalist
- Soloist

Military Band



- Band leader
- Section leader
- Musician

Choir



- Choir Master/ Mistress
- Singer
- Soloist

Group



- Vocalist
- Backing vocalist

Stage show



- Musical Director
- Assistant Musical Director
- Choir Master/ Mistress

Different responsibilities

Case study

Ella is a saxophonist and member of a six-piece jazz band, and they have decided to put on a small scale jazz concert within the next twelve months. This will be their first concert.

The case study below highlighted in **blue** shows the responsibilities that Ella has to ensure that this and further concerts are a success.



Ella

Ella **practises** privately at home regularly to ensure that she is confident and able to play her individual part.

Ella **attends** the twice weekly rehearsal on time and **works hard** for the duration, **paying attention** and **focusing** on the direction given from the conductor and working with band mates to gain positive results. Ella is **passionate** and **enthusiastic** about the band, **listens intently to feedback** and advice and **clearly wants to build on her skills** and **produce a good performance**. Ella intends to study Music at a specialist college and is considering music as a future career.

Ella is also involved in a band within her youth organisation and often helps younger or less experienced band members to improve their performance in a mentor type role.

Following on from reading about Ella can you think of any other **responsibilities** that could be added to this list? Use the space below to make a note of them.

...

Responsibilities

Every person in an ensemble will have different responsibilities.

Here are some possible responsibilities of an ensemble musician:

- reliability
- attendance and punctuality
- having appropriate equipment (e.g. instrument, leads, reeds etc.)
- scheduling and organising rehearsals
- selecting repertoire
- arranging musical material
- being prepared for rehearsals (e.g. individual practice, score preparation)
- preparing resources (e.g. sheet music, chord charts, lead sheets etc.)
- contributing to rehearsals and suggesting improvements
- offering and responding to constructive criticism
- supporting and helping others
- organising performances
- marketing and promoting performances
- liaising with technicians and venue staff
- setting up and packing down equipment for rehearsals and performances

Military Band: Musician

- Learning their individual part (private practice)
- Attending rehearsals
- Performing as an ensemble
- Stage management duties
- Security duties
- Playing and marching at the same time
- Following drum major or conductor signals
- Communicating with an audience



Orchestra: Conductor

- Selecting the programme of music
- Ensuring the orchestra is technically capable of playing the pieces
- Conducting
- Teaching the music of the piece (phrases, meaning etc.)
- Ensuring the venue is acoustically appropriate for the performance
- Liaising with sound recorders



Choir: Singer/Soloist

- Learning their individual part (private practice)
- Learning the pronunciation of words set to music
- Perform in a group
- Following the choirmaster or lead vocalist
- Musical communication



Following on from reading about Ella and the three detailed examples, think about the responsibilities that **you** have. Use the space below to make a note of them.



Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **A Conductor helps the musicians to interpret the music and gives each of them clear direction to perform to a high standard. True or False?**
- **Name two responsibilities of an ensemble musician**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 79.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

Task 1: Describe roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles (AC 1.1)



For this task you must firstly *identify* **three** roles within an ensemble. You must then **DESCRIBE** the specific responsibilities associated with each role.

As the verb is **DESCRIBE**, it is expected that you will write a detailed sentence for each answer.



For example, if you were describing the roles and responsibility of a conductor:
"A conductor conducts the music" **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"In an orchestra, the conductor, having selected the pieces, would work with the ensemble to explain how the music should be interpreted and teach the music of the piece. A conductor would support and rehearse the musicians giving them clear direction to perform to a high standard in rehearsals and during performances" **would be an acceptable answer.**



Consider one role that you have held when you have been part of an ensemble. How would you describe that role to someone else?

LO

Learning Outcome 2

Be able to prepare for a performance as part of a musical ensemble

This learning outcome requires learners to take part in the planning, preparation and rehearsal process for an ensemble performance.

Preparing for a performance as part of an ensemble

There are **three** key elements that you need to consider when planning a performance as part of a musical ensemble. The pages that follow will explain each one in more detail.

The **first** element to consider is **planning and preparation**.

1. **Planning and preparation**
2. **Targets**
3. **Rehearsal skills**



1 Planning and preparation

For a performance to be successful it is important that you plan and prepare very carefully; this is not something that can be left to chance. At the start of the process you need to make decisions about the **arrangements** and **organisation** that you will need put in place for a successful performance.

Decisions you will need to make about **arrangements** include:

- **Venue** Where you are going to perform?
- **Available equipment** Can you access all the equipment you will need?
- **Audience** Who are you going to perform to?
- **Genre (type) of music** Consider the music you are going to perform including the style and mood.
- **Produce a contrasting and balanced programme** This will then appeal to your audience
- **Common musical interests** of musicians
- **Skill level of the available performers** Pitch this correctly
- **Availability of performers** You will need an appropriate mix of instrumentalists or singers
- **Time** How much time do you have before the performance?

Decisions you will need to make about **organisation** include:

- **Rehearsal space** Do you have access?
- **Equipment** What is available for rehearsals and the performance (e.g. instruments, music stands, PA system, etc.)
- **Organising sufficient rehearsals** How many will you need to reach the required standard?
- **Planning each rehearsal** Ensure that sufficient time is allocated to each piece
- **Liaising with technicians and venue staff** What will they need to do for you?
- **Arranging and booking the performance venue** Consider any costs?
- **Promoting your performance** To ensure that you have an audience

Task 2: Identify the planning and preparation required for a successful ensemble performance

(AC 2.1)

There are two parts to this task.

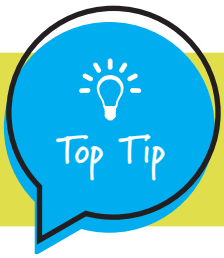
Part a.
You should **IDENTIFY two** examples of how **you** contributed to the *selection of musical material* for your ensemble performance.

Part b.
You should **IDENTIFY two** examples of how **you** contributed to the *planning and organisation of the rehearsals*.



For example:
"I put up my music stand and got my music ready." **would not be an acceptable answer.**

Whereas:
"I helped with getting all the instruments in my section in tune and correctly warmed up. I also made sure everyone worked on the most difficult sections in the music before the rehearsal began" **would be an acceptable answer.**



Remember this task is all about **YOU** and your contribution to the planning and preparation.

The **second** key element to consider when planning a performance as part of a musical ensemble is **targets**.

2 Targets

It is always good practice to set targets throughout the process to ensure that your final performance is the best it can possibly be.

The first step to do that is to produce a **SWOT** analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). Once completed this can then inform target setting.

Case study

Here is an example of a SWOT analysis that links to Ella and her experiences in preparing for a concert with her jazz band.

STRENGTHS (Consider what you are good at?) Strengths	**WEAKNESSES** (Consider anything that you can improve on, this could be skills, knowledge or experience) Weaknesses
• Passion and Enthusiasm • Commitment • Skill level	• Limited experience • Can play one instrument • Key change on my first solo piece
OPPORTUNITIES (Consider things that you feel could be advantageous to you) Opportunities	**THREATS** (Consider things that you feel may present a challenge or prevent you from achieving what you want) Threats
• College course • Higher Education • Employment	• Time due to pending exams in college • Limited face to face due to impact of pandemic • Competition for a college place

You can use a completed SWOT template to:

- identify a series of long term goals and aims
- set short, medium and long-term targets

Any targets that are set must be **SMART**.

S	M	A	R	T
SPECIFIC	**MEASURABLE**	**ACHIEVABLE**	**REALISTIC**	**TIME**
State what exactly you will be looking to improve	**How will you measure your success?**	**Make your goal reasonable**	**Is it realistic for you? Will it be a challenge?**	**When will it be achieved by?**

Case study

Here is an example of a SMART target for Ella.



Ella

I find the change of key on the first page of my solo piece very difficult to manage.

I will concentrate on practising this page separately for 10 minutes each day, so it is accurate and correct before the first full rehearsal in three weeks' time.

Once SMART targets have been set they can help to identify deadlines and milestones leading to your performance.

It is importance that SMART targets are recorded and documented in an appropriate format and communicated and understood by all participants.

Task 3: Set and review relevant targets for rehearsals that will result in musical progress

(AC 2.2)

There are three parts to this task.

Part a.
You should complete a personal SWOT analysis. You must include at least **two** points in each element.

Part b.
You should now set yourself **two** appropriate SMART targets that will help you to improve your musical performance for a series of rehearsals.

Part c.
You should now **REFLECT** on your contribution to rehearsals and detail **four** actions for improvement. For each action you should also consider the impact it may have.

Being honest with yourself when completing the SWOT template will help you to complete your SMART targets.



The **third** and final key element to consider when planning a performance as part of a musical ensemble is **rehearsal skills**.

3 Rehearsal skills

Key skills

When taking part in rehearsals, there are some key skills that you will need to be able to fulfil as a member of the ensemble. These include:

- Ensuring that you have warmed up properly before the rehearsal starts
- Ensuring that your instrument is in tune before the start of the rehearsal
- Ensuring that there are targets for each rehearsal – e.g. how much time to spend on each piece
- Are you able to both give and receive direction; this involves listening and responding to others to ensure that each rehearsal achieves the necessary targets
- Are you able to solve problems within the rehearsal both musical and logistical; this might include the use of different fingering, or maybe a change of technique; this might require additional rehearsal time
- When there are problems, are you able to suggest alternative solutions (e.g. maybe a change of repertoire)
- Where there are problematic sections of music, do you have the skills to be able to solve the problem (e.g. repeated practice at a slower tempo)

Expected behaviours

There are also a set of expected behaviours for members of ensembles. These might include:

- Regularly attend the planned rehearsals and ensure that they arrive at each rehearsal in plenty of time for a prompt start
- Be well prepared for the session; e.g. they have worked on their own parts between rehearsals
- Have the correct equipment for each session
- Have a positive attitude towards the rehearsals and are enthusiastic
- Respect and encourage others
- Listen attentively throughout the session and follow all instructions
- Work tidily and safely
- Communicate clearly throughout rehearsals
- Respond appropriately to constructive criticism

Recap

To check your understanding you may wish to answer the following questions:

- **SMART targets can help to identify deadlines and milestones leading to improving your performance. True or False?**
- **As a member of an ensemble you need to have a number of key skills. Can you name two?**

If you want to check your answers, they are located on page 79.

LO **Learning Outcome 1 - complete** ✓

LO **Learning Outcome 2 - complete** ✓

Activity 1: Prepare for a performance as part of a musical ensemble (AC 2.3 & 2.4)



To complete the next part of the unit, you must **prepare** for a performance and perform as part of a musical ensemble.

To provide **evidence** of this **you** must:

- Contribute ideas that have a positive impact on rehearsals for an ensemble performance
- Demonstrate expected behaviours throughout ensemble performance rehearsals
- Complete a practice log (**VQF 661***) to evidence 35 hours rehearsal time carried out under direct supervision and independently.

**The template can be found at the back of your workbook.*

To provide **evidence** of this your **tutor** must:

- Complete a testimony (**VQF 659 Part a***) to provide evidence of your positive impact and your behaviour whilst preparing for your ensemble.

LO

Learning Outcome 3

Be able to perform as part of a musical ensemble

This learning outcome requires learners to demonstrate their competence in performing as part of a musical ensemble.

Performance skills

Performing in a group is what most musicians do. It is much more fun being part of a group rather than merely playing or singing by yourself. Being part of an ensemble will allow you to develop a set of skills that will aid your overall development as a musician, skills that you cannot develop by yourself.

There are two sets of skills that will be assessed;

- Technical accuracy and
- Ensemble skills.





Technical Accuracy

Before you can perform in a group you need to ensure that you have the following musical skills at a sufficient level to be able to contribute to the group:

Pitch → Are you able to play or sing the right notes at the right time in the pieces you are performing?

Rhythm → Are you able to play or sing the accurate length of notes throughout the chosen pieces?

Intonation → Are you able to play or sing every note in tune? Can you hear when you are slightly sharp or flat, and can you make the changes needed?

Pulse → Are you able to play or sing the chosen pieces at the correct speed? Can you maintain a steady pulse throughout the chosen pieces?

Dynamics, articulation and expression → Are you able to play the music expressively, correctly playing loud or soft when the dynamic marks indicated and accurately playing slurred or staccato notes.



Ensemble Skills

Playing as part of an ensemble is very different to playing as a solo performer. It is important to perform as a member of the musical team, playing sympathetically with the other musicians under the conductor's direction.

Consider the following questions...

- Is the music being performed in the appropriate style?
- Are the performers aware of their own roles within the ensemble?
- Is there an appropriate level of interaction between members of the ensemble?
- Do the members of the ensemble follow the conductor, musical director, drum major, band leader or choir master/mistress
- Is there an appropriate balance between the instruments/voices?
- How is the ensemble organised in terms of layout (i.e. use of space)?
- Are the members of the ensemble dressed appropriately? Is the appearance and image created correct?
- Is the physical expression and body language of the members of the ensemble appropriate?
- In what ways do the members of the ensemble communicate with the audience (both verbal and non-verbal)?
- How do the members of the ensemble present themselves on stage (how do they enter and leave the stage)?
- How do the members of the ensemble react when there are mistakes and other unexpected occurrences?

LO Learning Outcome 1 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 2 - complete ✓

LO Learning Outcome 3 - complete ✓

Activity 2: Perform as part of a musical ensemble



(AC 3.1)

To complete the next part of the unit you must **perform** as part of a musical ensemble.

To provide **evidence** of this **you** must:

- Perform contrasting pieces of music as part of an ensemble with competent technical and ensemble skills

To provide **evidence** of this your **tutor** must:

- Take a video recording of the performance.
- Complete a testimony (**VQF 659 Part b***) to give you feedback and to provide evidence of your performance as part of a musical ensemble.

**The template can be found at the back of your workbook.*

Answers

LO 1 Know the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles

Q1: True.
Q2: Reliability and selecting repertoire. Others can be found on page 62.

LO 2 Be able to prepare for a performance as part of a musical ensemble

Q1: True.
Q2: There are many key skills required, some include: warming up properly, tuning your instrument, working to achieve targets and solving problems. Others are listed on page 72.

Additional reading

Should you wish to know more about this subject area, the following resources may be useful:
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zg6ntv4/revision/6
https://us.abrsm.org/media/63919/developing-ensemble-skills.pdf

Additional units of interest

As part of this qualification there are 14 other units of study. A number of them have clear links with working as a music ensemble and include:

- **Unit 12:** Planning and Creating a Music Product
- **Unit 13:** Solo Music Performance

LO Learning Overview

Criteria reference	To achieve the criteria the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	Task	Evidence (page no.)
Learning Outcome 1: Know the roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles			
1.1	**Describe** roles and responsibilities of members of musical ensembles	Task 1	WB Pages 4-5
Learning Outcome 2: Be able to prepare for a performance as part of a musical ensemble			
2.1	Identify the planning and preparation required for a successful ensemble performance	Task 2	WB Page 6
2.2	Set and review relevant targets for rehearsals that will result in musical progress	Task 3	WB Pages 7-8
2.3	Contribute ideas that have a positive impact on the rehearsals for an ensemble performance	Activity 1, VQF 659 Part a. **and** VQF 661	WB Page 9, 10 **and** 12-13
2.4	Demonstrate expected behaviours throughout ensemble performance rehearsals	Activity 1, VQF 659 Part a. **and** VQF 661	WB Page 9, 10 **and** 12-13
Learning Outcome 3: Be able to perform as part of a musical ensemble			
3.1	Perform contrasting pieces of music as part of an ensemble with competent technical and ensemble skills	Activity 2 **and** VQF 659 Part b.	WB Page 9 **and** 10-11

Additional study

A link to our current prospectus can be found on our website **www.cvqo.org**.

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