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to know.

Qualification Specification

NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology
(601/6774/9)

Version 8.1 November 2019

ncfe.

Contents

Summary of changes

This section summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version (Issue 7 October 2018).

Issue	Publication Date	Summary of amendments
7	October 2018	On page 71 the overall qualification grading descriptor for a Distinction * has been made clearer around the achievement of the internal units and the external assessment. To be awarded a Distinction* grade, the learner will have achieved within the top 10% of the maximum UMS or learners will have achieved a Distinction grade in every unit for the internal assessment and a Distinction grade in both external assessments.
8	September 2019	On page 68 the following sentence has been added; Learners need to achieve a Distinction for each unit in order to achieve an overall grade of Distinction*.
8.1	November 2019	• Information regarding the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners added to Section 1 (page 14) • Information regarding the aggregation methods and grade thresholds added to Section 5 (page 71)

Section 1

Qualification overview

Qualification overview

Introduction

We want to make your experience of working with NCFE as pleasant and easy as possible. This qualification specification contains everything you need to know about this qualification and should be used by everyone involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of the NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology.

All information contained in this specification is correct at the time of publishing.

To ensure that you're using the most up-to-date version of this qualification specification please check the issue date in the page headers against that of the qualification specification on our website www.ncfe.org.uk.

If you advertise this qualification using a different or shortened name you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the regulated qualification title of NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology.

Things you need to know

Qualification number (QN)	601/6774/9
Aim reference	60167749
Total Qualification Time*	215
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	140 plus 4-hour external assessment
Level	2
Assessment requirements	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence and externally set and assessed question paper and practical assessment.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

Total Qualification Time comprises:

- the Guided Learning Hours for the qualification
- an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, Teacher or other appropriate provider of education or training.

About this qualification

This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 601/6774/9.

This qualification forms part of a suite of qualifications which have been developed to meet the Department for Education's (DfE's) requirements for high-quality, rigorous qualifications which:

- have appropriate content for the learner to acquire core knowledge and practical skills
- allow the qualification to be graded
- provide synoptic assessment
- enable progression to a range of study and employment opportunities.

This qualification features on the DfE list of approved Technical Award qualifications for Key Stage 4 performance tables.

Qualification purpose

This qualification enables learners to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of the music technology industry. It's suitable for learners who are motivated and challenged by learning through hands-on experiences. The qualification will allow learners to gain practical skills in creating music using technology.

This qualification is aimed at 14-16 year olds with an interest in music production and recording and is designed to sit alongside GCSEs in the Key Stage 4 curriculum. It's a vocational qualification equivalent to GCSE at grades A*-C.

The qualification provides an introduction to the music technology industry and enables learners to acquire, develop and apply the skills and knowledge required for further academic and/or vocational study.

Throughout the delivery of this qualification, the following core areas and transferable skills should be evident:

- reviewing their own and others' work
- communication skills
- planning and experimentation
- health and safety.

Entry guidance

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification.

This qualification has been developed for learners aged 14-16 in schools and colleges but is also accessible for learners post-16.

The qualification has been developed alongside the NCFE Level 1 Technical Award in Music Technology. It is a vocational equivalent to GCSE grades A*-C.

The NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology is a linked qualification. The Level 1 and 2 qualifications have been developed together for co-teaching. The qualifications reflect each other in content but are pitched at the different levels in language and expectation. The grading descriptors have been levelled and therefore are different across both of the qualifications.

The Level 1 and 2 qualifications share the same external assessment to aid co-delivery. By having one external assessment across both qualifications it provides a valid and more robust assessment.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy, and health and safety aspects of the qualification.

Learners registered on this qualification shouldn't undertake another qualification at the same level with the same or a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding levels.

For learners that have already achieved at level 1, and then progressed to a level 2 qualification with the same discount code, the **first entry only** will be the one that counts in the performance tables. Centres should be mindful of this in their planning.

If a learner has undertaken the majority of the level 2 qualification, but for any reason is not able to fully achieve it, centres can transfer the learner to the corresponding level 1 qualification and map prior learning from the level 2. For more information please contact the External Quality Assurance team.

Achieving this qualification

This qualification consists of:

Unit No	Unit title	Guided learning hours	Mandatory/ Optional	Assessment
Unit 01	Using a digital audio workstation (DAW)	30	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 02	Creating music	30	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 03	Studio recording	40	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed
Unit 04	Sound creation	40	Mandatory	Internally and externally assessed

To be awarded the NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology, learners are required to successfully complete 4 mandatory units. The learning outcomes for each unit are provided in Section 2 (page 15).

To achieve the NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the units as detailed in this qualification specification.

A Unit Certificate can be requested for learners who don't achieve the full qualification but who have achieved at least one whole unit. Grades are awarded for this qualification. For further information about grading and submitting these grades to NCFE, please see Section 4 (page 65).

Progression opportunities

Learners who achieve this V Cert qualification could progress onto further level 3 qualifications and A levels, such as:

- NCFE Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Music Technology
- NCFE Level 3 Diploma in Creative Media
- NCFE Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media
- A level Music
- A level Music Technology

It may also be useful to those studying qualifications in the following sectors:

- film studies
- media studies
- music
- computing
- economics and business
- science
- maths.

Qualification dates

Regulated qualifications have operational end dates and certification end dates.

We review qualifications regularly, working with sector representatives, vocational experts and stakeholders to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments.

If a decision is made to withdraw a qualification, we will set an operational end date and provide reasonable notice to our centres. We will also take all reasonable steps to protect the interest of learners.

An operational end date will only show on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications register.ofqual.gov.uk and on our website if a decision has been made to withdraw a qualification. After this date we can no longer accept learner registrations. However, certification is allowed until the certification end date so that learners have time to complete any programmes of study. The certification end date will only show on the Ofqual Register once an operational end date has been set. After this date we can no longer process certification claims.

Where a qualification has an external assessment this can only be taken up to the last assessment date set by us. No external assessments will be permitted after this date so learners will need to be entered in sufficient time.

Staffing requirements

Centres delivering any of NCFE's qualifications must:

- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Assessors to assess the volume of learners they intend to register
- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Internal Quality Assurers to internally quality assure the anticipated number of Assessors and learners
- ensure that all staff involved in assessment and internal quality assurance are provided with appropriate training and undertake meaningful and relevant continuing professional development
- implement effective internal quality assurance systems and processes to ensure all assessment decisions are reliable, valid, authentic, sufficient and current. This should include standardisation to ensure consistency of assessment
- provide all staff involved in the assessment process with sufficient time and resources to carry out their roles effectively.

Assessors and Internal Quality Assurance

Staff involved in the Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance of this qualification must be able to demonstrate that they have (or are working towards) the relevant expertise and/or occupational competence, at the same level or higher as the units being assessed and internal quality assured. This may be gained through experience and/or qualifications.

Resource requirements

Although NCFE does not specify the resource requirements for this qualification, centres are expected to have appropriate equipment to allow learners to cover all of the learning outcomes. NCFE does not stipulate the software packages or equipment centres should use. However, centres must offer learners access to software packages and equipment appropriate to music technology. These might typically include (as available within centres):

- audio interface
- microphones
- MIDI keyboard/MIDI controller
- computer
- most up-to-date software that can satisfy the requirements of the qualification.

Support for learners

Evidence and Grading Tracker

We've produced an Evidence and Grading Tracker for each internally assessed unit to help learners keep track of their work and to help Teachers reach a judgement on the overall unit grade.

They can be downloaded free of charge from our website www.ncfe.org.uk. You don't have to use the Evidence and Grading Tracker – you can devise your own evidence-tracking documents instead.

Any documents you produce should allow learners to track their achievement against each required learning outcome and include:

- information on the content, availability and location of NCFE's procedures and policies
- advice on support mechanisms for learners who are experiencing difficulties with their studies
- a mechanism for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers to authenticate evidence and achievement for each unit.

Support for centres

There are a number of documents available that you might find useful. These are available to download from our website www.ncfe.org.uk or can be requested from the Centre Support team on 0191 240 8822 or by emailing schools@ncfe.org.uk.

Customer Support team

Our award-winning Customer Support Team will support you with approvals, registrations, external quality assurance, external assessment, results and certification. You can find contact details for your Customer Support Assistant here or get more information by calling 0191 239 8000 or emailing service@ncfe.org.uk.

Assessment and Moderation Handbook for Schools

This guide describes the moderation process so that you can be aware of what systems and processes you should have in place.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments – V Certs

This is designed to assist centres in the correct administration of the external assessment component of NCFE V Cert qualifications.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

This policy is aimed at our customers, including learners, who use our products and services and who submit requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations.

Subject maps

Our suite of subject maps showcase the qualifications we have available within each specialist sector and how they connect to each other. They demonstrate how you can plot routes for your learners at different levels from entry level right through to higher education or the workforce, with supporting qualifications along the way.

Fees and Pricing

The current fees and pricing guide is available on our website at www.ncfe.org.uk.

Useful websites

Teachers may find the following websites helpful for materials and resources to assist with the delivery of this qualification:

- www.soundonsound.com
- www.soundandmusic.org

Training and support

We can provide training sessions for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers. Bespoke subject-specific training is also available. For further information please contact our Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Learning resources

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the qualification page on our website for more information and to see what is available for this qualification.

This qualification has been developed for learners aged 14–16. Resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification, must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your Institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

School accountability measures (performance points)

This V Cert qualification has been developed to meet the criteria set by the DfE to be included in the Key Stage 4 performance tables. Each grade has been assigned a points value. Please check the Register of Regulated Qualifications website register.ofqual.gov.uk/ for further information.

Work experience

Work experience can be very valuable to learners to gain a realistic insight into the career or job they may be interested in. The following websites provide useful information and guidance:

- www.bbc.co.uk/careers/work-experience/
- www.creativeskillset.org/
- www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm

Essential skills

In order to complete high-quality project-based learning, learners may spend some time exploring how such projects are undertaken in the commercial sector of their subject area. They may also seek work experience opportunities and develop contacts with workplaces and employers.

All this activity requires that they develop a thorough understanding of the essential skills employers look for in employees.

These range from familiar 'key skills' such as team working, independent learning and problem solving, to the softer skills such as:

- an appreciation for appropriate behaviour and dress
- appropriate interpersonal skills
- communicating with professional colleagues/peers and/or hierarchical seniors
- supporting other aspiring employees
- personal manners and deportment
- understanding work practices and how different roles and departments function within an organisation.

NCFE has a range of qualifications that schools can use to formalise learning in these aspects of essential work-ready skills. NCFE offers valuable support to learners whose portfolio of qualifications may benefit from some work-specific enhancements. For more information please go to our website www.ncfe.org.uk.

Section 2

Unit content and assessment guidance

Unit content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

The unit overview provides an overview of each unit including:

- unit title and number
- unit summary
- guided learning hours
- level
- an indication of whether a unit is mandatory or optional
- an indication of how the unit is assessed.

Following the unit summary there's detailed information for each unit containing:

- learning outcomes
- assessment points
- grading descriptors and examples
- delivery and assessment (types of evidence for internal assessment)
- unit glossary.

The regulators' unit reference number is indicated in brackets for each unit (eg M/100/7116). However, to make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we've used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

For further information or guidance about the qualification please contact our Product Development team on 0191 239 8000.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment[1] is an important part of a high-quality vocational qualification because it shows that learners have achieved a holistic understanding of the sector and that they can make effective connections between different aspects they have studied. It enables learners to show that they can transfer knowledge and skills learned in one context to resolve problems raised in another.

To support the development of a synoptic approach, the qualification encourages learners to make links between elements of the course and to demonstrate how they have integrated and applied their increasing knowledge and skills from the beginning.

As learners progress through the course, they use and build upon knowledge and skills learnt in previous units.

The external assessments are also synoptic in nature as they require learners to apply and integrate their knowledge and skills from across the whole qualification in a vocationally relevant context.

Full evidence of learners' accumulated knowledge, skills and understanding and of their ability to 'think like a music technologist' will be evidenced when the learner successfully achieves the qualification.

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[1] The Department for Education (DfE) defines synoptic assessment as: 'a form of assessment which requires a learner to demonstrate that s/he can identify and use effectively in an integrated way an appropriate selection of techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole vocational sector, which are relevant to a key task'.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002)

Unit summary	This unit will allow learners to develop skills in operating a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) creatively using audio, MIDI, hardware and editing tools. Learners will create a musical project in response to a brief, reflecting industry skills.

Guided learning hours	30
Level	2
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/Externally Assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand the hardware components and software functions of a DAW

The learner must know about:

- **Hardware components:**
  - computer
  - computer peripherals/hardware
  - keyboard and other MIDI controllers
  - audio/MIDI interface

- **Software functions:**
  - differences between audio, software instrument and MIDI tracks
  - software instruments
  - editing tools
  - plug-ins.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Describes the hardware components and software functions of a DAW and correctly uses <u>some technical terms</u>.	Learners should describe all hardware components and software functions shown in the specification. The learners may not be able to relate technical terms to some specific areas. The keyboard is connected to the computer by a cable which sends information
Merit: Describes the hardware components and software functions of a DAW and correctly uses a <u>range</u> of technical terms.	Learners should consistently use technical terms to describe both hardware components and software functions. There may be some minor errors of understanding. The controller keyboard generates MIDI data and is connected to the computer via a USB cable.
Distinction: Describes the hardware components and software functions of a DAW supporting <u>most</u> points with well-thought-out examples/explanations. <u>Consistently</u> and correctly uses a wide range of technical terms.	Learners should support points with well thought out explanations (for example, the learner should explain how hardware components interrelate and how software functions could be used creatively in the context of producing music). Technical terms should be used consistently and correctly throughout. The controller keyboard generates MIDI data, which allows the pitch, velocity and length of notes played to be recorded into the software to create music. The cable acts as a MIDI interface with a MIDI connector plugging into the keyboard and USB to connect to the computer.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment

Learners must show how different components of a DAW work together. Learners must demonstrate understanding of hardware components and software functions.

The following areas must be addressed:

- **computer** (eg operating system)
- **computer peripherals/hardware** (eg external hard drives, USB devices, headphones, speakers)
- **keyboard & other MIDI controllers** (eg MIDI guitars, pad controllers, wind controllers)
- **audio interface** (eg microphone/line input & audio outputs)
- **MIDI interface**
  - MIDI In/Out connections
- **track types**
  - audio, software instrument and MIDI
- **software instruments**
  - synthesizers, samplers
- **editing tools** (eg cut/copy/paste, quantize, velocity, trim, reverse, split, fades, automation of volume and pan, automation of software instrument parameters, tempo control)
- **plug-ins**
  - effects, EQ, dynamics processing

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- presentation
- annotated diagrams
- video recording
- report
- poster
- leaflet/brochure.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

Create a musical project that will include MIDI and audio

The learner must demonstrate:

- contextualisation of project to industry-relevant brief
- configuration of software preferences
- recording of audio and MIDI
- selection and editing of software instruments
- use of audio and MIDI editing tools
- use of plug-ins
- export to a stereo audio file.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Completes appropriate tasks following a given brief with <u>some degree</u> of accuracy. Process will show application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should apply the range of tools and techniques stated in the specification to create a musical project. The final musical result may not always be fluent. Application of tools and techniques may not always be consistent. Process evidence may not be detailed but should give an account of technical skills used.
Merit: Completes tasks <u>mostly accurately</u> following a given brief. Process will show the <u>effective</u> application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should apply the range of tools and techniques stated in the specification to create a musical project. The end result may have some small areas which lack musical fluency. There may be some areas of application which lack detail or skill. Process evidence may lack detail in some areas.
Distinction: Completes tasks <u>accurately</u> <u>meeting all</u> of the requirements in the given brief. Process will show the <u>consistent, effective</u> application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners' application of tools and techniques will be consistently skilful leading to a musically fluent end result. Process evidence should be detailed and indicate considered use of skills in all areas to meet the brief.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment

Learners must use a DAW to create a musical project that will include at least 4 MIDI and audio tracks in response to a brief. Learners must export their completed 2-3 minute piece as a stereo audio file.

Learners must demonstrate the use of appropriate tools and techniques to include:

- **contextualisation of project**
- **configuring software preferences** (eg setting audio ins/outs)
- **recording audio and MIDI** (eg recording audio via an interface, recording MIDI from a controller)
- **selecting and editing software instruments**
- **editing audio and MIDI** (eg use of copy/cut/paste, quantize, velocity, trim, reverse, split, fades, automation of volume & pan, automation of software instrument parameters, tempo control)
- **using plug-ins**
  - effects, EQ, dynamics processing
- **export to a stereo file** (eg WAV, Aiff, mp3)

Learners must produce original audio and MIDI material. Imported material such as loops could be used alongside the learners' original material within the musical project.

Learners must provide evidence of the process they went through in creating their project.

Types of evidence

Learners must provide:

- the final piece as a stereo audio file.

Evidence of the process could include:

- annotated screenshots
- video recording/screencast with commentary
- written or verbal report
- presentation.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

Review a completed musical project

The learner must consider:

- how the project has met the brief
- musical outcome
- use of MIDI & audio
- use of editing tools
- strengths and weaknesses
- ways to improve.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Describes the processes involved <u>and</u> identifies <u>some</u> strengths and weaknesses. States 2 <u>basic</u> ways to improve the outcome and the process.	The learners review should identify strengths and weaknesses and state 2 ways to improve the outcome and process. Statements may lack detail. I could improve my use of audio editing tools.
Merit: Describes the processes involved <u>and</u> identifies <u>the</u> strengths and weaknesses. States <u>advanced</u> ways to improve the outcome and the process.	The learners review should identify strengths and weaknesses throughout the process. The learner will state meaningful ways to improve the process and outcome. I could improve my audio editing by making use of crossfades between regions.
Distinction: Describes the processes involved <u>and</u> identifies <u>the</u> strengths and weaknesses. States <u>advanced</u> ways to improve the outcome and the process <u>with development and explanation of ideas</u>.	The learners review will state meaningful and specific ways to improve the process and outcome with clear explanation. I could improve the audio editing in the piece by making use of crossfades between regions to ensure that transitions are smooth and no audible clicks are present.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners are being assessed on their ability to review the completed musical project created in learning outcome 2 and make recommendations. The review must include constructive commentary identifying strengths and weaknesses and ways to improve, in terms of meeting briefs and using appropriate tools.
Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • their review. Evidence could include: • video recording/screencast with commentary • written report • podcast.

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Unit glossary

DAW	Digital Audio Workstation. In this specification the term DAW is used to refer to both the hardware and software elements which make up a computer based music production environment.
Hardware components	These are the physical components of the DAW which the learner will interact with to produce music.
Computer	This may include laptop and desktop machines. It is likely that learners will be aware of the Operating System used on the machine as the interface between the hardware and music sequencing software.
Keyboard & other MIDI controllers	These are controller devices used to enter MIDI information. The most typical controller device is a musical (piano) keyboard controller. Learners at Level 2 should be aware that MIDI controllers can encompass a wide range of devices – some of which are based on traditional instrument designs (for example, MIDI guitar, wind and percussion/pad controllers) and others which are commonly referred to as control surfaces (for example, faders, knobs, buttons and data wheels).
Computer peripherals	The hardware commonly encountered which allows for physical input to a computer (for example - a QWERTY keyboard, mouse or trackpad) and storage (for example, external hard drives/memory sticks). It is likely that many of these devices will interface via USB. It is expected that learners will be using headphones and/or speakers to listen to their work and as such should be aware of these items as part of the DAW setup.
Audio/MIDI interface	The hardware designed to allow for input and output of audio and MIDI to and from the sequencing software. MIDI information is increasingly sent from controllers via USB. However, it would be useful for learners to be aware that many MIDI devices continue to use MIDI sockets and may require an interface to communicate with the hardware and software. Learners should be aware that audio interfaces in professional and semi-professional use carry a variety of input connections (particularly the ability to accept balanced microphone level inputs and unbalanced line inputs) and output connections (usually at the minimum stereo line outputs and a headphone output).
Software functions	In this unit software refers to music sequencing software. The software must be capable of recording and editing both MIDI and audio to allow the learners to produce musical projects.
Configuring software preferences	Learners should be able to configure preferences to allow them to work in sequencing software (for example, setting up audio inputs and outputs to allow for recording and playback).
Track types	Learners should be able to make use of and appreciate the difference between: • Software Instrument tracks (onto which MIDI data is recorded and played back within the sequencing software by a software instrument). • MIDI tracks (which allow MIDI data to be routed out from the sequencing software and sent to other hosted software or to external MIDI devices such as hardware synthesizers).

	• Audio tracks (onto which audio is recorded or imported audio files are sequenced).

Unit 01 Using a Digital Audio Workstation (D/507/5002) (cont'd)

Unit glossary (cont'd)

Editing tools	Learners should be familiar with editing tools which can be used to manipulate MIDI and Audio. Learners should be aware of the use of tools in: • Arranging. Using tools to create musical sequences. Adjustment of tempo settings. • Control of MIDI data. Changing duration and pitch of input MIDI information, velocity editing and quantizing. Application of controller information to software instruments to provide dynamic control. • Editing audio - learners should demonstrate audio editing techniques including trimming, reversing, fades, splitting and joining. • Balancing - control of volume and pan statically and dynamically through automation.
Plug-ins	These are components of sequencing software that provide a specific function. In this unit plug-ins refer to 3 types of processing which learners should be aware of. • EQ or Equalization - used to modify the frequency content of audio. It's likely that learners will be familiar with filters (eg Low Pass and High Pass), boost (gain), cut (attenuation) and the ability to select frequencies. • Effects - used to process audio signals. Examples may include time based effects (eg reverb, delay), modulation effects (eg chorus, flanging), filter effects (eg wah-wah) and distortion (eg amp simulation, overdrive). • Dynamics processing. Used to control the dynamic range of audio signals. Examples may include compression (eg compressors, limiters) and expansion (eg noise gates, expanders).
Software instruments	These are 'virtual' instruments which are often supplied as part of the sequencing software and also widely available from other sources.
Selecting and editing software instruments	Learners should be able to select a range of software instruments. This should include software synthesizers and samplers. Learners should be able to undertake basic editing of software instruments (for example, filter and envelope settings) to suit their creative needs.
Export to stereo audio files	Learners should be able to export ('bounce') completed projects to stereo audio files from the sequencing software. Learners should be aware of a variety of audio files types (for example, WAV, AIFF, mp3) and their uses.
Contextualisation of project	Learners should be able to create and develop new projects within the DAW with reference to the aims and purpose of the brief. Learners should consider the musical initial set up of their project (eg use of templates in creating a new project) as well as ongoing musical and technical development.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006)

Unit summary	Learners will develop skills to analyse stylistic elements of music and develop a piece of music based on a specific style. Learners will engage in a review of technical and creative processes.
Guided learning hours	30
Level	2
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/Externally Assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Understand the musical elements of a chosen style

The learner must know about:

- key elements of their chosen style including:
  - structure
  - melody
  - rhythm
  - harmony
  - instrumentation
- music technology developments that have influenced their chosen style.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: <u>Describes</u> key musical elements of the chosen style and technical developments. Supports ideas with examples/explanations. Uses information found in <u>at least 2</u> sources and communicates it <u>mostly accurately</u> into own words.	Learners should use examples of artists in the selected style in their description. Learners must reference the key musical elements given in the specification and music technology developments relevant to the style. Learners should make reference to at least 2 sources (for example, 2 written articles).
Merit: <u>Describes</u> key musical elements of the chosen style and technical developments, <u>comparing different artists within the style</u>. Supports ideas with examples/explanations. Uses information found in <u>different formats</u> from <u>at least 2</u> sources and communicates it <u>mostly accurately</u> into own words.	Learners should compare different artists within the chosen style. Learners should find information from 2 different sources in different formats (for example, a written article and a recorded musical example).
Distinction: <u>Describes</u> key musical elements of the chosen style and technical developments, <u>comparing them with different artists and other styles</u>. Supports ideas with well thought out examples/explanations. Uses information found in <u>different formats</u> from <u>different types</u> of sources and <u>accurately communicates</u> the information into own words.	Learners should compare different artists from both the selected styles and other styles of music. Learners should make use of both different formats (for example, written articles and recorded musical examples) and types of sources (for example, online article/magazine article/reference book and audio recording/music video) in their evidence.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must be introduced to a variety of musical styles in terms of musical features and developments in music technology. Learners must then choose a style to research. Learners will use this research, supported by examples, to describe the musical elements of the style and technical developments that have influenced and defined the style. In learning outcome 2 they will go on to create a piece of music in the selected style. Research must come from at least 2 sources which might include sound clips, online videos, musical notation, articles, books, websites, and music magazines. The learners' findings should be communicated in their own words

Types of evidence
Learners could include: • digital or interactive presentation • poster • written report • podcast • blog • research evidence: audio examples, list of sources.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

Create a piece of music in the style identified in learning outcome 1

The learner must demonstrate:

- use of audio and MIDI tracks
- selection and creation of key musical elements
- stylistically appropriate organisation and structure
- mixdown of the piece to an appropriate stereo audio format.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Completes task following a given brief with some degree of accuracy, carrying out limited experimentation with materials and techniques. Process will show the application of musical elements in meeting the brief.	Learners work should be recognisably stylistic in parts. The learner should demonstrate some experimentation with musical ideas (for example, experimenting with structure) and techniques (for example, experimenting with editing of sounds). The learner may not demonstrate a clear planning in regard to outcome.
Merit: Completes task mostly accurately following a given brief, carrying out considered experimentation with materials and techniques. Process will show the effective application of musical elements in meeting the brief.	Learners work should be generally stylistic throughout, but some areas may be unconvincing. The learner should demonstrate experimentation with musical ideas and techniques with reference to some planning.
Distinction: Completes task accurately meeting all the requirements of the given brief, showing purposeful experimentation with materials and techniques through which practice is developed. Process will show the consistent effective application of musical elements in meeting the brief.	Learners work should be stylistic throughout and consistently well executed. The learner will have experimented with musical ideas and techniques, referencing clear planning and evaluation.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must select and create key musical elements and organise them into a complete original musical piece in their chosen style using a DAW. The piece must use a minimum of 4 audio and MIDI tracks. The length of the completed piece must be relevant to the chosen style. It is suggested that the piece should be between 2-3 minutes in length in order to show musical development. Learners must produce original audio and MIDI material. Imported material such as loops could be used alongside the learners' original material where stylistically appropriate. The final piece must be mixed to an appropriate stereo audio format. Learners must provide evidence of the process they undertook in experimenting with musical ideas and applying technical skills in creating their final piece. Learners should refer to how they used the DAW and the key musical elements.

Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • the final completed piece as an audio file. Evidence of the process could include: • annotated photographs and/or screenshots • video recording/screencast with commentary • a written or verbal report.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

Review the musical piece

The learner must consider:

- use of key musical elements
- use of DAW technology
- strengths and weaknesses
- ways to improve.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: <u>Identifies</u> a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence and suggests <u>basic</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the process. Makes conclusions about how the completed piece meets the brief.	Learners should identify areas of strength and weakness. The learners should identify ways in which the outcome of the brief could be improved. The learners should state conclusions about the success of their work in relation to the brief.
Merit: <u>Identifies</u> a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence and <u>describes the impact on the overall outcome in relation to the brief</u>. Suggests <u>advanced</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the process. Makes detailed conclusions about how the completed piece meets the brief.	Learners should identify areas of strength and weakness and describe how these affected the brief outcome overall. The learners should identify specific and technically correct ways in which the outcome of the brief could be improved. The learners should state conclusions which include relevant and specific detail about the success of their work in relation to the brief.
Distinction: <u>Describes</u> a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence, showing evidence of <u>recognising different levels of importance with relation to the brief</u>. Suggests <u>advanced</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the process <u>with explanation of ideas</u>. Makes detailed conclusions about how the completed piece meets the brief.	Learners should describe areas of strength and weakness and comment on how these strengths and weaknesses affected their ability to complete specific areas of the brief. The learners should explain specific and technically correct ways in which the outcome of the brief could be improved. The learners should state conclusions which include relevant and specific detail about the success of their work in relation to the brief.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must review their use of musical elements and music technology in relation to the piece they created in learning outcome 2. They must identify strengths and weaknesses in the process and execution of their project and suggest ways to improve.

Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • their review. The review could include a: • video recording/screencast with commentary • written report • podcast.

Unit 02 Creating music (T/507/5006) (cont'd)

Unit glossary

Key musical elements	These refer to the common building blocks of music which the learner should understand in relation to style. • **Structure:** learners should know about common structural ideas used stylistically (for example – verse/chorus, 12 bar, song structures). • **Rhythm:** learners should know about commonly used simple and compound time signatures (for example - 4/4, 3/4, 6/8) and stylistic rhythmic features (for example, 4 to the floor bass drum pattern, backbeat). • **Instrumentation:** learners should know about commonly used instruments, combinations and textures. • **Melody:** learners at level 2 should be able to describe melodic sequences with consideration of diatonic and chromatic features. • **Harmony:** learners at level 2 should be able to describe simple harmonic features in terms of tonality (major, minor).
Music technology developments	Learners should be able to relate developments in music technology to their chosen style. Developments in music technology may include, for example: instrument technology (eg the electric guitar, synthesizers, sampler, drum machines), recording and mixing technology (changing recording formats and practices) and consumer formats (eg vinyl, CD, mp3, streaming audio).
Musical styles	In preparation for making their own stylistic choices learners should be aware of key musical styles from the 1950's onwards and be able to relate these to stylistic and technological developments. It would be useful for learners to understand notions of genre and sub-genre and how these develop over time leading to new styles. Suggested styles could include: • rock and roll • folk • rock • soul • disco • reggae • hip hop • dance • electronica.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009)

Unit summary	Learners will plan and undertake a recording session for a given scenario. Learners will create a mixdown of their recording and review the final product.
Guided learning hours	40
Level	2
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/Externally Assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Plan a recording session in response to a given scenario

The learner must know about:

- health and safety
- microphones, sound sources, placement and DI
- audio interfaces
- multi-track recorder
- monitoring
- planning a studio session.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Correctly applies <u>basic</u> technical terms in identifying <u>possible solutions</u> to a scenario. Supports <u>some</u> points with explanations.	Learners should be able to plan a recording session using the basic technical terms (microphone, DI, audio interface, multi-track recorder, monitoring) listed in the specification. The possible solutions provided by the plan may not always be effective (for example, the learner may not allocate sufficient time to some areas of the plan). Some areas should be explained (for example, the learner may provide a microphone plan with some explanation of placement).
Merit: Correctly applies technical terms in identifying <u>effective solutions</u> to a scenario. Supports a <u>range</u> of points with explanations.	Learners should be able to plan a recording session using technical terms (for example, correctly identifying different microphone types, polar patterns and frequency responses). The solutions provided by the plan should be functional but may not always be cohesive as a whole (for example, individual activities may be well planned but the session may not be realistically achievable in the timescale). A range of areas should be explained (for example, microphone choices and placements based on knowledge of microphones chosen and how monitoring has been set up for different purposes).
Distinction: <u>Consistently and</u> correctly applies technical terms in identifying and <u>planning the implementation</u> of effective solutions to a scenario. Supports <u>most</u> points with <u>well-thought-out</u> explanations.	Learners should use technical terms correctly throughout the plan and show effective planning by recognising the range of activities and placing them in a suitable timescale with explanation. The majority of activities should be explained in relation to the plan.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment

Learners must plan a recording session thinking about:

- **health and safety** (exposure to noise at work, display screens, trip hazards)
- **microphones and DI** (dynamic, condenser, polar pattern, frequency response, placement)
- **audio interfaces** (balanced and unbalanced inputs, pre-amps, audio in/out, connectivity to DAW)
- **multi-track recorder** (software or hardware)
- **monitoring** (control room, studio engineer, performers, speakers, headphones)
- **planning** (time constraints and timelines for the session).

Learners will go on to use their plan to undertake a recording session in learning outcome 2.

The recording scenario should be provided by the Teacher although learners may be given some choice if appropriate. Possible scenarios could include:

- a band recording a demo
- a vocalist overdubbing lead and backing vocals
- production of radio play
- production of podcast.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- poster
- written report
- leaflet
- audio/visual narrative
- annotated diagram.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

Undertake a studio recording session

The learner must demonstrate:

- use of equipment (microphones, DI, audio interfaces/pre-amps, multi-track recorder and monitoring)
- health and safety
- optimisation of gain
- overdubbing.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should demonstrate that the recording session has been undertaken. The learners' evidence may not always be detailed. Technical skills may not always be effective and/or the audio outcome may have some errors (for example, some microphone placement issues).
Merit: Process and outcome will show the <u>effective</u> application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should produce a recording with few noticeable technical errors (for example some areas of minor distortion) and the evidence of process should give useful technical detail in the majority of activities.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show the <u>consistent, effective application</u> of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should produce a recording with no noticeable technical errors and provide evidence which shows a detailed and thoughtful approach to the activities throughout.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must record the studio session planned in learning outcome 1. Learners must be able to adjust recording levels to optimise gain and demonstrate recording of multiple audio sources onto separate tracks. They must follow health and safety procedures in relation to a recording studio. Learners are expected to record a minimum of 4 audio tracks and must include overdubbing in their recording. They must provide evidence of the process they undertook in making the recording.

Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • stereo audio recording of the work at this stage. Evidence of the process could include: • video narration • annotated photos • diary or recording log • blog • health and safety checklists.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

Mix a multi-track recording

The learner must demonstrate:

- editing
- EQ
- effects
- dynamics
- balance
- stereo field
- monitoring
- automation.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should be able apply the technical skills listed in the specification (editing, EQ, effects, dynamics processing, balance, stereo field, monitoring, automation) to produce a mix. The audio result may not always be coherent or effective (for example, ongoing misjudgements in balance or stereo field). The learners' evidence of process should comment on the skills used but may not always be detailed.
Merit: Process and outcome will show the <u>effective</u> application of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should be able to apply the technical skills listed in the specification to produce a competent mix that has some errors (for example, momentary misjudgements in balance or processing). The learners' evidence of process should show thought given to technical processes in most areas.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show the <u>consistent, effective application</u> of technical skills in meeting the brief.	Learners should be able to produce an effective mix showing some creativity with no noticeable errors. The learners' evidence of process should give a detailed account of the technical processes in all areas (for example, clear and detailed reasoning, experimentation with plug in settings).

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment

Learners must mix the material recorded in learning outcome 2 ensuring that they demonstrate the use of:

- **editing** (eg removal of unwanted audio)
- **EQ** (eg parametric EQ, filters)
- **effects** (eg reverb, delay, modulation)
- **dynamics** (eg compression, gating)
- **balance** (eg relative volume of tracks)
- **stereo field** (eg panning)
- **monitoring** (eg headphones, speakers, use of reference material)
- **automation** (eg volume, panning).

Learners must show the process of mixing with reference to the elements above.

Learners must provide evidence of the process they undertook as well as the final audio mix.

Note that learners will be assessed on the quality of the mix, not the musicianship of the artist(s).

Types of evidence

Learners must provide:

- final stereo mix of the recording in an appropriate format.

Evidence of process could include:

- video narration
- annotated photos
- diary or recording log
- blog
- health and safety checklists.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 4

The learner will:

Review their mixdown from learning outcomes 2 and 3

The learner must consider:

- progression from original recordings to final mixdown
- strengths of the mix
- ways to improve.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Makes detailed conclusions about the progression from source recordings to final mixdown, identifying a range of strengths. States <u>basic</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the process.	Learners should identify areas of strength in the recording and mixing process. The learners should state ways in which the recording process and mix could be improved. The learners' statements may be limited in detail.
Merit: Makes detailed conclusions about the progression from source recordings to final mixdown, identifying a range of strengths. States more <u>considered</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the process.	Learners should identify areas of strength in the recording and mixing process. The learners should state specific and technically correct ways in which the recording process and mix could be improved.
Distinction: Makes detailed conclusions about the progression from source recordings to final mixdown, identifying a range of strengths. States <u>advanced</u> way(s) to improve the outcome or the <u>process with explanation of ideas</u>.	Learners should identify areas of strength in the recording and mixing process. The learners should state specific, creative and technically correct ways in which the recording process and mix could be improved with details of how this might be accomplished.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 4 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must compare and contrast the source recordings to final mixdown. They must consider: • editing • EQ • effects • dynamics • balance • stereo field • automation Learners should identify strengths in the progression from source recordings to final mixdown and state ways to improve the outcome or the process.
Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • their review. The review could include a: • video recording with commentary • brief written report • video review/podcast.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Unit glossary

Health and safety	Learners should know about safe working practices in relation to recording and mixing including exposure to noise, appropriate use of computer displays and trip hazards.
Microphones	Learners should know about dynamic and condenser microphones in relation to polar pattern, frequency response and common usage in relation to sound sources.
Placement	Learners should know about the placement of microphones in relation to recording sound sources and achieving the desired result (for example: close placement, ambient, stereo pair).
DI	Learners should know about the use of Direct Injection in recording sources (for example, keyboards and bass guitars).
Pre amps	Learners should be aware of the function of the pre amp in the recording chain in relation to setting gain. It is expected that in most cases the pre amp will form part of the audio interface hardware used by learners.
Audio interface	Learners should be aware that audio interfaces in professional and semi-professional use carry a variety of input connections (particularly the ability to accept balanced microphone level inputs and unbalanced line inputs) and output connections (usually at the minimum stereo line outputs and a headphone output). Learners should be able to use the audio interface to route signals to and from the multi-track recorder.
Multi-track recorder	Learners should be aware that a multi-track recorder is used to make audio recordings. It is expected that in most instances the multi-track recorder will be in the form of a software package and be used in combination with audio interface hardware as a DAW.
Optimisation of gain	Learners should be able to record a signal of appropriate level without incurring distortion or noise in the signal path.
Overdubbing	Learners should be able to undertake recording of tracks sequentially to build a multi-track recording (for example, recording a vocalist upon a pre-recorded multi-track).
Monitoring	Learners should be able to set up monitoring for both the engineer and artists at the recording stage (for example, setting up live room headphone mixes and control room speakers). At the mixing stage learners should be able to make use of headphones and speakers to check their mixes. It is suggested that learners should make use of reference material and tools such as solo and mute when mixing.
Planning a studio session	Learners should be able to plan a timeline for a recording as well as technical aspects and equipment requirements. Learners should consider time taken for initial recording and overdubs as well as experimentation. Appropriate recording scenarios should allow learners to plan and undertake recording of a minimum of 4 tracks (in one recording project) including overdubbing. It is therefore suggested that an ensemble and material should be selected which requires multitrack and overdub techniques to be used meaningfully.
Length of recorded project	A minimum length of recorded material is not stated but the recorded material should allow learners to be able to demonstrate skills of mixing. It is suggested that between 2 – 5 minutes would be appropriate.

	It is expected that mixing will take place using software in a DAW environment but hardware could be used if chosen.

Unit 03 Studio recording (J/507/5009) (cont'd)

Unit glossary (cont'd)

EQ	Learners should know about how equalization is used to balance frequency content in a mix. Learners should be able to make use of filtering (for example, Low Pass, High Pass) and Parametric EQ parameters (gain/attenuation, frequency selection) in achieving a desired audio result.
Effects	Learners should know how to apply effects in a mix. Learners should be able to make use of time based effects (for example, reverbs and delays) and any additional effects processing (for example, filter effects, modulation effects and distortion).
Dynamics	Learners should know how to use processing in a mix to control the dynamic range of audio signals. Examples may include compression (eg compressors, limiters) and expansion (eg noise gates, expanders).
Balance	Learners should know how to control volume of individual tracks statically and dynamically through automation.
Stereo Field	Learners should know how to position individual tracks in the stereo field statically and dynamically through automation.
Stereo Mix	Learners should be able to produce a stereo mix in an appropriate format (eg WAV, AIFF, mp3).
Group Work	Small groups of learners may work together in undertaking the recording session for learning outcome 2 of this unit. Practical group work to make the recording is permitted but individual learners should undertake all activities given in the learning outcome content and must provide individual evidence of this in their submitted work.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013)

Unit summary	Learners will explore sound creation and apply their knowledge to a given brief. They will create and review their own original sound creation project.

Guided learning hours	40
Level	2
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory
Graded	Yes
Internally/Externally Assessed	Internally and externally assessed

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

Explain sound creation using examples

The learner must know about:

- different forms of media
- types of sound creation
- methods of sound creation.

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Describes types and methods of sound creation and supports points with at least 2 examples from different forms of media.	Learners should describe the types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification with reference to at least 2 examples from different forms of media.
Merit: Describes types and methods of sound creation and <u>makes some links between them</u>. Supports points with at least 2 examples from different forms of media and <u>makes accurate conclusions</u> based on <u>all the</u> information.	Learners should describe the types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification using examples from at least 2 different forms of media. Learners should be able to explain, using basic terms how the sounds were created. The learners should be able to comment on how sounds were used differently in the 2 examples.
Distinction: Describes types and methods of sound creation and <u>explains how they are linked</u>. Supports points with at least 2 examples from different forms of media and makes accurate conclusions <u>weighing up all the information</u>.	Learners should describe the types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification using examples from at least 2 different forms of media. Learners should be able to explain, using specific technical terms how the sounds were created. The learners should be able to comment on how sounds are used differently in various forms of media.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 1 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment

Learners should be exposed to a variety of media examples. Learners must show that they know how types and methods of sound creation are used in different forms of media:

- **forms of media**
  - video games
  - movies
  - TV adverts
  - radio broadcast/podcast
  - animations
  - theatre

- **types of sound creation**
  - foley
  - ambience
  - dialogue/voice-overs
  - underscore
  - special/spot effects

- **methods of sound creation**
  - physical props
  - environmental sounds
  - sound synthesis
  - digital sample manipulation
  - effects libraries

Learners must provide a description of the types and methods of sound creation.

Their description must be supported by at least 2 examples from different forms of media, for example video games and theatre.

This learning outcome will allow learners to identify how sound creation is used and inform planning of their own sound creation project in learning outcome 2.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- digital or interactive presentation
- poster
- written report
- leaflet
- audio/visual narrative.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

Plan and undertake the sound creation for a given brief

The learner must demonstrate:

- planning
- selection of materials
- creation of audio material
- arrangement of sounds.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)

Grading descriptors	Example
Pass: Process and outcome will show application of technical skills and <u>limited</u> experimentation with materials <u>and</u> methods in meeting the brief.	Learners should present a plan, evidence of process and a completed project in a suitable media format. The project should show use of all types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification, but may not be successful in all aspects. The project may contain some ongoing audio issues (eg poor balance, limited editing, poor synchronisation, some inappropriate choices of sounds). The process evidence should show that the learner has experimented with materials and methods, but this may be limited in some aspects.
Merit: Process and outcome will show <u>the effective</u> application of technical skills and <u>considered</u> experimentation with materials <u>and</u> methods in meeting the brief.	Learners should present a plan, evidence of process and a completed project in a suitable media format. The project should show use of all types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification, and should be successful in meeting the brief. The project may contain some issues (eg some areas of poor balance or synchronisation). The process evidence should show that the learner has experimented with materials (eg by looking at possible alternative sound sources) and methods, considering alternatives.
Distinction: Process and outcome will show <u>the consistent, effective</u> application of technical skills and purposeful experimentation with materials <u>and</u> methods <u>through which practice is developed</u> in meeting the brief.	Learners should present a plan, evidence of process and a completed project in a suitable media format. The project should show use of all types and methods of sound creation listed in the specification, and should be successful in meeting the brief. The project should be successful in all aspects. The process evidence should show that the learner has experimented with materials and methods, considering alternatives and undertaking activities (eg detailed editing, layering and creation of sounds) to produce a considered end result.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 2 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must plan the sound requirements of a given brief and how these can be met using appropriate methods (physical props, environmental sounds, sound synthesis, digital sample manipulation, effects library) and types (Foley, ambience, dialogue/voice-overs, underscore) of sound creation. The brief should include creating sound for specific media (eg video game, movie, TV advert, radio broadcast/podcast, animation, theatre). Learners must use a combination of existing sounds and sounds they have created themselves to create the project. Learners must provide a final project including their sound creation and evidence of the process used to complete the project.

Types of evidence
Learners must provide: • audio/video recording. Evidence of process could include: • video narration • annotated photos • diary or project log • blog.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

Review their completed sound creation project

The learner must consider:

- how the project has met the brief
- strengths and weaknesses
- suggested improvements.

Grading descriptors:	Example
Pass: Identifies a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence and suggests basic way(s) to improve the outcome or the process. Makes conclusions about how the completed project meets the brief.	Learners should identify areas of strength and weakness. The learners should identify ways in which the outcome or the process could be improved. The learners should state conclusions about the success of their work in relation to the brief.
Merit: Identifies a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence and describes the impact on the overall relation to the brief. Suggests advanced way(s) to improve the outcome or the process. Makes detailed conclusions about how the completed project meets the brief.	Learners should identify areas of strength and weakness and describe how these affected the outcome overall. The learners should identify specific and technically correct ways in which the outcome or the process could be improved. The learners should state conclusions which include relevant and specific detail about the success of their work in relation to the brief.
Distinction: Describes a range of strengths and weaknesses with supporting evidence, showing evidence of recognising different levels of importance with relation to the brief. Suggests advanced way(s) to improve the outcome or the process with explanation of ideas. Makes detailed conclusions about how the completed project meets the brief.	Learners should describe areas of strength and weakness and comment on how these strengths and weaknesses affected their ability to complete specific areas of the brief. The learners should explain specific and technically correct ways in which the outcome or the process could be improved. The learners should state conclusions which include relevant and specific detail about the success of their work in relation to the brief.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Learning outcome 3 (cont'd)

Delivery and assessment
Learners must review their use of methods and types of sound creation in their project, identifying strengths and weaknesses and suggest ways to improve the outcome or the process.

Types of evidence
Learner must provide: • their review. The review could include: • video recording with commentary • a brief written report • video review/podcast.

Unit 04 Sound creation (L/507/5013) (cont'd)

Unit glossary

Forms of media	It's suggested that learners look at different ways sound is used in the forms of media listed in the specification and should be encouraged to consider the types of sound creation used along with the methods which could be used to produce it. It may be useful to discuss the use of diagetic and non diagetic sound as well as stylistic concerns in the various forms of media.
Types of sound creation	• Foley: sounds used to match action in visual media (for example, the sound of footsteps synchronised to a character walking onscreen). • Ambience: sound present to give a sense of location (for example, non diagetic background in a desert might include animal noises, wind sounds etc). Ambience may also include effects used to give a sense of space (for example, reverb and EQ used to replicate the size of a room, or frequency attenuation over distance). • Dialogue: diegetic spoken word (for example, the words spoken by a character on screen) • Voice-overs: non diegetic spoken word (for example, the commentary of a narrator off screen). • Underscore: music used to set mood or place. • Special/spot effects: usually diegetic sounds which are generated to enhance particular moments: these may include musical and non-musical sounds.
Methods of sound creation	• Physical props: learners should be encouraged to experiment with the recording of physical props available to record foley and create material for manipulation. • Environmental sounds: learners should be encouraged to record background sounds for use as ambience or to create material for effects libraries. • Sound synthesis: learners should be able to use basic synthesis techniques (for example, subtractive synthesis using filtering and envelope shaping) to create sounds for musical and non-musical use. • Digital sample manipulation: learners should be able to use basic sampling techniques (for example, trimming, mapping and looping) to create sounds for musical and non-musical use. • Effects libraries: these may include commercially available libraries, libraries created by the Teacher or libraries available within the DAW.
Creation of audio material	Learners are expected to create original material for use in their project. Learners should make use of recorded material, as well as creating synthetic sounds and manipulating material via sampling.
Arrangement of sounds	Using the various sounds that they have collected learners should place the sounds in their project to create an arrangement appropriate to the chosen media.
Length of project	A minimum length of the media project that the learners will create for learning outcome 2 is not stated. However, the project should allow learners to be able to demonstrate skills of planning and use of the methods and types of sound creation. It is suggested that between 30 seconds to 3 minutes would be appropriate dependent on the form of media chosen.

	The final project should be produced in an appropriate format for playback (for example, audio synchronised to visuals as a movie file).

Section 3

Assessment and Quality Assurance

Assessment and Quality Assurance

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the **standards** set in a qualification.

This qualification is made up of 3 different assessment components:

1. internal assessment – each unit is internally assessed and externally quality assured
2. external assessment – written test – this will assess the underpinning knowledge and skills drawn from across the qualification
3. external assessment – practical test – this will assess the application of knowledge and skills acquired throughout the course.

The different components are weighted based on their relevance to the vocational area. The 2 external assessments must account for a minimum of 40% of the final grade in order to meet the requirements of a Technical Award.

The external assessment components are set and marked by NCFE.

Learners must be successful in all types of assessment to achieve the qualification.

Assessment summary

	Assessment component	Description	Duration	Marks	Contribution to final grade
1	Internal assessment	Portfolio of evidence covering all learning outcomes	Duration of the qualification	N/A	50%
2	External assessment – written test	Invigilated exam including a listening task assessing underpinning knowledge and skills drawn from across the qualification	2 hours	60	15%
3	External assessment – practical test	Invigilated exam assessing application of knowledge and skills	2 hours	36	35%

Internal assessment

NCFE has created a set of sample tasks for each unit which can be found in the Internal Assessment Sample Tasks document. You can contextualise these tasks to suit the needs of your learners to help them build up their portfolio of evidence. The tasks have been designed to cover all the learning outcomes for each unit and provide opportunities for stretch and challenge. For further information about contextualising the tasks, please contact the Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. The assessment tasks should allow the learner to respond to a real life situation that they may face when in employment. On completion of each unit learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the Assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio for each unit are provided in Section 2 (page 15).

Internally assessed work should be completed by the learner in accordance with the qualification specification. A representative number of assessment hours should be timetabled into the scheme of work. Internal assessment hours must be administered outside of scheduled teaching and learning hours and should be supervised and assessed by the Teacher. Assessment activities can be integrated throughout, although separate from the teaching of the unit and do not have to take place directly at the end of the unit.

Any work submitted for internal assessment must be completed during scheduled assessment hours in accordance with the scheme of work, and must be authenticated and attributable to the learner. The Teacher must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own and the learner must declare that the work is their own.

In practice, this means that all of the portfolio of evidence will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours.

The internal assessment component is based on 100% coverage of the qualification content which is assessed holistically against descriptors to achieve a grade. Each unit of the qualification is internally assessed and will be allocated a weighting based on the guided learning hours. The grade achieved for each unit is converted to a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) score.

There is compensation within the internally assessed units as the grading descriptors are now based on learning outcomes rather than specific assessment criteria. All of the assessment points need to be evidenced in the learner's portfolio, but the grade awarded is based on the standard of work for the learning outcome as a whole. This allows for increased professional judgement on the part of the Assessor in terms of the learners' overall level of performance against the learning outcomes.

If a centre chooses to create their own internal assessment tasks, they must:

- be accessible and lead to objective assessment judgements
- permit and encourage authentic activities where the learner's own work can be clearly judged
- refer to the Internal assessment writing and delivery: Guide for centres on our website.

Supervision of learners and your role as an Assessor

Guidance on how to administer the internal assessment and the support you provide learners can be found on our website in the document Internal assessment writing and delivery: Guide for centres.

Feedback to learners

Guidance on providing feedback during teaching and learning and each stage of the assessment can be found on our website in the document Internal assessment writing and delivery: Guide for centres.

Presenting evidence

Written

Written evidence may be presented in word-processed or handwritten form. Audio-visual content (videos, pictures, drawings, audio) may also be used.

Tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT.

Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged, and quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible to ensure that learner work can be authenticated.

The use of word frames/templates provided by Teachers which give learners an advantage in meeting the learning outcomes must be avoided. If you're unsure whether a word frame/template does give learners an advantage, please contact your External Quality Assurer for advice prior to using them. If, on your quality assurance visit, your External Quality Assurer identifies that a word frame/template has been used which gives learners an advantage in achieving the learning outcomes, then the evidence will not be accepted and the unit grade may be rejected.

Recorded

Where audio-visual evidence of multiple learners is used, centres must ensure that each learner that is being assessed is clearly visible and can be identified by the Examiner/Quality Assurer.

The recorded evidence should allow the learner to demonstrate the learning outcomes clearly but should only show work relevant to what is being assessed. For example, if a performance/participation is done as part of a group, the Examiner/Quality Assurer will need to be able to see how each learner being assessed has contributed and met the learning outcomes.

To help our Examiners and Quality Assurers to identify clearly when a particular learner is performing/participating we'd recommend including the following information:

- the exact start and finish times so that the Examiner/Quality Assurer can go straight to that spot on the tape/recording
- a running order list and a description of each learner
- information about where the performance/recorded evidence took place
- what type of audience they were performing to (if applicable).

Centres must also ensure that the camera and microphone are set up in a suitable place to ensure good-quality audio. This will allow the Examiner/Quality Assurer to hear both the learner(s) and the Assessor (if applicable).

We have set out an example used for a performance:

Test High School

Recorded evidence starts: 4 mins 30 seconds into the recording and finishes at 16 mins 27 seconds.
Venue: School hall
Audience: Teachers, parents and friends

Band 1:
Lead singer – Joe Bloggs (brown hair, front of stage)
Drummer – Tom Smith
Guitar 1 – Dan Brown (blond hair, blue jumper)
Guitar 2 – Mark Jones (brown hair, left hand side)

Performance of XXX:
Lead male – John Smith
Lead female – Ann Jones

Choir:
Kay Bell (brown hair, back row, 3rd from left)
Jane Pattison (blond hair, back row, 5th from left)
Michael Davies (brown hair, front row, 3rd from right)

If learners are not clearly identified, NCFE may not be able to quality assure or examine the work.

Late submissions

Teachers and Assessors should encourage learners to understand the importance of deadlines and when they need to submit their internal assessments. Assessors do not have to accept late work and may refuse it.

Learners may only be given extra time for legitimate reasons such as illness. If you accept a late submission, you should follow the usual assessment process.

Grades should not be reduced as a result of late submission.

Submitting unit grades

Each internally assessed unit within the portfolio of evidence must be assessed and graded by Assessors in the centre.

A reasonable sample of portfolios must then be checked by an Internal Quality Assurer to ensure consistency with national standards. See our website www.ncfe.org.uk for further information on sampling.

Learners may revise and redraft work up until it's submitted to the Assessor for end-of-unit assessment and grading. Once the work has been assessed, graded and internally quality assured, the grades should be submitted to NCFE. This will be classed as the first attempt. Submitted grades for the first unit(s) of the qualification will trigger your first external quality assurance visit.

Following the external quality assurance visit the unit grades will either be accepted and banked by your External Quality Assurer or, if they disagree with the grades, they will be rejected. If the grades are rejected, the work cannot be given back to the learner. If a grade is rejected, centres must reassess, re-grade and internally quality assure the work and resubmit the new unit grade.

Once the grades for the internally assessed units of the qualification have been accepted and banked by your External Quality Assurer, learners are permitted one opportunity to revise and redraft their work. The additional work will need to be assessed, graded and internally quality assured again, and the centre will be required to resubmit the updated grade to NCFE for further external quality assurance. Learners are only permitted one resubmission of internally assessed work.

Why would the unit grades be rejected by an External Quality Assurer?

This would occur if the External Quality Assurer did not agree with the grades the centre had submitted. It may be that the centre had been grading too harshly, too leniently or inconsistently from one learner to the next. In this situation, the centre would be required to assess, grade and internally quality assure all learners' work again.

External assessment

Each learner is required to undertake an external assessment.

External assessments are set and marked by NCFE. The assessment assesses learners' knowledge, understanding and skills from across all units of the qualification.

The external assessment will take place at the end of the qualification after all units have been taught.

Any stimulus material used by the centre or work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used as evidence in the external assessment.

The external assessment for this qualification consists of 2 exams. The same high level of control applies to each.

The external assessment is split as follows:

- Paper 1 - written assessment (2 hours invigilated external assessment) – short-answer questions and listening questions.

- Paper 2 - practical assessment (2 hours invigilated external assessment) – creative and technical manipulation of musical material to a given brief. There is an Examiner owned mark scheme that will be applied.

Both of these external assessments must be done under timed external assessment conditions and must be invigilated in accordance with the Regulations for Conduct of External Assessment – V Certs, which can be found on the NCFE website www.ncfe.org.uk/centre-information/working-with-ncfe/policies-and-regulations.

The external assessments must not be altered in any way by the centre.

Sample papers for each of the external assessments will be made available. We'll update the website with the latest past paper soon after a live assessment has been sat.

There are 2 specific assessment dates for each external assessment during the year. Please refer to the assessment arrangements document on our website www.ncfe.org.uk for the specific dates.

To access the external assessment, centres must have entered learners using the NCFE Portal. When you make your registrations in the NCFE Portal you will be prompted to select an assessment date for your learners. NCFE will issue external assessment papers to the learner for the assessment date selected at registration. If you want your learners to sit the external assessment on a different assessment date you will need to contact your Centre Support Assistant and arrange a transfer of entry.

Centres must enter learners at least 10 working days in advance of the assessment date. Late entries cannot be accepted.

The external assessment material will be sent out in time for the assessment date. The material must be kept secure at all times throughout the assessment period.

You must return the External Assessment Register and all learner work to NCFE one working day after the external assessment date. The last date that NCFE will accept learner work is the next working day from the exam being sat. Please refer to the assessment arrangements document on our website www.ncfe.org.uk for confirmation of this date.

Learners are entitled to one resit for each of the external assessment components, which will be chargeable. This means that learners can have a total of 2 attempts at each of the external assessments. 'Did Not Attend' will not be classed as an attempt at the external assessment. If you know before the assessment date that a learner is no longer able to sit the external assessment please contact NCFE to cancel or transfer the entry.

For guidance on conducting external assessments, please refer to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments – V Certs, available from our website www.ncfe.org.uk, or contact the Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance

Internal quality assurance is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is assessing to the same standards. It's the responsibility of Internal Quality Assurers to ensure that Assessors' decisions are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency and fairness. Internal Quality Assurers are also responsible for supporting Assessors by offering advice and guidance.

The Internal Quality Assurer will follow the centre's own sampling strategy in selecting the sample to be internally quality assured. See the guidance on sampling on our website www.ncfe.org.uk.

The Internal Quality Assurer provides the vital link between the Assessors and the External Quality Assurer and acts as the centre's quality assurance agent.

External quality assurance

External quality assurance of internal assessments is carried out at least twice a year to ensure that assessment and grading decisions are in line with required standards. External quality assurance is carried out by External Quality Assurers who are appointed, trained and monitored by NCFE. External Quality Assurers are responsible for monitoring and sampling learners' evidence to ensure that internal assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair and consistent with national standards. Centres are notified of their External Quality Assurer's contact details on registration of learners with NCFE.

Section 4
Grading information

Grading information

Grading has been introduced to make sure that this qualification rewards learners with a suitable grade to reflect their achievement in this subject. NCFE has developed a robust grading structure that can be applied to all its graded qualifications fairly and consistently.

Each unit of this qualification is graded using a structure of Not Yet Achieved, Pass, Merit and Distinction.

Grading internally assessed units

The grading descriptors for each unit have been included in this qualification specification. Grading descriptors have been written for each learning outcome in a unit. Assessors must be confident that, as a minimum, all learning outcomes have been evidenced and met by the learner. Assessors must make a judgement on the evidence produced by the learner to determine the grading decision for the unit. We've provided a grading criteria glossary of terms to help you to make this judgement – see Section 5 (page 71).

Once Assessors are confident that all the Pass descriptors have been met, they can move on to decide if the Merit descriptors have been met. If the Assessor is confident that all the Merit descriptors have been met, they can decide if the Distinction descriptors have been met. As the grading descriptors build up from the previous grade's criteria, the evidence must meet 100% of the grade's descriptors to be awarded that grade for the unit.

If a learner meets a combination of grades for the learning outcomes, the lowest grade will be awarded for the unit overall. Learners are only required to meet the merit/distinction descriptors where they are specified in the qualification specification. For example, if a learning outcome/assessment criteria is only achievable at a pass level, then this grading criteria can be discounted when calculating the overall unit grade.

If the learner has insufficient evidence to meet the Pass criteria, a grade of Not Yet Achieved must be awarded for the unit.

Centres must then submit each unit grade to NCFE. The grades submitted to NCFE will be checked and confirmed through the external quality assurance process. This is known as 'banking' units.

The internal assessment component is based on performance of open-ended tasks which are assessed holistically against the grading descriptors to achieve a grade. Each unit of the qualification is internally assessed and will be allocated a weighting based on the guided learning hours and a score based on the holistic grade. The overall grade achieved for each unit is converted to a UMS score.

Marking the external assessment

The externally assessed components will consist of individual questions which are marked using a numerical mark scheme to achieve a total score. For each external assessment grades will be allocated by NCFE.

There will be a different weighting applied to the different components of external assessment depending on the requirements of the sector. The outcome will be based on the performance of the combined external assessments.

The following table represents the percentage UMS associated with each awarded grade:

Level 2 Pass UMS %	Level 2 Merit UMS %	Level 2 Distinction UMS %
60%	70%	80%

The weighting of the external assessments and the use of numerical mark schemes will allow for compensation.

Awarding the final grade

NCFE needs to be able to compare performance on the same assessment components across different papers when different grade boundaries have been set, and between the different components. NCFE uses a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) to enable this to be done.

The final qualification grade is calculated by converting the 3 assessment components into a UMS score to ensure comparability between the different components. These are combined using weightings based on their relevance to the vocational sector.

Learners must achieve a minimum of 120 UMS on the internal assessment component and a combined UMS of 120 on the external assessment components. These UMS scores represent the lowest UMS scores at which a learner would need to pass each component at Level 2.

The collective UMS will then be converted into a grade based on the following fixed thresholds:

	Max	P	M	D	D*
UMS	400	240	280	320	360

The final grade for the qualification is based on a structure of Not Yet Achieved, Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*.

Learners need to achieve a Distinction for each unit in order to achieve an overall grade of Distinction*.

The final grade will be issued to the centre by NCFE.

Level 2 standard

At level 2 learners will be given overall direction and guidance but will be able to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. They must be able to understand theories and ideas and be aware of different sources of information that are relevant to the subject.

Tasks

At level 2 tasks should be well defined and generally routine, allowing learners to address straightforward problems. They should require a general understanding of the key concepts, processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study and need some technical skills or understanding for their completion.

Learners will take responsibility for completing generally routine tasks and procedures. They will exercise autonomy and judgement with overall direction and guidance. They will be able to identify how effective actions have been and take responsibility for analysis and evaluation.

Overall qualification grading descriptors

These grading descriptors should be used as a guide to show what we'd expect to see overall from a learner at each grade. Please refer to the Levelling Grading Descriptors document on our website for a table summarising Level 1, 2 and 3 standards.

Level 2 Not Yet Achieved
The learner will not have met all the learning outcomes, either because there is insufficient evidence or because the evidence does not meet the required standards for a Pass.
Level 2 Pass
The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts but may not be able to make links between them. They will demonstrate some application of technical processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study. Tasks will be completed to a minimum standard with some errors and the learner will select and use some appropriate skills and processes. A range of strengths and weaknesses will be identified, with supporting evidence, and straightforward ways to improve the outcome or process. Evidence will show planning, organisational and investigatory skills in a clear and logical way.
Level 2 Merit
The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts and will be able to make some links between them. They will demonstrate effective application of technical processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and their level of study. Tasks will be completed to a level that exceeds the minimum standard with few errors and the learner will select and use some appropriate skills and processes, giving some explanation for their choices. The importance of strengths and weaknesses to the overall outcome will be described and the learner will state effective ways to improve the outcome or process. Evidence will show detailed planning, organisation and investigatory skills in a well-structured and thorough format. The learner will demonstrate the ability to work to deadlines.

Overall qualification grading descriptors (cont'd)

Level 2 Distinction
The learner will have a detailed understanding of the key concepts and how they interlink. They will demonstrate originality in the consistent, effective application of technical processes, resources, techniques and materials relevant to the vocational area and level of study. Tasks will be completed to a level that far exceeds the minimum standard with few or no errors and the learner will select and use appropriate skills and processes, justifying their choices.   The learner will recognise the varying impact of different strengths and weaknesses to overall outcomes and explain effective ways to improve the outcomes or processes.   Evidence will show detailed planning, organisation and investigatory skills in a well-structured and thorough format. The learner will demonstrate the ability to work to deadlines and to review plans.

Level 2 Distinction*
To be awarded a Distinction* grade, the learner will have achieved within the top 10% of the maximum UMS or learners will have achieved a Distinction grade in every unit for the internal assessment and a Distinction grade in both external assessments.

Whilst NCFE do not anticipate any changes to our aggregation methods or any overall grade thresholds there may be exceptional circumstances in which it is necessary to do so to secure the maintenance of standards over time. Therefore overall grade thresholds published within this qualification specification may be subject to change.

Section 5

Grading criteria glossary of terms

Grading criteria glossary of terms

This table has been provided as an aid to help you grade learners' assessments. These are generic terms used across the level 2 V Cert qualifications and may not all appear in this qualification specification.

Level 2 Music Technology	
Accurately	The learner carries out all stages of a process correctly and without errors *(see mostly accurately)*
Advanced ways	Solutions may be more complex or more considered *(see basic ways and considered ways)*
Appropriate	Ideas or choices must be realistic and viable to the vocational area and the learner's resources. At level 2 and above they must be selected by the learner, at level 1 they are directed.
Balanced conclusions	All arguments are considered in making a conclusion *(see reasoned conclusions)*
Basic ways	Straightforward, mostly obvious ideas or solutions *(see advanced ways and considered ways)*
Complex task/brief	A task/brief made up of several, interrelated elements
Complex technical problems	A problem specific to the vocational area that has several interrelated elements *(see technical problems)*
Considered experimentation	Experimentation is well thought out and fit for purpose. It is comprehensive enough to draw a reliable conclusion out *(see limited experimentation and simple experimentation)*
Considered ways	Ideas or solutions that show some degree of thought *(see advanced ways and basic ways)*
Directed tasks	Learners are given clear instructions on how to complete the task, which may be broken into stages for them by the Teacher/Assessor
Effective solutions	Solutions which are appropriate to the vocational area *(see possible solutions)*
Efficiently solves	Solves in a manner appropriate to the vocational area
Everyday language	The learner's own language and terms, the personal vocabulary the learner uses, non-vocational language and terminology *(see specialist terms/language and technical terms/language)*
General understanding	A basic understanding of the vocational area that does not require knowledge of technical skills, techniques or rules of implementation *(see technical understanding)*
Format of source	The style of information eg a questionnaire, a report, an observation, an interview *(see type of source)*
Limited experimentation	Experimentation shows some degree of planning and thought but may not be thorough enough to draw a reliable conclusion out *(see considered experimentation and simple experimentation)*
Mostly accurately	The learner is able to carry out most stages of a process without errors to achieve an outcome *(see accurately and some degree of accuracy)*
Possible solutions	The solution may not involve technical skills or understanding and may not be a long-term or effective solution *(see effective solutions)*

Grading criteria glossary of terms (cont'd)

Range	Frequent use of most common words/techniques/materials *(see some and wide range)*
Reasoned conclusions	Explanations are provided as to why a conclusion was made *(see balanced conclusions)*
Simple experimentation	Straightforward, most obvious experimentation is carried out *(see limited experimentation and considered experimentation)*
Some	Occasional use of most common words/techniques/materials *(see range and wide range)*
Some degree of accuracy	The learner is able to carry out the stages of a process to achieve an outcome, but most stages will contain errors *(see accurately and mostly accurately)*
Sophisticated examples	Complex or less obvious examples provided with detailed explanation. Clearly related to the point being made *(see straightforward examples)*
Specialist skill	Advanced technical skills in context *(see technical skills)*
Specialist terms/language	Advanced technical terms in context *(see everyday language and technical terms/language)*
Straightforward examples	Direct obvious examples which lack complexity of any kind, but clearly relate to the point being made *(see sophisticated examples)*
Technical problems	A problem specific to the vocational area. This could include equipment, processes etc *(see complex technical problems)*
Technical skills	The application of technical understanding. The ability to put subject-specific skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation into practice to achieve suitable outcomes *(see specialist skills)*
Technical terms/language	Language relating to the vocational area. May include skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation etc *(see everyday language and specialist terms/language)*
Technical understanding	An understanding of the skills, measures, techniques or rules of implementation appropriate to the vocational area. The learner may still be learning how to apply this understanding *(see general understanding)*
Type of source	The place that the information comes from eg the internet, a museum visit, staff, visitors *(see format of source)*
Wide range	Uses all relevant words/techniques/materials that could be expected at the level *(see range)*

Section 6
General information

General information

Equal opportunities

NCFE fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and social background. NCFE aims to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in its own employment practices and in access to its qualifications. A copy of NCFE's Equal Opportunities Policy is available on request.

Diversity, access and inclusion

Our qualifications and associated assessments are designed to be accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. NCFE regularly evaluates and monitors the 6 diversity strands (gender, age, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation) throughout the development process as well as delivery, external quality assurance and external assessment processes of live qualifications. This ensures that positive attitudes and good relations are promoted, discriminatory language is not used and our assessment procedures are fully inclusive.

Learners who require reasonable adjustments or special consideration should discuss their requirements with their Teacher, who should refer to our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy for guidance.

For more information on the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy please see our website https://www.ncfe.org.uk/media/822929/reasonable-adjustments-and-special-consideration-policy.pdf.

Data protection

NCFE is registered under the Data Protection Act and is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards when handling personal information.

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* To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.