

Chief Examiner and Chief Moderator Report

**NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Music
Technology
QN: 603/7008/7**

Series: Summer 2025

EA paper number: P002863, P002864

NEA paper number: P002865

EA assessment date: 12 June 2025

NEA assessment date: 30 April 2025

Introduction

This report contains information in relation to the examined assessment (EA) from the chief examiner and non-examined assessment (NEA) from the chief moderator, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment series.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally performed well, as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grade boundary information
- administering the examined assessment (EA) and non-exam assessment (NEA)
- evidence creation
- standard of learner work
- responses to the assessments

The qualification is linear, meaning both assessments must be taken in the same assessment series and cannot be combined across different assessment series. Learners are allowed one attempt at each assessment, and there are no resit opportunities.

Grade boundary information

This qualification consists of two assessments: the examined assessment (EA) and the non-exam assessment (NEA).

After both assessments are completed and marked or moderated, the marks are combined to give a final mark for each learner. Where the raw marks do not reflect the required weighting of the assessment, a scaling factor is applied. For further information on grading information and scaling factors, please see the Qualification Specification.

Qualification scaled mark boundaries in this series are:

	Overall	Notional boundaries*	
		EA	NEA
Scaling factor		1	1
Max	200	80	120
Level 2 Distinction*	176	70	106
Level 2 Distinction	153	60	93
Level 2 Merit	124	49	75
Level 2 Pass	96	38	58
Level 1 Distinction	76	30	46
Level 1 Merit	56	22	34
Level 1 Pass	36	14	22

*The grade boundaries given for each assessment are known as 'notional grade boundaries', as they are for illustrative purposes only. Grade boundaries are the lowest mark with which a grade is achieved.

Administering the examined assessment (EA) and non-exam assessment (NEA)

The EA is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#) document. The NEA is moderated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of NEA – Non-Exam Assessment](#) document.

Learners require additional pre-release material in order to complete the tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our guidance and regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the tasks and these are highlighted within the [Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery](#) (QSID) document.

Evidence creation

Examined assessment (EA)

Learners should use the space provided to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, the learner's name, centre number, centre name and task number must be clearly visible. The additional paper must then be securely attached to the workbook.

Where assessments are completed online, centres must ensure they are familiar with the Surpass platform and have completed all testing and preparation before the assessment, to ensure learners are unaffected by technological issues.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Learners should approach all tasks in the NEA with reference to time requirements and control conditions. Learners should produce evidence to meet each task independently and with no feedback or guidance from tutors during the assessment.

Learner evidence requirements are stated per task and reference mandatory outcomes, which can often be evidenced in a variety of ways to best meet the needs of the learner, unless otherwise stated.

Learner evidence submissions in this session most often included a range of word-processed documents, PowerPoint presentations and audio files.

It was noted that not all learners provided separate audio files for task 3 and task 4 as required by the task instructions. The chief moderator advises that provision of separate audio files for these tasks potentially allows for greater differentiation and accurate application of assessment criteria, and that this requirement should be adhered to in future sessions.

The majority of learners had included visual evidence which was often useful in reinforcing written commentary. The chief moderator suggests that screenshots and photographs should be subject to clear annotation to maximise the value of the evidence. A minority of learners had

produced screencast / video evidence with spoken commentary to reinforce or replace written commentary. This was often useful in providing evaluative evidence.

Centres are reminded that template documents, word frames and other supporting documents should not be supplied to the learner for the purposes of generating evidence against this assessment. Use of such materials to generate assessment evidence could potentially be considered malpractice.

Standard of learner work

Examined assessment (EA)

This was the second EA for the qualification. The question paper consisted of a mix of multiple-choice question (MCQs), short-answer questions (SAQs) and extended-response questions (ERQs). A range of questions within the paper related to supplied audio examples which required that learners listened to the material to provide responses.

The paper allowed for achievement of up to 80 marks and was structured across four sections. In this assessment a range of marks was achieved which suggested that learners had engaged with the assessment and responses showed differentiation between learners.

High achieving learners often provided responses indicating confidence in knowledge across the qualification content areas. These learners showed good knowledge across all question types, meeting assessment objective (AO) 1, AO2 and AO3 within responses. Some learner responses suggested more refined evaluative skills, particularly regarding aural perception and confidence in extended writing.

Learners who were awarded marks at the lower end of the range tended to formulate responses which were more limited in terms of accuracy, use of technical language, and application of knowledge in context. Responses from some learners suggested a narrower range of knowledge across specification content areas. In some cases, learners were able to access AO1, but did not consistently achieve against AO2 and AO3 elements. This was most notable in learners who gained credit against MCQs but were less confident in providing more descriptive, explanative, discursive or extended responses.

Some learners did not attempt to answer all questions within the paper, which limited the marks available to them. The chief examiner notes that this, in some cases, appeared to reflect more limited time management abilities in the context of completing the paper.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

This was the second NEA for the qualification. The assessment consisted of five tasks to be completed by learners over 17 hours between October 2024 and April 2025. The assessment was marked and internally quality assured by centres, with a sample of work externally moderated by NCFE.

A total of 120 marks were available across the assessment. Each task was allocated a range of marks placed against stated assessment objectives (AOs) contextualised to each task. AOs 1 to 5 were assessed via levels of response mark grids, with weightings per task varied to reflect the nature of the qualification outcomes.

Learners had achieved across the available range of awarded grades in this assessment. This suggested that learners had engaged with the assessment and that the assessment had differentiated effectively. The majority of learners had attempted all tasks, often gaining credit in each. A small minority of learners undertaking the assessment had not submitted any creditable evidence. Some learners had not attempted all tasks within the assessment, which reduced the available credit.

The majority of learners had undertaken tasks logically and with reference to task instructions, demonstrating understanding of key music technology content areas. Learner evidence was generally aligned explicitly to tasks, with work labelled accordingly. In some submissions where this was not the case, it was sometimes difficult to determine which task the learner had targeted. The chief moderator advises that learners should ensure their evidence clearly references the task it addresses.

Many learners had produced musical outcomes which evidenced a range of skills in using a digital audio workstation (DAW). Some varied and creative compositional outcomes were observed, which reflected the requirements of the brief. Learners who achieved well in applied outcomes demonstrated not only creativity in composition, but also attention to detail in MIDI editing, audio capture and refinement via mixing. Learners who achieved less well tended to demonstrate a less confident approach to the application of tools and techniques, often resulting in less satisfying aural outcomes.

Responding to the brief, planning for production and summative evaluation evidence (tasks 1,2 and 5, respectively) demonstrated a wide range of learner understanding. Learners who achieved well in these tasks tended to have accrued marks against all available AOs by demonstration of recall, application, analysis and evaluation. Their work was more balanced and detailed, and they responded to all listed elements of the tasks. Learners who achieved less well typically did not respond to all elements of the tasks or were inconsistent in balance of detail between tasks.

The structure of the assessment allowed learners to accrue marks in areas in which they were most confident, which to some extent, counterbalanced areas of lesser success based on the AO composition of each task.

Summative feedback provided by assessors to learners was generally positively written and provided a summary of the learners' outcome. In many examples, individualised and personalised feedback was provided to contextualise the assessment outcome to the learner. Assessor feedback did not always include marks and commentary at AO level within tasks, which in some cases made application of assessment less transparent (for the purposes of both accuracy of feedback to learners and external moderation).

Upload of learner evidence and associated documentation for external moderation was generally well handled by centres. However, it was noted that some uploads did not initially include all submitted learner evidence and, in some cases, did not include assessment documents. Evidence and documentation missed from upload has the potential to delay moderation of assessment. Therefore, the chief moderator advises that uploads should be carefully checked with reference to requirements (including the 'learner evidence upload checklist') to minimise any issues of this nature.

Responses to the assessments

Examined assessment (EA)

Question 1

Most learners were able to gain credit in this multiple-choice question (MCQ) which asked learners to identify tempo as a setting which affects speed of playback in digital audio workstation (DAW). This suggested some confidence in underpinning knowledge of a DAW settings. Learners who did not achieve in this question had selected an incorrect response or, in a limited number of cases, chosen not to provide a response.

Question 2

In this MCQ learners were asked to identify the correct health and safety risk related to prolonged display screen use. The majority of learners were able to correctly identify eye strain, which suggested some confidence in understanding of health and safety in the context of DAW usage. A small minority of learners did not respond to this question.

Question 3

Learners found this question slightly more challenging to approach. The MCQ required that learners selected the appropriate description of the effect of adjusting the Q control within an equaliser (EQ). Where learners had not achieved, a range of incorrect responses was observed which suggested that not all learners were familiar with Q as a technical term.

Question 4

Learners were asked to identify the compressor control shown on a provided visual representation in response to the question. Many learners were able to identify ratio as the correct response. Learners who did not achieve marks, provided a range of responses, some of which identified other compressor controls and some of which were not related to compression.

Question 5 (a)

Not all learners appeared familiar with 'stem' as a term, which led to some responses which were not creditable in this question. Whilst some learners were able to give an appropriate

response, others did not respond or provided responses which suggested a lack of confidence in this terminology.

Question 5 (b)

Learners who were less confident in defining the term 'stems', were often unable to accrue credit in response to this question. Learners who responded creditably were able to relate the use of stems to production of a remix.

Question 6

In this question learners were asked to explain one advantage of a DJ using loops during a performance. Learners who achieved well were able to provide an appropriate advantage and some learners were able to expand this explanatively to maximise credit. Most learners appeared confident with looping as a concept, but some learners were not able to contextualise this.

Question 7 (a)

This question asked learners to make use of aural skills, identifying instruments used in the given audio example. The majority of learners were able to creditably identify at least one instrument, with many learners going on to identify further instruments to gain credit. A very small minority of learners did not attempt this question.

Question 7 (b)

In this question learners were asked to identify musical features associated with disco in relation to the supplied audio example. The majority of learners were able to provide one or more creditable examples.

Question 8 (a)

Many learners were able to identify multiple items of equipment which would be useful in a recording session. A minority of learners had stated items already excluded by the question and so were not creditable. The responses indicated some confidence in knowledge of recording equipment.

Question 8 (b)

In this question learners were asked to give a reason why a DAW, audio interface, and mixing desk are useful for a recording situation. The majority of learners were comfortable in providing a rationale for a DAW, but less confidence was exhibited regarding the audio interface and mixing desk.

Question 9

This MCQ tested learners' knowledge of scalar intervals. Learners were asked to identify a major pentatonic scale based on the given options. The majority of learners appeared to find this challenging, which suggested some lack of underpinning music theory knowledge in relation to common scales.

Question 10

In this MCQ, learners were asked to select the appropriate description of the term retrograde. Most learners were able to select the correct response, with a very small minority of learners not responding.

Question 11

Most learners appeared confident in identifying vinyl as the correct playback format based on the playback device in this question, which suggested some understanding of consumer formats.

Question 12

This question asked the learners to identify a C major 7th chord based on given notes. Not all learners were able to gain credit in response to this question. Some learners identified the underlying triad but incorrectly identified the extension. Some learners did not attempt to identify the extension, and some learners provided responses which suggested limited recognition of chord structure. A small minority of learners did not respond to this question.

Question 13

Many learners were able to provide a creditable response which described the function of the top number in a time signature. Other responses sometimes confused top and bottom numbers, suggesting a lack of confidence and, in some cases, a lack of familiarity with the concept of time signatures. A small minority of learners did not respond to this question.

Question 14

In this question learners were asked to use the supplied audio file to aurally identify and state three examples of sound creation. Most learners were able to identify one or more examples. Learners were further asked to identify the type of sound creation used and many learners were able to identify creditable use of Foley and often ambience. Learners were often less secure in underscore and spot effect as terms.

Question 15

Many learners were able to identify at least one digital media format used to share music in response to this question. Learners who achieved less well tended to have confused digital media formats with examples of content providers / services which were not creditable.

Question 16

The nature of Portastudios was not always well understood in learner responses to this question, which asked them to discuss how Portastudios benefitted musicians in the 1980s. Learners who achieved well were able to comment on technical and logistical opportunities provided by the development of Portastudios in historical context. Learners who achieved less well appeared less familiar with Portastudios as a device which led to less creditable discussion. A minority of learners did not respond to this question.

Question 17

In response to this MCQ many learners were able to correctly identify eight as a standard track count for a magnetic tape recorder, which illustrated some understanding of historical developments in sound recording.

Question 18

The majority of learners were able to successfully identify production of CDs / Vinyl as part of the manufacturing process in response to this MCQ. A minority of learners selected an alternate multiple-choice response, which was not creditable. This suggested some understanding of distribution and manufacturing in context across the learner group.

Question 19

Responses to this MCQ suggested that not all learners were entirely confident in knowledge of cassette as a form of analogue media. Learners did not always differentiate between analogue and digital media, with some learners selecting incorrect answers, for example CD.

Question 20

The majority of learners were unable to identify the RCA phono connector from the given picture. This suggested some lack of knowledge in different types of audio connectors. Most commonly, learners misidentified the connector as a jack or external line return (XLR).

Question 21

Based on their responses, some learners seemed unfamiliar with modulation effects terminology and responses included a range of suggestions, including distortion and reverb

Question 22

Many learners were able to correctly state one type of uncompressed stereo audio file, with some learners able to correctly identify two file types to maximise credit. Some learner responses indicated confusion between uncompressed and compressed audio files (for example, MP3) and in some cases learners stated platforms (for example, YouTube, Spotify), which did not yield credit.

Question 23

In this short-answer question (SAQ), learners were asked to analyse the impact of the analogue hardware revival on music production in the 2000s. Some learners gained credit with reference to examples of how analogue hardware had been applied in historical context and were able to expand on this to consider the outcome in terms of music production. Some learners were less able to define analogue versus digital hardware, which led to less creditable responses. In general, learners appeared less confident with regard to timeline of developments in response to this question.

Question 24

In this SAQ, most learners were able to suggest one way in which reverb could be applied across multiple tracks, often with reference to copying a reverb plug in across track inserts. Learners generally appeared less confident in suggesting the use of bussing / auxiliary sends as a methodology, which in some cases would have allowed responses to maximise credit.

Question 25 (a)

In response to this SAQ, the majority of learners were able to state at least one creditable consideration which would be applicable to planning a recording session. Learners who

achieved well were able to maximise credit by stating three appropriate considerations. Responses to this question suggested some confidence in considerations such as health and safety, cost and software requirements.

Question 25 (b)

This SAQ asked learners to give a reason why agreeing hardware requirements, agreeing timeline and agreeing goals is important in the context of planning a recording session. Learners who achieved well were able to provide a creditable reason against each area which maximised credit. Learners were often more secure in their responses regarding hardware requirements and timeline.

Question 26

This extended-response question (ERQ) asked learners to assess the effectiveness of the given audio file as a piece of dance music.

Learners who achieved well were able to apply aural skills to identify musical elements and formulate a balanced response which focussed their response in terms of stylistic concerns, to assess effectiveness.

Learners who achieved less well tended to focus on a more limited range of musical elements and provide more generalised commentary. Some learners were less able to draw conclusions in regard to effectiveness which tended to limit credit available against AO3. Not all learners had attempted this ERQ, however, across the submissions it was positive to see some learners gave responses which were able to be awarded full marks.

Question 27

Learners who achieved higher marks tended to be able to discuss a range of features of audio interfaces in the context of a recording studio making a purchase to record bands of various sizes. Learners were often able to discuss specific functions and requirements and relate these to the scenario in a coherent way, using fully appropriate terms.

Learners who achieved less well often discussed a narrower range of features and frequently did so with more limited consideration of the given scenario. Some responses suggested a general lack of confidence in the nature and function of an audio interface, which tended to inhibit coherence.

As per question 26, not all learners had attempted this ERQ, but learners who achieved well were, in some cases, able to accrue full marks. The chief examiner suggests that learners should ensure that they do not fail to answer the ERQs, as they are worth a comparatively high number of marks. Learners who ran out of time or failed to provide any awardable response for the higher value questions tended to limit the overall marks available to them.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Task 1

In this first task learners were required to create a proposal for their piece of music, with reference to the requirements of the brief. Task evidence was defined as a word-processed document which could be supported with additional forms of supporting evidence.

The majority of learners engaged with the task to produce evidence which commented on musical elements of their proposed piece. Often, this was supported by research undertaken during the preparation time available prior to the NEA and extended during the task.

Learners who achieved well in this task tended to be able to present a highly detailed proposal which considered musical elements in relation to soul music. They also discussed other considerations such as time limitations and the context of the piece being created as a theme for a TV drama series.

Some learners were able to demonstrate a comprehensive application of knowledge via consideration of musical elements against AO1, including structure, form, melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, arrangement and sound creation. This often allowed learners to form highly comprehensive evidence which detailed application of each of these elements in relation to their own proposed work.

Learners working at this level were able to assimilate all demands of the brief into their proposal and make clear reference to these in commentary, showing analytical thinking skills informed by highly reasoned judgements and decisions which were creditable against AO3. For example, learners were able to consider typically used scales, chord sequences and rhythmic patterns by consideration of examples found through research. Learners were often able to consider proposed structure in relation to the specific time requirement and, in some cases, in relation to the nature of the purpose of the piece as a TV theme.

Learners who achieved lower marks in this task tended to have provided more limited recall of musical elements, with some inconsistency in coverage or omission of key elements. Most notably, references to melodic and harmonic elements were weaker, suggesting some lack of understanding of melodic structures and chord progressions amongst learners operating at this level. In some cases, learners tended to confuse underlying harmonic ideas with other aspects, such as vocal harmonies, and made only broad commentary in relation to melody. Recall of instrumentation used within the specific style tended to be secure, although this was not always carried through into the learner's proposal in terms of identifying how these elements may be applied to create their own piece.

A minority of learner responses to this task focussed on the development of soul as a style from a historical and social viewpoint, with limited reference to musical elements. Often this detracted from creditable focus on the production of a proposal, which adversely affected the learner outcome in this task. A minority of learners had produced minimal work in response to the task or had in some cases only duplicated research sources without further consideration of the task.

It was noted that if uncredited / unreferenced research was repeated it could be considered plagiarism and should be considered as such during assessment.

Coherent and detailed proposals developed in task 1 tended to allow learners to move forwards into task 2 with some confidence.

Task 2

Task 2 required learners to develop a plan which evaluated skills, processes, tools and techniques which learners intended to use to produce their piece of music. The evidence format of the task was not specified. However, a majority of learners approached this through written commentary which, in some cases, included appropriate planning tools (for example, timeline tables, diagrams and Gantt charts), which tended to provide useful underlying structure to the plan.

Learners who achieved well in this task tended to be able to consider the time available to them during the assessment and relate tasks to activities specifically required to meet the underlying brief. At this level, learners were often able to assign realistic schedules to work required to create and mix the piece. Coverage of task requirements within the plan was generally analysed at this level and made reference to all required elements to meet AO2.

Learners who were able to produce a coherent timeline were also, at this stage, able to consider hardware and software requirements. Often, learners were able to relate these to planning for recording of audio materials, potentially referencing logistical demands and discussion of additional musicians required. Evaluation of skills, processes, tools and techniques required by the plan was often presented in evidence, alongside detailed consideration of health and safety as part of ongoing commentary. At this stage, some learners demonstrated creative thought regarding development, recording and mixing which tended to align with reasoned judgements and decisions based on analysis of the brief.

Learners who achieved less well tended to produce a less detailed plan, which in some cases did not recognise time constraints or showed unrealistic application of time to tasks (most often considerably underestimating time required). Task requirements were sometimes not fully addressed, or some areas were inconsistent in detail. In many cases, available hardware and software was identified, but was not placed in the context of applying the plan. Commentary at this level was generally less analytical and evaluative.

Recording of audio materials was not always well defined within plans, although the majority of learners had recognised the requirement to capture audio rather than rely on pre-recorded assets. In some cases, learners had not related use of hardware and software to recording, which tended to limit commentary in this respect. Some learners had produced an evaluation as a summative outcome distinct from planning, which in some cases, had led to more limited creditable commentary against AO5.

Detailed planning, which examined requirements in relation to the brief, generally allowed learners to move into task 3 with some focus and confidence.

A minority of learners had not attempted this task or had produced evidence which was not distinct from task 1 and / or task 3 responses. This tended to limit available marks and provided a less coherent path for learners moving into subsequent tasks.

Task 3

Task 3 required that learners use their plan from task 2 to create their piece and evaluate the production process undertaken. This task carried a high weighting of AO4 marks, and a substantial percentage of time given to the NEA in recognition of the skills and demands inherent in producing a piece of music. The evidence format of the task in terms of evaluative commentary was not specified but it was mandatory that a stereo audio file be produced in response to this task.

The majority of learners had produced a stereo audio file in response to this task, but some learners had failed to address this evidence requirement. This was potentially detrimental to the outcome of the assessment and learners should consider this requirement in future sessions.

Learners who achieved well in this task had considered set up of equipment, configuration of software, use of hardware, use of software, use of musical elements and sound creation, capture of recorded audio and the export of a stereo audio file. Commentary was often highly detailed and showed consistent ongoing analysis and evaluation of processes and decisions in relation to the creation of the piece. In most cases this made good use of screenshots with commentary linked to application in context. A minority of learners had provided effective screencast evidence with spoken commentary, which often provided thoughtful consideration of decisions made.

Many learners had produced imaginative and stylistic music outcomes which addressed all elements of the brief at this level. A range of compositional processes were in evidence, with the most successful usually informed by work in tasks 1 and 2. Appropriately structured and stylistically considered outcomes which were consistently developed in all aspects were produced by some learners. Compositions which made use of all musical elements to produce a convincing outcome tended to gain marks against AO4 elements. Learners working at this level tended to have made considered use of MIDI tools and techniques, which was often subject to appropriate corrective and creative editing, for example by application of quantisation, velocity and automation being considered in the context of the desired musical outcome.

Audio capture had often allowed learners to demonstrate consideration of technique alongside the application of audio tools for considered purpose. Learners working at this level were often able to demonstrate well-conceived process evidence that included ongoing evaluative commentary, which fed into AO5 credit. The range of audio capture varied at this level, but generally exhibited more detailed consideration of sources (via microphones or direct injection) alongside gain structure and use of multiple takes to reach the learners desired outcome.

Learners who achieved less well tended to have used a narrower range of MIDI and audio tools to produce less sophisticated outcomes. This was often accompanied by process commentary which was more limited and presented less evaluative scope. Often learners were able to input MIDI and capture audio, but editing was less convincingly applied (for example, with only copy

and paste in evidence for MIDI rather than note duration and velocity considered). In some cases, learners appeared unaware of the ability to apply tools to edit.

In some cases, learners had produced pleasing audio outcomes, but these were not well supported by process evidence. Some learners had produced outcomes which were limited in their response to the brief in terms of the stylistic aspect and time constraint. In some cases, these outcomes were limited in their use of coherent musical elements.

A minority of learners had produced no response to this task which considerably limited available credit.

Learners who had made considered decisions linked to appropriate use of tools and processes in this task, which led to an outcome meeting all elements of the brief effectively, were often able to progress to task 4 with confidence.

Task 4

In this task learners were asked to mix the completed piece and export as a stereo audio file, alongside evaluation of the mixing process. The evidence format of the task in terms of evaluative commentary was not specified but it was mandatory that a stereo audio file be produced in response to this task.

As in task 3, the majority of learners had produced a stereo audio file in response to this task, but some learners had failed to address this evidence requirement, which limited the outcome of this task. The majority of learners had presented written evidence (including appropriate screenshots) of process alongside a suitably exported audio file, with a minority choosing to provide creditable screencast evidence with commentary.

Well considered pieces created in task 3 generally presented learners with a useful basis for refinement via the application of mixing processes and DAW tools. However, similar to the previous session, in some cases, less sophisticated task 3 outcomes were substantially lifted by application of creative and corrective skills at mixdown.

Learners who achieved well in this task tended to have developed the pieces created in task 3 via a creative and corrective mixing process which considered stereo placement, balance, editing, EQ, effects and dynamics processing. The sometimes-imaginative application of tools and techniques was often accompanied by detailed ongoing evaluation which showed a comprehensive understanding of all elements. Evaluative commentary tended to reinforce creative decisions made during the mixing process, which often resulted in well balanced and engaging outcomes showing progress made between task 3 and task 4

At this level, EQ and dynamics processing was often purposefully considered in terms of the overall outcome per track and sometimes expanded into application of these tools as mastering. Volume and pan automation was sometimes used imaginatively to pick out elements and add movement to mixes. Editing was considered in relation to refinement of sources and appropriate tools applied, showing an evaluative approach.

Learners who achieved less well had tended to not consider all elements of the mixing process. Whilst the majority of learners had attempted application of EQ and effects, these were often more reliant on templates. In some cases, a less evaluative approach was in evidence within individual work. Dynamics processing appeared less well understood at this level, although some stylistic application of compression was sometimes in evidence. Some learners had produced sonically developed outcomes but had not supported this with commentary.

A minority of learners had not attempted this task, which limited available credit. In a small minority of outcomes, identical audio files were presented for task 3 and task 4 which suggested a lack of applied tool usage in this task.

Learners who had developed their outcome and demonstrated understanding and analysis to produce a cohesive piece in response to the brief tended to be able to use this to further inform their response to Task 5

Task 5

In this final task learners were asked to provide a summative evaluation of the technical skills, tools and techniques used to create, produce and mix their piece. The format of the evidence was not specified but the majority of learners had produced a written response.

Learners who achieved well in this task were often able to produce a balanced evaluation which considered all elements of the process and outcome, with thoughtful suggestions for improvement indicated. At this level, learners made clear links back to the brief to provide a basis for commentary and consideration of alternate approaches. Evaluations at this level, were often logically structured against task elements and made clear reference to each to provide detailed coverage.

Learners who achieved less well tended to have produced evaluation which was limited in scope and, in some cases, did not address all aspects of the task. Some learners took a 'what went well' and an 'even better if' (WWW / EBI) approach, which generally allowed for identification of some areas of improvement but in some cases narrowed the commentary significantly – particularly in relation to consideration of how the piece of music met the project brief. Some learners were, however, able to gain useful credit by recognition and exploration of some less considered judgements in earlier tasks and how an alternate approach could be employed with hindsight.

This task did not always result in substantial outcomes, with a minority of learners producing no evidence in response. It was noted that, generally, learners who had produced less evaluative process evidence in the preceding tasks, produced less considered responses in this task.