

UNIT 8: REVIEWING PERFORMANCE & ENTERTAINMENT (FOUNDATION)

ABOUT THIS UNIT

This unit will help you to find out about the performance work of others. You will go and see different kinds of performance events, read reviews in the local and national press, and write your own reviews. You could also listen to new album releases and videos. Attending a performance event will help you to gain a better understanding of the work of everyone involved (the musicians, dancers, actors, lighting designers, set and costume designers). You will learn more about different practices in the Performing Arts. You will note the impact of performance events on audiences.

You will learn:

- about reviews
- how to gather background information before watching a performance
- about watching performances/listening to recordings
- how to discuss performances
- how to write reviews.

There are many different kinds of performance events which can take place in many different venues. Some performance events might take place at your own centre. Performances can be both live and recorded. Your work in compulsory Unit 1: Opportunities in performing arts (Foundation) will help you to discover where performance events are taking place. Your work in compulsory Unit 2: Skills development (Foundation) and Unit 3: Performing work (Foundation) will help you to appreciate the performance skills involved in the events.

This unit will be assessed through your portfolio work only. The grade awarded will be your grade for the unit.

WHAT YOU NEED TO LEARN

About reviews

Reviews are comments which are written about performances by people who have been to see them. Reviews can be found in newspapers, on television and on radio programmes. People look at reviews to find out about the quality of performances. People often decide to go and see a performance or buy a recording after reading a good review.

All reviews have certain key features. You will learn that reviews:

- are written differently for different media, for example newspapers, radio or magazines
- use different styles for different audiences
- include some practical information about the performance event
- tell us what the reviewer thinks about the performance/event/recording
- are written by people who know about the kind of work they are reviewing.

How to gather background information before watching/listening to a performance

To be able to write your own reviews you will need to go and see performances and/or listen to recordings. Before going to see your performance/event or listening to a recording, you will need some background information.

This could include:

- the type of performance/event you are going to see
- the likely audience
- who is performing – are they famous?
- what previous work the company or band has done
- key features of the work, for example ideas, style, performers
- details of the venue/record label.

About responding to performances

The performances you go to see can be at your centre or could be at venues in your region or could be on a recording. When you are watching or listening to a performance it is important that you think about:

- What are the good points and bad points of the performance? For example, if you go to see a play, what are the performers like? What is the acting like? What is the set like?
- How do the rest of the audience respond to the performance? Do they clap? Do they cheer? Does it keep them interested?
- How do you feel about the performance? Do you like it?
- How is the recording mixed? How does it compare to other recordings?

How to discuss performances

After a performance or listening to a recording, it may be useful for a group of you to get together with your teacher or tutor and discuss what you have seen/heard. This will also give you the chance to:

- express what you felt about the performance and the material
- find out what other people thought
- take notes for your written review.

In discussions you will need to know how to:

- explain what you think about the performance you have seen/heard
- say things which suit the purpose of the discussion
- judge when to speak and how much to say
- show you are listening closely to what others say.

How to write reviews

You should use your notes from your discussion about a performance to write the review. Before you start it is important that you think about:

- who will read or hear your review
- the best way to present your review.

When writing your reviews you will need to:

- make sure you have included all the necessary information
- think about all aspects of what you saw or listened to, including details about the venue/recording
- include what you thought of the performance/event/recording
- make your meaning clear by writing, proof-reading and re-drafting the review so that people who were not there understand what happened.

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

You need to produce:

- examples of reviews from different sources, with brief comments on two of them
- a record of information on performance events attended
- two short reviews of different performance events.

The reviews may be in the form of a presentation, written or recorded.

Pass	Merit	Distinction
To achieve a pass your work must show:	To achieve a merit your work must show:	To achieve a distinction your work must show:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you can identify key features in reviews by other people • some basic background information to support your reviews • that information about performances is recorded accurately • what you felt about the performance/event • that you can present your reviews so that your audience can understand what you want to say. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to respond to different types of performance or event, and consider good and bad points • some independent thought in preparing and presenting your reviews • clarity in presenting information as well as your response to the performance/event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you can write a review that takes account of the venue, the audience, and the intentions of the performance • the ability to present reviews in a balanced way, with a thoughtful evaluation of the performance or event.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Teaching strategies

Students may have little experience of being audience members at live performance events. They are more likely to have participated in them. This unit is very important for helping them to appreciate the work of others as this will help to make sense of their own learning in relation to the practice of the performing arts. Similarly students listen to a lot of recorded music but very rarely from the point of view of a critic, listening to the work of others will help inform their own recorded work.

This unit is assessed through portfolio work. The grade on that assessment will be the grade for the unit.

Delivery

They will need encouragement and support to attend events. If there are performance events by other groups of students at your centre these could prove excellent starting points. Group discussion after such an event will help them to understand that a performance can have a different impact on different people, but there are common elements which they will all need to include in a review.

Reviews by others

Students should investigate reviews by others. Local newspapers are a good source as the language is generally quite accessible and comment can be fulsome. Reviews on the radio and television can be recorded and presented to the students. Students should note the kinds of information and opinions which figure in the reviews of others. They should also know that professional reviewers record their impressions immediately, and often have to telephone their reviews to features editors after a performance.

Recording reviews

When students go to performance events they should take a notebook and have access to programmes. This is to ensure they record and collect information on the spot, rather than rely on memory. Their notes could become a useful resource for other foundation units.

Their reviews can then draw upon their notes and programme information. They should prepare and present their reviews as soon after the performance events as possible. Within the assessment evidence they are required to present two reviews. The more work by others they see the better opportunity they will have to structure and present good reviews. There might be reasons, such as practical and financial, why students cannot go to see more than two performance events. You will need to be alert to local possibilities for your students to see work (eg at another centre, special block booking rates at local venues, open dress rehearsals etc). If students review a recording, they should balance this with a review of a live performance.

Resources

These should include:

- range of reviews from different sources
- access to different kinds of performance events
- access to IT and communications technology; some companies and venues include reviews of performances in their web pages.

Assessment strategies

Two kinds of assessment evidence are required:

- a record eg a notebook where students log their information about companies etc, venues and their impressions of performance events
- two reviews of different kinds of performance events. Students can be encouraged to use original ways of presenting the review. It need not be a written review (eg a radio or video review with simulated interviews with artists involved in the production). If students do write their reviews, the length should be similar to those in local newspapers and appropriate for the performance event.

When grading student evidence you should consider the following general qualities that distinguish between the three grades:

- increasing depth and breadth of understanding
- increasing coherence, comparison and drawing valid conclusions
- increasing independence and originality.

Vocational relevance

The relevance of this unit to a vocational context is enabling students to gain an insight into the range and quality of performing and entertainment products available. The unit aims to broaden the student's experience and knowledge of performances and recordings.

Links

This unit also has links with optional Unit 7: Providing quality service to customers (Foundation) and Unit 5: Promoting an event (Foundation). It could also be a useful unit to generate evidence for the Key Skill: Communication (Level 1).

Key Skills

This guidance highlights the most relevant Key Skills opportunities in this unit. It contains suggestions only. You will need to check that students have produced all the evidence required to meet part A **and** part B of the Key Skills specifications. Students may need to develop additional evidence elsewhere to meet fully the requirements of the Key Skills specifications.

Guidance is referenced in two ways:

K – keys to attainment

These are Key Skills or aspects of Key Skills which students should achieve as they meet the vocational requirements of the units. Only part B of the Key Skill is highlighted – you will need to check that students achieve part A.

S – signposting

These are opportunities that can be incorporated naturally into the learning programme.

COMMUNICATION, LEVEL 1		Key Skills Reference
When students are:	They should be able to develop the following Key Skills evidence:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing, the performance to be reviewed • collecting and reading information about the performance events they are going to see (eg type, company producing it, key features) • writing the reviews including all the necessary information and illustrating them with the use of at least one image 	C1.1 Take part in a one-to-one discussion and a group discussion about different, straightforward subjects.	K
	C1.2 Read and obtain information from two different types of documents about straight forward subjects, including at least one image.	K
	C1.3 Write two different types of documents about straightforward subjects. Include at least one image in one of the documents.	K

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, LEVEL 1		Key Skills Reference
When students are:	They should be able to develop the following Key Skills evidence:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • typing and formatting the reviews (you can see examples on the Internet as some companies/venues include reviews in their websites) • word processing and formatting their 'Guide to Writing Reviews' • presenting their review to their tutor and peer group using images (one created by them and one obtained from an IT source) which give all the relevant information about one of the performances they have seen. (Some companies and venues include relevant information in their web pages) 	<p>IT1.2 Present information for two different purposes. Your work must include at least one example of text, one example of images and one example of numbers.</p>	S

