

Level 4 Associate Award (Performance)

Submission Guidance

April 2023

Contents

Acknowledgements	III
Foreword	III
Contact	III
Examiner guidance on submission	1
Choosing a theme	3
Repertoire	3
Checklist for completing and uploading your submission	4
How to film your performance	5
How to format video evidence	5
Recommended audio/video devices and apps	5
How to encode video files	6

Acknowledgements

Executive Producers

Norton York and Tim Bennett-Hart

Syllabus Guidance Design

Daniel Bowater and Eva Brandt

Syllabus Guidance Writers

Eva Brandt and Michelle Jones

Foreword

This collated guidance has been designed in support of RSL's 'Associate Award Syllabus Specification Guide'. It is aimed at helping candidates working towards this qualification to gain insight into the unit's requirements: the specific learning outcome, evidence required for assessment and the grading criteria.

The guide serves three purposes:

- 1.** To provide an overview of the submission requirements for the unit
- 2.** To provide examples of what a pass, merit and distinction submission may typically contain
- 3.** To provide guidance on how to film your performance

Candidates may use this guidance to better understand the unit requirements and as a checklist before uploading their submissions. Please note that the guidance is not exhaustive and should be seen as an indication of what work might include and/or demonstrate.

Contact

RSL
Harlequin House Ground Floor
7 High Street
Teddington
Middlesex
TW11 8EE
Website: www.rslawards.com
Telephone: +44 (0)345 460 4747
Email: info@rslawards.com

Examiner guidance on submission

Successful candidates will have read and understood the whole unit specification and noted the requirements across the learning outcome, assessment evidence and grading criteria as well as the context in which the unit is framed.

The learning outcome describes the skills and knowledge that the candidate is expected to demonstrate for assessment at the end of a period of study.

The assessment evidence gives clear guidance on how the learning outcome is expected to be successfully demonstrated and the grading criteria set out how the evidence will be measured by the assessor through an indication of what is taken into account.

A pass standard submission must address **ALL** of the unit requirements and will include:

- A video performance of a duration of 35 minutes, with a minimum of 2 people in the audience.
- The audience must be visible or clearly audible in the recording before, after and/or during the performance.
- The recording needs to be continuous with no excessive breaks between pieces and with no editing or post production or alteration permitted including pitch correction.

The following section provides examples of the kind of response anticipated:

A pass standard submission will demonstrate the following:

The performance demonstrated mostly secure control of repertoire including complex elements and reflecting a suitable theme. Structural features were clearly grasped but there may have been a little hesitation and/or some minor slips. A sound and secure understanding of interpretation, and a developing awareness of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.

In practice, this means that a pass standard submission will typically demonstrate:

- Control of repertoire: demonstrate secure control of the repertoire for most of the time, including the complex elements, and ensuring that the repertoire reflects a suitable theme.
- Structural features: demonstrate that you have clearly grasped the structural features of the repertoire and aim to minimise any hesitation or slips.
- Interpretation: display a sound and secure understanding of interpretation within the repertoire by portraying the context and subtleties of the performance, including elements of dynamics, articulation and expression.
- Performance engagement: engage the audience most of the time with use of stage presence and communication.

A merit standard submission will demonstrate the following:

The performance demonstrated secure and confident control of repertoire including complex elements and reflecting a suitable theme. Structural features were clearly and authoritatively grasped but there may have been some very minor hesitation and/or the occasional slip at times. A secure and confident understanding of interpretation, and a solid understanding of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.

In practice, this means that a merit standard submission will typically demonstrate:

- Control of repertoire: perform with ease, confidence and secure control, even in the more challenging parts of the material that include complex elements, and ensuring that the repertoire reflects a suitable theme.
- Structural features: demonstrate that you have clearly, confidently and authoritatively grasped the structural features of the repertoire, paying attention to the overall structure and form of the performance, and performing with minimal mistakes.
- Interpretation: display a secure and confident understanding of interpretation within the repertoire by portraying the context and subtleties of the performance with confidence, including elements of dynamics, phrasing, articulation and expression.
- Performance engagement: clearly engage the audience effectively with use of effective stage presence and communication.

A distinction standard submission will demonstrate the following:

The performance demonstrated highly assured control of repertoire including complex elements and reflecting a suitable theme. Structural features were secure and sustained throughout the performance. Any hesitation or slips were negligible and did not materially affect the success of the overall performance. A mature and confident understanding of interpretation, and a highly developed understanding of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.

In practice, this means that a distinction standard submission will typically demonstrate:

- Control of repertoire: perform with highly assured control, mastering the entire performance, including the more challenging parts of the material that include complex elements, and ensuring that the repertoire reflects a suitable theme.
- Structural features: demonstrate that you have clearly and confidently grasped the structural features of the entire repertoire, paying clear attention to the overall structure and form of the performance and performing with only minor mistakes that do not affect the impact of the performance.
- Interpretation: display a mature and confident understanding of interpretation within the repertoire by portraying the context and subtleties of the performance with consistent confidence and highly developed awareness, including elements of dynamics, phrasing, articulation and expression.
- Performance engagement: Clearly and confidently engage the audience effectively with use of effective stage presence and communication throughout your performance.

Choosing a theme

Candidates must build their programme around a theme to ensure that the performance given is cohesive and coherent. The choice of theme is down to the candidate, however this is likely to include a specific topic or idea which is explored within the performance material.

Examples of starting points for themes include (but are not limited to):

- Current affairs
- Political topics
- Relationships
- Statuses
- Genres or styles
- Historical events
- Artistic and creative movements
- Social constructs
- Inspiring individuals

Repertoire

Repertoire for this qualification must be approved in advance. The **theme** for the performance **must also be clearly stated** on the repertoire approval form.

All repertoire should be agreed **at least 6 weeks** in advance of the submission of the video with RSL, using the repertoire approval form, available here: <https://cloud.rslawards.com/secure/diplomas/downloadresources>

Chosen repertoire will be checked to ensure that it is comparable to the standard of the indicative repertoire lists and approval will be given once this check is complete.

The indicative repertoire can be viewed here: <https://www.rslawards.com/associate-award-performance/>. In addition to providing repertoire suggestions, these are also a useful resource to gain further insight into the level of skill required for these qualifications.

You must submit complete programmes and may send in only one complete programme for approval at any time. We are unable to consider approval of individual pieces.

If the proposed repertoire is agreed, RSL will issue a permission statement, which will **remain valid for twelve months**. You should submit the evidence for this unit within this timescale.

If the proposed repertoire is not agreed, RSL will contact you by email. You should then change piece(s) as necessary and re-submit the whole programme (or replace the whole programme with pieces from the relevant repertoire list).

In approving programme proposals, we do not consider either timing or balance. The approval is simply in terms of technical and/or musical difficulty, and it is the learner's responsibility to design an appropriate and balanced programme that complies with the stipulated timings.

Checklist for completing and uploading your submission

- Make sure you have the latest syllabus, available from the [RSL website](#) and that you have read and understood the whole unit description, particularly the learning outcomes, assessment evidence, and grading criteria as these explain what the assessors will be looking for when they mark your work.
- Ensure that you have considered all required content as set out in the unit description including audience and repertoire requirements.
- Ensure that you have taken account of any specified evidence limits. Note that you may exceed the stated duration by 10%. Any footage that exceeds this will not be considered by the assessor.
- Upload the signed repertoire approval form with your submission, within 12 months of approval.
- Ensure that the audience is clearly visible and/or audible in the footage. Guidance on filming your performance can be found [here](#).
- Upload work directly to the RSL Cloud site rather than linking to other locations such as Google-drives, Dropbox or similar.
- Upload video evidence as an .mp4.
- Name the video file with your full name and the unit number.
- Ensure video evidence is compressed to below 1GB. Guidance on how to do this can be found [here](#).

How to film your performance

Basic considerations

Ensure that there is enough battery charge and storage on the filming device for the full length of the performance. With many devices such as mobile phones it is useful to have a memory card installed if the device offers this as a feature to extend storage. The app used for making the recording would typically have its settings adjusted to set the card as the destination for recordings. In order to gauge the amount of storage required, a short 1-minute test recording could be made and then inspected for its size. This size would need to be multiplied with the number of minutes taken up by the assessment.

Lighting

If possible, use either good quality photographic or stage lighting, or film in a space with good natural light. Filming in very dark environments can affect the video quality and make it harder to clearly see candidates.

Tripods and camera mounts

Please use a tripod or another kind of camera mount in order to keep the footage steady. If you do need someone to hold a camera or phone, ensure you keep the video as stable as possible.

How to format video evidence

What frame size should I set my equipment to use?

Use either 720HD video (often referred to 720i or 720P) or 1080HD (FHD) to ensure the picture quality is good while keeping the file size manageable. While 4k video can look fantastic, the file sizes are large and can cause some compatibility issues too. The image below shows how each frame size relates to each other. This explains why 4k is so detailed, but why the file sizes are so big.

What frame rate should I use?

Set your frame rate to somewhere between 24 frames per second (24p) and 30 frames per second (30p) and 30fps. Typically this will be a choice between 25p and 30p, depending on the hardware. This will generate video that is smooth while keeping the file size manageable.

What video format should I use?

We recommend using MP4 (MPEG-4) format where possible, to ensure a good sound and image are retained, while keeping the file size manageable and minimising the risk of any compatibility issues. Please don't upload video files as .zip files as they can't be streamed on the RSL Administration Site and there is a greater risk of the file being corrupted.

What file sizes should my video evidence be

Please keep video evidence to 1gb or less. Guidance on compressing video files to reduce file size can be found in the next section: [How to encode video files](#).

Recommended audio/video devices and apps

Microphones for use with mobile phones (check for handset compatibility)

- Zoom iQ7
- Shure MV88
- RØDE iXY
- RØDE VideoMic

Video apps that allow manual control of audio

- FV-5 (supported Android devices)
- Filmic Pro (IOS devices and some supported Android devices)

Dedicated video cameras for recording high quality audio

- Zoom Q4
- Zoom Q2n

Any video evidence should be compressed to below 1GB. Please double check that your video evidence plays after compression and is not corrupted before uploading.

How to encode video files

As a video camera's main concern is video quality output, exported video files tend to be extremely large in size. To reduce this file size in order to successfully upload it to the RSL Site, you will need to encode the video. Using the instructions below, a 1GB video around 10 minutes in length can potentially be reduced in size by 90%. Generally, a high-quality video around 10 minutes in length will take 3 minutes to encode.

We recommend using the free video encoding software 'Handbrake' (available for both Windows & Mac) to complete this. This can be downloaded via: handbrake.fr

Steps to encoding a video:

1. Open Handbrake

2. Select the video file you wish to reduce in size

3. Select **Presets, General** and then **Very Fast 480p**

4. Set the encoded video to export as an MP4 file type

5. In the bottom right corner of the program, select **browse**

6. Select the folder you wish the encoded video to be exported to and enter a name for the video file

7. Select **Start Encode** at the top of the program

Once the video file has been encoded, please play it to ensure the file has not become corrupted and that the quality is of a sufficient standard.