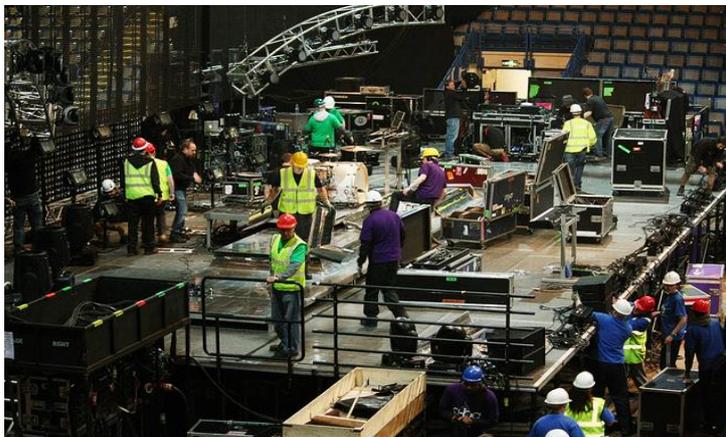


How to improve your grade from a Pass in the BTEC Music Award



In a performance assignment you need to keep detailed **diaries** to show your progress over time. The more **musical terms** you include the better and try to refer to specific sections of the music. Remember that 'I practiced this many times' doesn't give enough information. If instead you said 'I practiced the chorus (bar 20-34) slowly at first and focused on changing the chords smoothly. I found bar 28 really tricky and spent time just making sure that it was in tune and had the correct finger pattern for the chord. This got a lot easier because I adjusted my hand position to help me put my fingers in the correct shape. After this, I practiced this bar in a four bar phrase until I could play it without any hesitations. I then focused on the chorus, slowly at first, until I could play it confidently. Once I had improved this section, I gradually increase the tempo until it was up to speed with the rest of the song' is what will impress the examiner. You must also put two **targets** at the end of your diary which should be **SMART** ones. Make sure you refer to them in your next diary. It is ok to keep a target for more than one lesson if that is what you need to improve in your playing/performing skills.



Often in an assignment you can gain a pass by describing what a person does for a job. Here is a description of a roadie: *a roadie is a person employed by a touring band of musicians to set up and maintain equipment.* Now if you wrote this as part of your assignment, the maximum you could be awarded is a pass. To get a higher grade you should describe and explain what they do in detail but for the top marks, you should also **link it to other job roles** within the music industry. Here is an example of good practice.

Roadies, sometimes called technical support staff or crew, help to stage music concerts and other events. Their job is to set up before a gig, look after the instruments during the show and pack away afterwards. They should be physically fit, love music and technology and enjoy practical hands on tasks. A roadie needs to use their initiative to get things done and work well as part of team. Their role is really important because they have to get everything set up and working so that the artists can rehearse and complete a sound check before the event starts. A roadie needs a head for heights to hang lights and plug in cables above the stage and be able to work calmly under pressure to get the job done on time. Whilst no formal qualifications are needed, experience or qualifications in electronics, electrical work, sound production, music technology and lighting would help them greatly in this job. A roadie may be working alone or as part of a large crew (see the photograph above). They will need to lift and carry equipment and sets, drive to collect equipment, load and unload vans, trailers and tour buses. They many need to act as security for equipment and band members because if harm came to a band member or an instrument got damaged or stolen then this would effect the performance. They will be expected to set up and look after sound equipment, set up video equipment and screens, rig up wiring and lighting, set up pyrotechnics (fireworks) and laser displays, tune the instruments during the show. Some roadies are also responsible for tour management duties including booking travel and caterers or issuing back stage passes. In a big live concert event, roadies will work closely with the tour manager to ensure that all the equipment is moved from one venue to the next safely and on time. They will work with stage manager to make sure the equipment is in the right place at the right time, the lighting engineer to put up and focus lights and carry out repairs where needed. They will work with the sound engineer to set up the PA system, microphones and stands, amps for the guitarists and drum kit with microphone. They may need to set up chairs and music stands depending on the ensembles performing. The job of a roadie is hard work but also interesting and fun. It can involve lots of travelling especially if the band is on tour and needs a reliable and organised person to take on this role.

Commented [L1]: Merit – the student has explained what their role is not just described it.

Commented [L2]: Merit – they have explained why they need to do this part of the job.

Commented [L3]: Distinction - This section links the job of a roadie to other jobs roles and would gain you a distinction in the assessment criteria.

So the key to improving you grade is to

- 1. Explain the process and add the detail! How have you improved your playing? Why do they need to do that job?**
- 2. Set SMART targets so that they are Specific, Measured, Achievable, Results-focused, Time bound.**
- 3. Give examples and relate it to other jobs in the music industry.**