Professional Performance Diploma

LEVEL 4

SYLLABUS SPECIFICATION

RSL Awarding the **Contemporary Arts**

Contents

Introduction

The value of RSL qualifications

RSL advocates an open access approach to qualifications, providing a range of syllabuses, designed to accommodate a wide variety of candidates of different ages, experience and levels of achievement. RSL qualifications are listed on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) in England and are regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). In Northern Ireland they are regulated by the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), in Wales by Qualifications Wales and in Scotland by the Scottish Qualifications Authority Accreditation. RSL is committed to maintaining and improving its reputation for excellence by providing high quality education and training through its syllabuses, examinations, music and resources.

Purpose of this syllabus specification
This specification guide serves the following purposes:
- To provide regulatory information surrounding the qualification
- To provide an overview of qualification structure and content
- To provide content and assessment specification relevant to the qualification

Period of operation
This syllabus specification is valid from January 2025

This syllabus guide outlines the following qualifications:

RSL Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma

For detailed information on all aspects of RSL qualifications visit **rslawards.com**.

Qualification at a glance

Qualification title	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Credit Value
RSL Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma	54	900	90

Assessment

Form of assessment	All assessments are carried out by external examiners. Candidates are required to carry out a combination of practical tasks and underpinning theoretical assessments.
Unit format	Unit specifications contain the title, unit code, level, GLH and TQT, credit value, unit aim and content, learning outcomes (what has to be learnt), marking schemes (how the evidence of learning will be marked), and types of evidence required for the unit.
Assessment bands	Overall grades for the qualification are banded Pass, Merit, Distinction and Unclassified. In order to achieve the minimum of a Pass grade learners must achieve a minimum of 60% of the total available marks.
Evidence Limits	Evidence limits are set to give an indication of the typically required amount of information to achieve the learning outcomes. Candidates may exceed the limits by 20%; this applies to all written and audio/video evidence (see page 6 on combining Evidence Limits).
Quality Assurance	Objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

1. Qualification summary

1.1 Qualification aim and broad objectives

The aims of Professional Performance Diploma qualifications at levels 4 and 6 are:
- To provide progression from the graded examinations progressive mastery framework
- To provide opportunities for learners to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of performing and the process of developing material for performance.
- To provide progression within the Professional Diplomas for management and/or higher level technical and professional skills, knowledge and understanding

1.2 Qualification rationale

RSL's Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma Syllabus has been designed to build upon RSL's graded examinations in both Music and Performing Arts. It is aimed at candidates already working in the music and performing arts industry with the evidence required being based on each candidate's individual industry practice. This has resulted in an accessible and relevant qualification that offers the opportunity for learners to self-study and achieve the qualification at a pace that fits with their professional and other educational commitments.

RSL's Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma continues to provide a progressive mastery approach to music and performing arts and an enjoyable experience for all learners.

1.3 Certification title

The qualification will be shown on the certificate as follows:

RSL Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma

1.4 Post nominals

Achievement of this qualification entitles you to use the following post nominal letters after your name:

AssocRSL (Performing)

1.5 Entry requirements

We recommend that candidates **under the age of 18 contact RSL Awards** prior to registering.

There are no entry requirements for these qualifications. However, these qualifications are designed for those who have previously completed Grade 8, or equivalent, in their chosen discipline. While the prior completion of a Grade 8 qualification is not compulsory, candidates should already possess the skills, knowledge and experience in line with the standard of a relevant Grade 8 or Level 3 qualification before undertaking this qualification.

1.6 Candidate profile

Level 4 qualifications are broadly equivalent in terms of demand, but **not** in terms of size, to the first year of a university degree. These qualifications are designed for those who have previously completed Grade 8, or equivalent, in their chosen discipline. While the prior completion of a Grade 8 qualification is not compulsory, candidates should already possess the skills, knowledge and experience in line with the standard of a relevant Grade 8 or Level 3 qualification before undertaking this qualification.

Indicative repertoire lists are available for a range of disciplines. 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.

2. Unit summary

2.1 Unit Overview

Code	Unit title	GLH	TQT	Credit Value
PPD401	**Advanced Repertoire and Technical Skills**	54	900	90

3. Assessment information

3.1 Assessment methodology

The Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma is assessed either recorded or live. The details regarding these are below.

Recorded assessment
Candidates must submit all assessment evidence digitally.

Live assessment
Candidates must submit assessment evidence for LO1 and LO3 digitally.
Assessment for LO2 (performance) will be conducted live either via live stream or in person by an RSL Examiner.

To arrange a live assessment (either live stream or in person), you must contact RSL a minimum of 6 months in advance to discuss the minimum number of candidates required for an examiner visit.

All assessment of these qualifications is external and is undertaken by RSL Examiners.

3.2 Qualification grade

Element	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Planning	12 – 14 out of 20	15 – 17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Technical Skills	12 – 14 out of 20	15 – 17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Consistency	12 – 14 out of 20	15 – 17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Interpretative Skills	12 – 14 out of 20	15 – 17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Evaluation	12 – 14 out of 20	15 – 17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Total Marks	60%+	75%+	90%+

Specific elements may not meet the 60% threshold but in order to achieve the minimum of a Pass grade for the qualification learners must achieve a minimum of 60% of the total available marks for the qualification as a whole.

3.3 Retaking assessments

On receipt of summative assessment results, learners are permitted one further attempt (at an additional charge). Learners must resit the entire unit and this must be completed within 15 months of the original date of registration for the qualification. This is uncapped and is available to any learner, regardless of the original mark awarded. We recommend that applications to retake assessments are made within two weeks of receipt of original marks as this ensures that retakes are completed while the work is still familiar to the learner. Learners have three months to complete and submit any work from the point of application for a retake.

Following the completion of a resit, any learners who wish to retake the entire qualification must re-register for the qualification and submit entirely new work.

3.4 Guide to referencing

It is advised that all referencing utilises the Harvard style: https://www.mendeley.com/guides/harvard-citation-guide

3.5 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the attempt to use the ideas or words of another and pass them off as one's own, or present those ideas or words as new and original, without appropriately crediting the source.

All candidates must understand that their work needs to be authentic, and that they must reference any research they have undertaken, or any wording, thoughts or ideas which are taken from another source.

RSL will check submissions for plagiarism and where this is detected, relevant learning outcomes will be assessed as Unclassified. In addition, plagiarism will be considered malpractice which will be investigated by RSL and may be subject to sanctions.

3.6 Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is not encouraged, however should AI platforms or tools be used then this must be fully evidenced. Evidence must include the prompts used, a full indication of how the AI responses have been utilised and any use of AI must be fully referenced within the work.

3.7 Evidence limits

Evidence limits may be observed individually or combined. For example, a submission could consist of 1500 words or 10 minutes of audio/visual, or alternatively, 750 words and 5 minutes of audio/visual. Combined limits can be proportioned in any way.

The required word count is for the main text of the written evidence only and does not include appendices and tables.

3.8 Quality assurance

Objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

All RSL qualifications are standardised in accordance with the processes and procedures laid down by RSL

4. Candidate Access and Registration

4.1 Access and registration

This qualification will:
- Be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- Be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- Offer equal opportunities for all wishing to access the qualification

- We recommend that candidates **under the age of 18 contact RSL Awards** prior to registering

RSL publishes information about the requirements and demands of the qualification.

All evidence is submitted online for external assessment by RSL by individual candidates (with the exception of live assessment for LO2). Each learner will have their own personal log-in and password through which all submissions will be made and through which marks will be awarded.

RSL does not offer a course of study leading to the award of these qualifications or any formative guidance throughout; it assesses submissions from learners who have studied and prepared externally. **Where teachers and centres are mentoring learners, RSL has no quality assurance of these teachers and centres and, as such, has no liability for provision**.

Where bulk uploads of registrations are made by centres, the same rules apply as above and RSL's communication will remain directly with the individual learner.

Candidates should complete the qualification in 1 year from the date of registration. Extensions to this time can be applied for by directly contacting RSL awards at info@rslawards.com.

4.2 Accessing data and information

Learners will be able to review the progress of their study through the learner pages. These are learner specific and can be accessed through a personal password system, which will allow a learner to view their own records of registration and achievement but not those of any other learner.

4.3 Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The Level 4 Professional Performance Diploma contains assessment outcomes at Level 4 which is broadly equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree. Learners will need to ensure that they can access the appropriate training or learning opportunities to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding required for this level.

It is recommended that learners contact a suitable trainer or mentor who will be able to provide them with opportunities for learning and practical application of skills.

5. Further Information and Contact

5.1 Repertoire approval

Repertoire must be approved in advance .

All repertoire should be agreed at least 6 weeks in advance of the submission of the video/live assessment with RSL, using the repertoire approval form. The approval form can be viewed in the downloadable resources for the qualification, which can be found on your RSL account after registration, or by signing into your account and following the link below:
https://cloud.rslawards.com/secure/diplomas/download-resources

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.

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. RSL will aim to approve programmes within 15 working days. If RSL is unable to approve programmes within this time you will be notified accordingly.

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 the learner by email. The learner 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.

RSL cannot accept responsibility if you submit evidence for this unit before requesting approval for your programme. RSL's decision on approval of any item or programme is final.

The indicative repertoire can be downloaded here: https://www.rslawards.com/level-4-professional-diploma/

5.2 International learners

Information and guidance on using a translator or interpreter is available at: https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/

5.3 Complaints and appeals

All procedures related to complaints and appeals can be found on the RSL website www.rslawards.com

5.4 Equal opportunities

RSL's Equal Opportunities policy can be found on the RSL website www.rslawards.com

5.5 Contact for help and support

All email correspondence about this qualification should be directed to:
info@rslawards.com

RSL
Harlequin House
7 High Street
Teddington
Middlesex
TW11 8EE

rslawards.com
+44 (0)345 460 4747

Unit Specification

Advanced Repertoire and Technical Skills

Unit code: PPD401
Level 4
TQT: 900
GLH: 54

Unit aim

This unit follows the progressive mastery framework of graded examinations at Grades 1-8 and vocational graded examinations in dance at Intermediate and Advanced Foundation. The aim of this unit is to further develop advanced technical skills beyond the standard required for Grade 8/Advanced Foundation and present these through a practical performance.

Unit Content

What are advanced technical skills?
At Level 4, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to identify, adapt and use appropriate skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined. In the context of this unit this means that candidates should select performance material that includes complex elements, which are more advanced than those normally demonstrated for Grade 8, Intermediate or Advanced Foundation, and their performance will need to clearly meet the demands of such repertoire.

For further guidance, please see the indicative repertoire list for your chosen discipline, available at: https://www.rslawards.com/level-4-professional-diploma/

Broadly speaking, these skills include:
- The ability to show technical mastery and personal style in performance
- The use of an extensive vocabulary of musical skills and/or dance movements and/or acting skills
- Assured musicality and/or artistry
- The ability to demonstrate a performance as a coherent entity in a confident and assured manner through:
    - Integrating personal knowledge and experience with the repertoire required in your chosen discipline/instrument
    - Appropriate subtleties of performance
    - Evidence of varied and challenging work being undertaken
    - The ability to communicate subtleties of interpretation effectively
    - The ability to interpret the repertoire for your chosen discipline/instrument with a developing sense of individuality and style
- An adaptable, self-confident approach to performance skills

The content of the performance is dictated by the complexity of the repertoire chosen for an individual discipline/instrument. You may **choose one** of the following disciplines/instruments which is offered by RSL:
Music – Any discipline that RSL currently offers at Grade 8.
Dance – Street and Commercial, Jazz.
Performing Arts – Musical Theatre (Acting and/or Singing and/or Dancing)/Acting disciplines

Alternatively, you may also choose from one of the following dance disciplines that is not currently offered by RSL: **Ballet, Tap, Modern, Contemporary and Lyrical.** Please note that if you choose one of these disciplines you must ensure that you have sufficient knowledge and technical proficiency beyond the requirements of Grade 8, Intermediate, or Advanced Foundation. This is necessary to demonstrate that the Level 4 performance includes complex elements that surpass the technical expectations typically seen at these grades.

You will need to specify which discipline you will be demonstrating as part of your rationale for the choice of repertoire.

You will be expected to perform a programme of own choice pieces with a duration of **30 minutes**.

Live performance to an audience

The pieces chosen for this unit can be performed either as solo or accompanied. The accompaniment can be live or via a backing track. If a backing track is used, another person can be present to operate any technical equipment.

The audience for the performance should be **a minimum of ten people** who are at the performance for the purpose of viewing it and should be conducted in an **appropriate performance space.** The audience should not include others involved in the production of the performance, including the teacher/tutor.

Choosing appropriate repertoire

You should compile/create/choreograph and perform a varied and contrasting programme around a theme of your own choosing. The programme should be of the required duration and result in a balanced performance. Content can be drawn from the indicative repertoire lists; however this is not a requirement. Innovative and creative approaches to programme building, which reflect the candidate's strengths and interests as a performer, are encouraged; this may include for example repertoire composed or created by the candidate, and/or repertoire which requires significant improvised elements. Programmes which are varied in terms of style, mood, genre, technique etc. are more likely to fulfil the assessment criteria.

Please note that repertoire chosen should be suitable for a particular discipline or instrument and that a performance on multiple instruments or disciplines is not appropriate for this unit.

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. Suggestions for themes and guidance on choosing a theme can be found in the downloadable resources for the qualification, which can be found on your RSL account after registration, or by signing into your account and following the link below:
https://cloud.rslawards.com/secure/diplomas/download-resources

Approval of repertoire

Repertoire for this unit must be approved prior to submission.

Please see page 8 of this specification for information about RSL's process for the approval of repertoire.

Indicative repertoire lists are available for a range of disciplines. 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.

Use of notes during the performance

You may refer to choreographic/musical/performance notes during the performance if you wish. These may include prompts or notes regarding the set list or programme. Musicians may perform using scores, lead sheets and/or charts. However, these must not interfere with the performance or the level of audience engagement, and no additional credit will be given in the assessment for the use (or non-use) of such material.

Learning outcomes

Through completion of this unit, you will:

1. Plan a performance of advanced technical skills
2. Demonstrate an advanced level of technical and interpretative skill through performance
3. Evaluate the performance

Assessment Evidence

This unit will be assessed through the demonstration of a performance.

- **Live** assessments must be conducted in front of a **live audience (minimum of ten people)** in an **appropriate performance space**. The performance must last **30 minutes**.

- **Recorded** assessments require the **submission of a video** of the **continuous performance** to a **live audience (minimum of ten people)** in an **appropriate performance space**, lasting **30 minutes**

The recording needs to be continuous with **no editing** or **post-production** or **alteration** permitted, including pitch correction.

The audience must be visible or clearly audible in the recording/live stream before, after and/or during the performance.

All candidates must also **digitally submit**:
- Programme notes for your performance. This should include:
  - The theme of the performance
  - A brief description of the pieces chosen
  - A rationale for the pieces chosen, including the technical skills to be demonstrated and how they relate to the theme
- An evaluation of your performance. This should include:
  - Identification of own technical strengths and areas for development with reference to specific elements of the performance
  - An evaluation of the success and impact of the overall performance

Evidence may be presented as an essay, blog, vlog, podcast or filmed presentation. Total written evidence must not exceed 1500 words. Total audio/visual evidence must not exceed 10 minutes.

The required word count is for the main text of the written evidence only and does not include appendices and tables.

Marking Schemes

Learning Outcome 1: Plan a performance of advanced technical skills

Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	18 - 20	15 - 17	12 - 14	6 - 11	0 - 5
	You showed a comprehensive and convincing knowledge and understanding of the context and complexity of the repertoire chosen, giving a detailed and well thought through explanation of the rationale and theme for the performance.	You showed a thorough and confident knowledge and understanding of the context and complexity of the repertoire chosen, giving a clear and thorough explanation of the rationale and theme for the performance.	You showed knowledge and a broadly confident understanding of the context and complexity of the repertoire chosen, giving a clear explanation of the rationale and theme for the performance.	You showed limited and/ or sometimes inaccurate knowledge and understanding of the context and complexity of the repertoire chosen, giving limited explanation of the rational and theme for the performance.	No attempt or incomplete planning.

Learning Outcome 2: Demonstrate an advanced level of technical and interpretative skill through performance

Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	18 - 20	15 - 17	12 - 14	6 - 11	0 - 5
Technical Skills	The performance demonstrated highly assured control of repertoire including complex elements.	The performance demonstrated secure and confident control of repertoire including complex elements.	The performance demonstrated mostly secure control of repertoire including complex elements.	The performance demonstrated limited control of repertoire.	No attempt or incomplete performance.
Consistency	Structural features were authoritatively grasped and sustained throughout the performance. Any hesitation or slips were negligible and did not materially affect the success of the overall performance.	Structural features were clearly and securely grasped but there may have been some very minor hesitation and/or the occasional slip at times.	Structural features were clearly grasped but there may have been a little hesitation and/or some minor slips.	Grasp of structural features was limited.	No attempt or incomplete performance.
Interpretative Skills	A mature and confident understanding of interpretation, and a highly developed understanding of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.	A secure and confident understanding of interpretation, and a solid understanding of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.	A sound understanding of interpretation, and a developing awareness of the subtleties of performance and engagement with the audience, were demonstrated.	Understanding of interpretation was limited.	No attempt or incomplete performance.

Learning Outcome 3: Evaluate the performance

Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	**18 – 20**	**15 – 17**	**12 – 14**	**6 – 11**	**0 – 5**
	You presented a comprehensive evaluation of the performance, your technical strengths and areas for development. You discussed a wide range of specific elements of the performance and perceptively considered of the success and impact of the overall performance.	You presented a detailed and thoughtful evaluation of the performance, your technical strengths and areas for development. You discussed a range of specific elements of the performance and effectively considered the success and impact of the overall performance.	You provided a relevant and clear evaluation of the performance, your technical strengths and areas for development. You discussed specific elements of the performance and considered the success and impact of the overall performance.	Evaluation of the performance was limited.	No attempt or incomplete evaluation.