

RUTHERFORD C.
A LEVEL COMMITTEE
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Rutherford Rugby Club
30 Avenue Road
Rutherford
AB1 2CD

A Candidate
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 Alan B
 Katy M
 Nazeem P
 Susan G
 Jenny K
 Mike S



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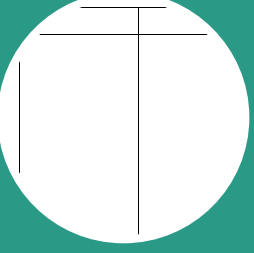
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RUTHERFORD C.
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PROBLEM SOLVING
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First published in 2004

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Foreword

Key skills are for everyone, from learners in the workplace, colleges and schools to chief executives in large companies. They are the skills most commonly needed for success in education, training, work and life in general.

The six key skills are:

- application of number
- communication
- improving own learning and performance
- information and communication technology
- problem solving
- working with others.

In developing key skills, people improve the quality of their learning as well as their performance in the world of work.

When QCA completed its review of the key skills qualifications and units, it was clear that there was a need for examples of key skills portfolios. We produced example portfolios in application of number, communication and information technology earlier in 2004. We have now produced example portfolios for improving own learning and performance, problem solving and working with others at levels 1 to 3.

The example portfolios provide practical guidance on organising and referencing portfolio evidence, and on the kind and amount of evidence required. They are intended, along with the 2004 key skills standards and guidance, to help assessors interpret the key skills. They are based on the 2004 key skills standards and guidance and show real work from real candidates. Their production is supported by the key skills awarding bodies.



Ken Boston AO
Chief Executive, QCA

Overview

The key skills awarding bodies and the regulatory authorities (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA) have produced this example portfolio as a result of a collaborative project. The purpose of the project was to produce a set of portfolios that would give practitioners a clear understanding of the requirements for key skills portfolios.

Portfolios for each of the key skills of application of number, communication and information technology were published earlier in 2004. There are now portfolios for each of the other key skills:

- improving own learning and performance, levels 1 to 3
- problem solving, levels 1 to 3
- working with others, levels 1 to 3.

The project group selected a range of learning and vocational contexts to show the application of skills across these nine portfolios. While a specific context may not be directly relevant to all sectors, the principles of approach, recording and assessment apply, and should prove useful to all.

Key skills chief moderators and external verifiers for the awarding bodies have met and scrutinised the portfolios. They agree that the portfolios meet the specifications for the key skills qualifications. QCA chaired and facilitated the meetings.

These portfolios went through an internal assessment by a centre and then an external verification/moderation process by the centre's awarding body. Each of them met the standard and received a pass. They should be viewed as such, not as perfect examples of work.

You will see that improvements could be made to the portfolios. For example, evidence could be more effectively or logically presented. However, room for improvement is to be expected: candidates develop skills over time, reflecting and progressing as they do so. Key skills are free-standing qualifications open to everyone at any age. This means that portfolios of evidence are created in a range of academic, occupational and vocational contexts.

Also included in the portfolios are:

- record sheets that make the feedback and assessment decisions clear
- commentaries that outline some of the issues and describe the context in which the candidates gathered the evidence.

Some of these portfolios have been created from more than one portfolio. Some have been reworked to avoid 'benefit of the doubt' situations. The record sheets have been rewritten to make decisions clearer to the reader. During the copying process, some loss of clarity may have occurred, especially in images that were originally in colour.

These example portfolios should be read with reference to the 2004 key skills standards and guidance, which provides advice and guidance on the assessment of key skills. It should also be noted that, while a portfolio may meet the standard for a specific key skill, it might not reflect the equivalent standard in another key skill.

QCA and the key skills chief moderators and external verifiers would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of centres and students in the production of these materials.

Commentary

The problem

The candidate was asked to organise the college's Christmas Party for students in such a way that an increased amount of money was raised for charity without increasing the price of the tickets. He quickly realised that a level 3 problem frequently has a number of sub-problems to be solved before overall success can be achieved.

The portfolio

The portfolio has been generated by an A level science student. The evidence checklist shows how the standards have been met, and has been completed by the candidate. It has been countersigned by the assessor as being an accurate interpretation of the evidence.

There are four other assessment records that have been produced by the assessor. They provide useful comments relating to the development of the portfolio and associated formative assessment dates. This number of sheets has not been imposed by an awarding body and is not a requirement for achievement. It does, however, provide clear and complete assessment matched to assessment criteria.

The assessor has signed and dated minutes of meetings as a means of authentication but this is not necessary in this case because it is clear that she was at the meetings as was the candidate. The minutes were, however, also being used as evidence by other candidates – hence the countersigning. The assessor used her attendance at a meeting to gather naturally occurring evidence of the candidate's performance via observation; there was no need to set up a separate assessment session for this purpose.

The witness testimony provided is, once again, an example of effective use of naturally occurring evidence, which authenticates the candidate's claim; the assessor had routinely raised queries and the Rugby Club Chairman responded.

The candidate's plan shows where reviews and amendments were necessary and his ongoing log provides evidence of how the problem was solved and covers some of the knowledge and understanding required in Part A. The questions asked by the assessor complete the knowledge and understanding requirements.

The candidate's personal report is reflective and evaluative and serves to highlight the fact that this is a level 3 award where a great deal of autonomy is required. The tutor's original memo to the candidate gives the clear brief for the candidate's need to solve a problem. The candidate was discouraged from 'smartening up' the jottings made when brainstorming the ways forward and evaluating what the costs and benefits were; the rough notes are seen as naturally occurring evidence and need no further work on them.

PS3.1

The candidate has demonstrated an understanding of the problem by preparing and reviewing his plan alongside his log of activities. He also identifies what the costs and benefits are of following different ways of solving the problem.

PS3.2

The candidate's plan and log show how he has enlisted the support of his assessor and fellow students to help him to solve his problem. Minutes of meetings also confirm this.

PS3.3

Feedback from other people has been used by the candidate to evaluate whether the problem was solved satisfactorily and a full personal report shows an analysis of his own strengths and weaknesses in solving problems.

**PROBLEM SOLVING LEVEL 3
ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

<p>You must: PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.</p>	<p>PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.</p>	<p>PS3.3 Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.</p>
<p>Your evidence must show you can: 3.1.1 Identify, analyse and accurately describe the problem, and agree with others how you will know it has been solved; and 3.1.2 select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problem; and 3.1.3 compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and 3.2.2 put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and 3.2.3 check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved; and 3.3.2 describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem; and 3.3.3 review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.</p>

LOCATION OF EVIDENCE

Page	List items of evidence and where they are located in the portfolio	PS3.1			PS3.2			PS3.3		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
2	Assessor summative record	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3-4	Staff memo from A Tutor with notes	x	x	x						
5	Cost/benefits analysis	x	x	x						
6	Christmas Party 2003 plan				x		x	x		
7	Costs/benefits of using the Rugby Club			x						
8-9	Christmas Party log					x				
10-11	Minutes of meeting held on 3/11/03				x	x	x			
12	Observation and feedback record	x			x	x				
13	Letter to A N Assessor from Rugby Club			x		x				
14-15	Minutes of meeting held on 24/11/03				x	x	x			
16	Feedback form							x		
17-18	Review of Christmas Party					x	x	x	x	x
19	Questions answered by A Candidate		x						x	x
20	Feedback from A N Assessor							x	x	x

Assessor Declaration: I confirm that the details above are correct and that the evidence submitted is the candidate's own work and the candidate meets all the requirements for certification of this key skill.

Assessor Name: A. N. Assessor
 Assessor Signature: A. N. Assessor
 Date: 9/1/04

Candidate Name: A. Candidate
 Candidate Signature: A. Candidate
 Date: 9/1/04

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.1** Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.
- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.
- PS3.3** Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

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- 3.3.3** review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.

PROBLEM SOLVING LEVEL 3

Criteria	Assessment Method	Comments	Formative assessment dates
<p>PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.</p> <p>3.1.1. Identify, analyse and accurately describe the problem, and agree with others how you will know it has been solved.</p> <p>3.1.2. Select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problem.</p> <p>3.1.3. Compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use.</p>	<p>Obs Product</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>	<p>A Candidate considered a variety of methods before agreeing to work with the A Level committee. He first tried simply to copy what had been done previously and realised this would not work. Because he was determined to try and work alone, he tried brainstorming on his own plus coming up with lists of pros and cons. He then tried brainstorming techniques with a group of his A Level peers and realised this was a more productive exercise. He was careful to work out the costs and benefits of choosing that method and reported to me on his decisions. He worked well with the A Level Committee and got their full support.</p>	<p>27/10/03</p> <p>27/10/03</p> <p>27/10/03</p>
<p>PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.</p> <p>3.2.1 Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person.</p> <p>3.2.2 Put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem.</p> <p>3.2.3 Check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.</p>	<p>Product WT</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>	<p>Rugby Club agreed on by everyone concerned and I gave the approval to go ahead. A Level Committee and A Candidate worked together well. Meetings and reporting in used to further progress. Plan revised where necessary.</p>	<p>3/11/03</p> <p>24/11/03</p> <p>3/11/03</p> <p>24/11/03</p> <p>15/12/03</p>
<p>PS3.3 Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.</p> <p>3.3.1 Apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved.</p> <p>3.3.2 Describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem.</p> <p>3.3.3 Review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.</p>	<p>Product</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>	<p>A Candidate used feedback sheets from students attending the party plus his own reflection and that of the A Level Committee. He has some sensible recommendations for future events and has acknowledged where his weaknesses lie.</p>	<p>7/1/04</p> <p>7/1/04</p> <p>7/1/04</p>

Assessor Name: *A. N. Ashworth* Assessor Signature: *A. N. Ashworth* Date: *9/1/04*
 Candidate Name: *A. Candidate* Candidate Signature: *A. Candidate* Date: *9/1/04*

You must:

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RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

STAFF MEMO

From A Tutor

Date 7 October 2003

To A Candidate

A LEVEL CHRISTMAS PARTY 19 December 2003

Thanks for chairing last week's A Level Committee - you worked wonders in getting Tony to get the minutes out so quickly. The Principal is delighted that the Committee is extending an invitation to the A Level students and staff from Clarence High School. They will be moving in here as soon as the new building is complete so it will be an ideal introduction to their new home. The Principal pointed out that the minutes did not mention raising funds for the Mayor's Christmas appeal and you will need to think about that. I usually aim to raise the ticket price every other year but we are expected to increase the amount we raise for the appeal every year.

The bad news is that I am, unfortunately, going into hospital next Monday for an operation on my knee and I will not be back in college until after Christmas. I will not be able to arrange the Christmas Party as I usually do so it has been suggested that you should take on this job as part of your key skills programme - problem solving comes to mind since it has always been a headache for me! A N Assessor is available to help you with anything - for example she will let you look at the files in my office so that you can see how I have usually tackled things. She will also act as your assessor. Good luck!

Method 1
Do everything myself - can keep full control - A level committee tends to mess about and that wastes time - after all they have never been involved before apart from helping put up decorations
Can follow A Tutor's plan - our hold - it's dead easy - A N Assessor will help.

Method 2
Free and low session by myself - brainstorm with group ruled this out anyway.
Better still involve A level committee and A level students who produce the letter and we'll sell even more tickets

Method 3
Work with A level committee but it will mean keeping careful control - perhaps more ideas on things coming out - if they are involved we will sell more tickets.

Organise fundraising Christmas Party.
Checked PLE - can't raise ticket price this year - must make more than £800 raised last year for the appeal.

In all consider this problem solved if the party ever does go ahead and we make some money!

You must:

PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.

Your evidence must show you can:

3.1.2 Select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problem; and

3.1.3 compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use.

Results of individual and group brainstorm/discussions etc

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Method 1	A Tutor's plan very clear for use of our hall and working with NUS Students can keep very tight control of everything at my pace - AN Assessor will help office staff will probably help me.	Have a lot of coursework for the next six weeks or so AN Assessor might not have much free time - she's taking some of A tutor's classes A level groups might not help with decorating and perhaps won't buy tickets if they are not involved was hoping to get working with others but of work done this term.
Method 2	A level committee does come up with a lot of good ideas although it takes them ages because they waste time We would sell more tickets They might know out of the work they do which will make them work harder They would help with the decorations and other jobs that need doing would be good on my UCAS form	would have to keep control of the A level committee and stop them talking on - although they do come up with some ideas, it takes them ages because they waste time Some people will do things and then they either forget or don't do them.
Method 3	NUS group might help start the A level committee up - they are at work in hotels etc and we've always told "they are a much more active group than you" By being involved they might do more with the buffet and have ideas for decorations. They might be glad to get something towards towards their key skills They might have a better idea of costs if A Tutor's figures need to be adjusted	Sometimes if a working group is too big less gets done The NUS Tutors might not be too happy because the NUS group is busy in the run-up to Christmas Some of them are older than we are and might think it's not for them so we would sell as many tickets. They tend not to be uncollegiate a lot so they don't hang around with the rest of us.

You must:

- PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.1.1 Identify, analyse and accurately describe the problem, and agree with others how you will know it has been solved; and
- 3.1.2 select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problem; and
- 3.1.3 compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Last year's tickets sold at £15 each and we can get 150 people in our hall but we only sold 135 tickets

Total raised last year on tickets at £15	£1950
Catering raised at £7 per ticket	£945
Left us with	£1005
Cost of soft drink from wholesalers	£100
Decorations for the hall	£50
Cost of printing tickets and posters	£20
Raffle tickets cost	£40
Left us with	£795
Spent on buying raffle prizes	£500

(extra to those supplied by Chambers of Commerce)

£295 was left as a float for extras like crisps, nuts etc that were in bowls around the room and we had to bring the car later £50 for being on duty for the evening. We bought a big box of chocolates and some wine out of it for the cleaners as well. The rest started off the charity pot.

METHOD CHOSEN

I would have liked to go with option 2 but the NUB Tutors were not happy because their students come in on day release only and they don't have the time to come to committee meetings. As well as that, at Christmas they do extra work in the cafes and restaurants so they probably wouldn't buy the tickets. They could, however, still produce the buffet if we wished though even the catering tutor was pulling a face about it and saying the cost per head would be dearer.

When I looked at it carefully, Method 1 really wouldn't work because I have so much coursework - and others have. If we share things out between us and follow A Tutor's plan it should be a lot less work and by using our hall everything is on the spot. I really will need help as there is so much to do. Although A Tutor's file says he does it on his own I think we must get other members of staff to help.

Method 3 is the best option but it means that I will have to check up to see that everyone does things to targets. A N Assessor agrees with me and called the group together to talk to them about it. They have agreed to help.

COSTS/BENEFITS

Now that I have checked last year's costs I know we are going to have a hard time because we can't raise the ticket price this year. Will put it to the committee that we could charge for the soft drinks instead of them being part of the ticket price - we can charge less than the cans cost in the shops. We can also ask other people to give raffle prizes instead of spending quite so much on buying them. We could see if we could all borrow decorations from home.

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.
- PS3.3** Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.1** Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary; and
- 3.3.1** apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved.

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2003

PLAN

TASK	TARGET DATE	REVIEW
Book college hall for party on 19/12	11/10/03	8/10/03 Have to amend – building work in hall – now for end October. Booked on 22/10/03 at Rugby Club
Posters and tickets to be out	End October	30/10/03 Changed to 10/11 because of above problems
Design form to keep track of ticket sales and raffle sales	5/11/03 (achieved)	
Ticket sales to start	7/11/03 (achieved)	
Raffle sales to start	First week December. Actually started on 14/11/03 thanks to A N Assessor	
Buckets for donations and Santa hats	15/12/03 – achieved	15/12/03 Reminded need a feedback form
Raffle prizes to be delivered to Rugby Club	16/11/03 – achieved – A N Assessor booked van	
Raffle prizes arranged, room checked, everything ready for the evening	17/12/03 by 4 pm. Achieved with A Level Committee members' help	
Room cleared of debris, chairs put back etc	18/12/03 by 2 am. Completed by 1.30 pm with A Level Committee members' help	19/12/03 Definitely could not have achieved this without help and it did save money on cleaners
Evidence to be put together with log, statement etc	7/1/04 Handed in to A N Assessor at lunchtime on 7/1/04	20/12/03 Read feedback forms before completing evidence

Confirmed targets met AN ASSessor

You must:

- PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.1.3 Compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use.

COST / BENEFITS OF USING THE RUGBY CLUB

CAN ONLY SELL 120 TICKETS - HEALTH AND SAFETY PROBLEM

120 tickets x £15 will raise £1800 which is less than last year
The £100 we spent on soft drinks last year will have to pay the Rugby Club for this year but that will cover the cost of using the room
People will drink their own drinks from the bar and we will get a percentage of that
We won't need to spend anything on crisps, nuts and things like that and we will save the £50 we gave to the caretaker and the money we spent on wine and chocolates (would be a good idea to spend a small amount on flowers for AN Assessor who has been very helpful)
Room will already be decorated - no need to spend £50 or borrow from home.
Would like to think we could cut the amount spent on buying raffle prizes to £400 or less this year - but we must have good prizes otherwise tickets won't sell. A messy few soft toys would look sick against the prizes the local Chamber of Commerce gives and we usually pay for a weekend away for 2 people.
Need to think about that one

Think we can keep the cost of ticket at £15!

Level 3

You must:

PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

3.2.2 Put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem.

CHRISTMAS PARTY 19 DECEMBER 2003 – changed to 17 December 2003

LOG

10/10/03	Appointment with A N Assessor to look at the files – easiest thing is to hold the party in our hall – just copy what A Tutor did last year.
13/10/03	Emergency meeting of A Level Committee ready for the meeting on 17/10/03. Cannot use our hall because of the building work – no room for buffet to be set up. Means we will have to think about another venue and outside caterers rather than using the NVQ Catering students and this adds to the cost of tickets. That might mean we don't get the numbers we need plus we are not really supposed to increase the ticket price.
17/10/03	Meeting today – A N Assessor sat in to listen. It was agreed that we go to look at Clarence High School hall – A N Assessor would arrange with the Head there. As an alternative Jenny said she could ask her dad about the Rugby Club as he's the Chairman there. Jenny, Tony and me will go to Clarence on 21 October. We cannot get anything started until we have a venue – by this time last year A Tutor had posters out.
21/10/03	Clarence High School hall won't do. The school closes next June so everything looks a bit grim and shabby. Even with a lot of decorations, it would look bad and people wouldn't want to come. Plus we won't have a lot of time to do all the decorating with all our coursework. Jenny will try and find out from her dad tonight and let us know tomorrow. We will meet in A N Assessor's office at 1 pm so that she can check on what we are doing.
22/10/03	Jenny's dad said that we could have the use of the Rugby Club if we are prepared to change the date to 17 December when the main function room is not in use. Bonus is that the room would already be decorated and they have their own DJ. Downside is that we have to use their caterers and the A Level Media Studies band won't be able to play. After a lot of argy bargy, everyone agreed to change the date and Jenny will ask her dad if the band can have one slot. A N Assessor said we now had her permission to go ahead. Alan from A Level Art Group will now get his group to design the posters (Jenny to let Alan know by 24/10/03 so that we can say whether the band is performing). Agreed they have to be out week beginning 10/11/03. Volunteers agreed to take them out to shops, libraries etc in the area and one up to Clarence. No time for anything else because we had classes – meet again on 3/11/03.
3/11/03	Band can perform which means we'll sell more tickets and Alan had a draft poster which we all liked so I will help him with the printing and then they can go out (see minutes for rest of discussions).
6/11/03	Reported in to A N Assessor. All posters out and invitation to Clarence tutors sent. Tony's group have now produced 150 tickets to sell at £15 each and the ticket office will open tomorrow. (Have told Tony we cannot sell more than 120 because of health, safety and security at the Rugby Club. A N Assessor will keep the spare 30 tickets to make sure.) Will see A N Assessor at 4.30 every day to hand over the day's takings and she will countersign before we put in the college safe. We did want to sell tickets during the evenings but A N Assessor refused permission – felt she could not guarantee security if she was not on the premises.

Level 3

You must:

PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

3.2.2 Put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem.

13/11/03	A N Assessor has now handed over the specially printed raffle tickets to me and we can start to sell these. In addition to the prizes donated by the Chamber of Commerce, each A Level Tutor Group, GNVQ groups and NVQ groups have donated prizes. We have the usual soft toys, bottles of wine, stationery sets, cinema tokens and the A Level Tutors have donated a Christmas hamper but we also have a huge bottle of whisky, a 3-day break in New York for 2 people and a lunch trip on the Orient Express. These should really boost ticket sales.
12/12/03	All tickets have been sold. A N Assessor and I handed over the cheque to Jenny's dad in full payment for the party. I asked him whether or not the Media Studies band would be allowed to play downstairs in the porch as people were arriving. He said he could not see anything wrong with that as long as they kept to their one hour in the function room.
21/11/03	Reported to A N Assessor. She was pleased that Jenny's dad had agreed that the Media Studies band could play in the porch for as long as they liked when people were coming in. This is really good because people will come to listen and we could dance in the car park.
24/11/03	A Level Committee meeting in A N Assessor's office (see minutes). Think the idea of buckets for collecting extra donations is great.
15/12/03	Final Christmas Party Committee meeting – very short so we agreed no minutes. We have done well with selling raffle tickets and we are hoping to beat last year's figure of £800 for the Mayor's appeal, especially if the buckets get filled. We will be at the Rugby Club from 9.30 am on the 17 th to get everything ready. A N Assessor has agreed to bring down the prizes to the club on the 16 th in the college van. Tony and I will go with her to hand them over for safe keeping.
17/12/03	Worked hard all day to get everything ready. Jenny's dad had invited the press in to take pictures (I realised I should have done that). I have made arrangements, though, to hand over the proceeds of the raffle to the Mayor on the 19 th before we break up. We will go to the Town Hall at 2 pm. Now ready to party!!!
20/12/03	Read feedback forms and got evidence ready to give to A N Assessor after Christmas.

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.1 Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.2 put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3 check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.

RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

A LEVEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3/11/03 IN A N ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

PRESENT	A Candidate (Chairman) Tony W (Secretary) Lan W Alan B Katy M Nazeem P Susan G Jenny K Mike S A N Assessor
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Progress on venue

A Candidate gave details of a meeting he had with Jenny's dad. Because we are not having to spend on decorations and other things, the fact that the Rugby Club caterers charge a little more means it won't add to the cost of the tickets which will remain at £15 like last year. The Media Studies Band will have an hour's slot so we should sell the full number of tickets. The hall usually holds 150 people but the Rugby Club will only hold 120. As well, Jenny's dad says that they are prepared to donate a small percentage of the bar's takings to add to our funds for the Mayor's Christmas charity appeal. A Candidate said it is important that everyone understands that there should be no under-age drinking or drugs and the Rugby Club has its own bouncers. A N Assessor said that members of staff would be there anyway in case there was any trouble.

A Candidate has agreed with Jenny's dad (and with A N Assessor's approval) that full payment will be made to the rugby club by Friday 12 December. The daily running total is essential so that we know whether we have sold the full number of tickets or whether we need to do a bit more advertising.

Posters

Now that everyone is happy with the poster, A Candidate and Alan will get copies printed and we will take them out to get them displayed. We will get them out to A Candidate's target of week beginning 10/11/03.

Mayor's Christmas appeal

A N Assessor had allowed A Candidate to use her office to return a telephone call from the Chamber of Commerce. They donate 3 big prizes each year for the college raffle and this year they are giving us a huge bottle of whisky, a 3-day break in New York for 2 people and a lunch trip on the Orient Express. We will all try and get smaller prizes as well and A N Assessor has agreed to do the necessary about the licence for the raffle. A Candidate aims to start selling tickets from the first week in December.

Level 3

You must:

PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.1** Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.2** put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.

Tickets

A Candidate asked for volunteers to staff the "ticket office" every day during college hours. Each volunteer must note the number of tickets sold alongside the cash taken on the form that A Candidate has drawn up. He and A N Assessor will sign for each day's takings and they will be put in the college safe. The same system will apply for raffle tickets.

Any other business

Lan asked whether anyone had been up to Clarence since the last visit to invite them to the party. Jenny was going to take a poster up to Clarence and A Candidate had written a special invitation card for the 6th form tutors. A N Assessor suggested that any tutors attending should not have to pay for tickets because they would be "on duty". A Candidate had not thought about this but would calculate the costs to see if it would work out okay.

Next meeting

A Candidate felt that everything was now going to plan so the next meeting could be left until 24 November. Everyone agreed but A N Assessor stressed that members of the Committee must report in to A Candidate every couple of days and A Candidate would keep her informed of progress.

*I confirm that this is a true record
of the meeting that took place in my
office on 3/11/03
A N Assessor 6/11/03*

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.
- PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.1.1 Identify, analyse and accurately describe the problem, and agree with others how you will know it has been solved; and
- 3.2.1 plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.2 put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem.

Rutherford City College

A level Key Skills Programme

Name of Student A Candidate **Key Skill and Level** Problem Solving 3

Observation and feedback record

A Candidate was convinced at first that he could arrange this event completely by himself because he had someone else's plan to follow. He did look carefully at his options and realised that he needed help. A Candidate looked at the files in the Tutor's office and assumed that he could use the College Hall as usual. This is the best venue because he could cut costs by using the skills of other A Level students and NVQ students in the college. Quite rightly he realised that this is not an option this year because of building work so he met with his colleagues to propose 2 further options (see A Candidate's plan). I visited Clarence High School with A Candidate and the others and can only agree that holding the event there would be a disaster.

Once there was agreement that the Rugby Club could accommodate us, A Candidate put the details to the A Level Committee and after some heated discussion – which he controlled very well – it was agreed to change the date and move forward. The choice of this venue is a good one because it will cut down on a lot of decorating and preparation work just at the time that the group has a lot of coursework to complete. I also feel it will inject new life into this annual event and perhaps enable us to raise more money for the Appeal, which is the real aim of the party.

A Candidate is very clear at putting solutions forward to the group and takes on board any suggestions that are put forward. He was able to get agreement to the option chosen and persuaded others in the group to help him to meet necessary targets.

Feedback

A Candidate, I think you have realised that it is a little naive to assume you can simply follow someone else's previously used plans though you were wise to check those plans for costing of catering, entertainment and the numbers needed before you could agree a ticket price. Although you are a little behind last year's targets for completion of certain tasks, I feel that A Tutor would have faced the same problems this year and would have been at the same point that you are at now. Well done!

Signed *A. N. Assessor*

27/10/03

Signed *A. Candidate*

27/10/03

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.1** Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.
- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.1.3** Compare the main features and risks of each approach, and justify the method you decide to use; and
- 3.2.2** put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem.

Rutherford Rugby Club
30 Avenue Road
Rutherford
AB1 2CD

30 October 2003

A N Assessor
Rutherford City College
City Square
Rutherford
AB1 9YZ

Dear A N Assessor

Re A Candidate

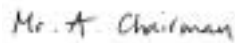
I can confirm that I have had a meeting with A Candidate today about the Christmas Party to be held on 17 December at the club. He looked carefully to see how many people the club would take and checked this out with security. In discussion with me, he had clearly thought through the costs of catering and how the increase could be offset because decorations and other benefits were being provided. He signed an agreement to pay the club's costs in full by Friday 12 December – I understand you will take responsibility for countersigning the cheque from the college accountant.

A Candidate took very seriously my views on under-age drinking and drugs and has promised to pass on my warnings to everyone concerned. In return for a mature approach to this, we have agreed to donate a percentage of our bar takings to the funds raised for the Mayor's Christmas charity appeal.

I also explained to him that it was highly unusual for a live band to be allowed to perform because we book our own musicians and entertainers. The band must agree to restrict itself to the one hour slot agreed. A Candidate will ensure that this message is reinforced by sitting in at one of the band's rehearsals.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me but I think that A Candidate is doing a very good job and the experience will be invaluable to him.

Yours sincerely



Club Chairman

Level 3

You must:

PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.1** Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.2** put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.

RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

A LEVEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24/11/03 IN A N ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

PRESENT	A Candidate (Chairman) Tony W (Secretary) Lan W Alan B Katy M Nazeem P Susan G Jenny K Mike S A N Assessor
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Progress on ticket sales

So far we have sold 80 tickets so we are on target to sell all of them before we have to hand over the full amount to the Rugby Club. Sales to Clarence had not been good but at least 4 of their Tutors were going to attend. A Candidate reported that there was no need to charge Tutors because after checking the files, this had not happened before since the main problem was sufficient food. Apparently the caterers always produce more food than is necessary so it was not a problem.

Mayor's Christmas appeal

The Chamber of Commerce representative had been invited to attend the party and would bring the special prizes with him. A Candidate reported that he had seen Jenny's dad who had agreed that all the prizes could be stored securely at the Club the night before the party. He would also arrange for a long table to be available for the prizes to be on view.

Tickets were going well and we had been able to start selling ahead of A Candidate's target of the first week in December. Thanks to A N Assessor for making sure everything was legal.

Volunteers' rota

People who had volunteered with ticket sales and raffle sales had mostly kept their promise but there were complaints about volunteers from the Geography group who had not turned up on one day so no tickets had been sold. A N Assessor agreed that this was not good but did suggest that A Candidate should see the Geography Tutor to find out if there was a valid reason for this rather than just blaming people.

Any other business

Katy M had been to a student party at the University and they had had people going round with buckets to collect donations for charity. They raised quite a lot this way. It was agreed that Committee members would get buckets and go round collecting once the party had got going. They would all wear Santa hats.

Level 3

You must:

- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.1** Plan your chosen way of solving the problem and get the go-ahead from an appropriate person; and
- 3.2.2** put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary.

A Candidate had sat in on the Media Studies band practice and they had numbers which would restrict them to an hour's performance. Jenny's dad had agreed, however, that they could play in the porch for as long as they liked as people were coming in so most people were going to come early to listen and maybe dance if the car park was not full. The Committee could also go round with their buckets here.

Next meeting

A N Assessor was pleased with the way in which everyone was reporting in to A Candidate and she saw A Candidate every day for an update. She felt that, unless there was an emergency, we should continue to report and meet next on 15 December to check final arrangements. The Principal had agreed to release all members of the Committee to go up to the Rugby Club for the full day on 17 December to get the tables ready, prepare the buckets for donations, etc.

*I confirm that this is a true record
of the meeting that took place in my
office on 24/11/03
A N Assessor, A level Tutor*

You must:

PS3.3 Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

3.3.1 Apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved.

RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

Welcome to the College's 10th fund raising Christmas Party. We would like your views on how you enjoyed the party and what suggestions you have for making it even more enjoyable. Please put the completed questionnaires in the box in the college reception area by midday on 19/12/03. Thank you for helping us raise money for the Mayor's charity appeal. This year all money raised will be going to our local hospice.

Have you been to the party before?	Yes/No
If 'Yes', do you think this venue is better?	Yes/No Does not apply to me
If 'No', do you think this is a good venue?	Yes/No
Were you happy with the food and drink arrangements?	Yes/No
Were you happy with the food provided?	Yes/No
Did you enjoy the choice of DJ and band?	Yes/No
Was the ticket price of £15 value for money?	Yes/No

If you have answered 'No' to any of the questions other than the first, please state your reasons to help us put matters right.

I was happy with the bar but my parents were not pleased. They said it should have stated on the ticket that there was a bar selling alcohol. I think if a letter had gone out to parents of those under 18 saying that staff were on duty it would have helped.

Please give us any suggestions you might have to make the party better.

None - I thought it was a great night out

This is an example of the customer satisfaction survey.

You must:

- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.
- PS3.3** Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.2** Put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary; and
- 3.3.1** apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved; and
- 3.3.2** describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem; and
- 3.3.3** review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.

REVIEW OF SUCCESS OF CHRISTMAS PARTY

PERSONAL REPORT

Positive things

The Party was a real success and we were able to hand over nearly £1500 to the Mayor's appeal. There was a little bit of trouble with a small group of students trying to drink when they shouldn't but the Tutors sorted that out and we didn't need the Club's bouncers. The idea of the Media Studies band playing in the porch was perhaps the best idea of the lot because people who live in South Mead Road came out to see what was happening and they threw quite a bit of money into the buckets. We also were given £70 from the Rugby Club bar takings. The Rugby Club stewards also let us take our buckets downstairs and people there donated a tremendous amount of cash. A N Assessor was really pleased at the way things had gone and she felt that the press pictures would be good for the College's image.

I was pleased with the way that the A Level Committee members pulled together although there were times when there was a lot of argument. For example, most people were against the idea of changing the date to the 17th December because it was a Wednesday. How wrong they were – it couldn't have been better!

Overall, I think the A Level Committee is now much stronger than when it started in September and I think we can now do a lot more – we are thinking of trying to arrange an Easter five-a-side football competition.

One thing that surprised me was that Jenny's dad has offered me some weekend work up at the Rugby Club. He felt I was well organised and kept careful records so I could help in the Admin Office when things were busy.

Negative things

I honestly thought that it would be simple to organise the party and I now realise why our Tutor says it was a headache – especially as A N Assessor told me that he really does do most of it himself. I did at least have help. Although I knew the building work was still going on I had not realised that it would affect our being able to hold the party in college. The hardest part was making sure that everyone else did what they said they would do – sometimes I felt it would be better if I did it all myself – and I was glad A N Assessor was there to help. For example, when there were complaints about the Geography group. I went to see the Geography Tutor and she explained that the group had gone on a field trip that day so they could not look after the ticket office. She did say that they should have known that and reported it to me.

A N Assessor was right when she said I should have realised that I could not simply expect to follow someone else's plan and hope it would turn out OK. The Tutor files were great as a starting point but I had to find my own way. In fact there were times when the Tutor files could have put us off because we were not keeping to the targets set in there.

Only a few students turned up from Clarence and I realise now that it was perhaps my fault. We did go up, we sent a poster and an invitation to the Tutors but I honestly think we should have invited them to send a representative to our A Level Committee meetings so that they felt involved.

You must:

- PS3.2** Plan and implement at least one way of solving the problem.
- PS3.3** Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.2.2** Put your plan into action, effectively using support and feedback from others to help tackle the problem; and
- 3.2.3** check regularly progress towards solving the problem, revising your approach as necessary; and
- 3.3.1** apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved; and
- 3.3.2** describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem; and
- 3.3.3** review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.

I only realised at the last minute that I should have asked the press to come to the party because we were also raising money for the Mayor's appeal. I had not realised that it could be good publicity for the college and the work that A Level students can do if they want to. We also got some very good photographs in the Mayor's Parlour of A N Assessor and I handing over the cheque.

One of the biggest difficulties was that although there was only one main problem, every time I turned round there seemed to be lots more smaller problems and nothing seemed straightforward.

Way forward

When I see my Tutor when he comes back to college next week, I am going to suggest to him that maybe the party should be held at the Rugby Club each year. Although we can do things a little more cheaply in college, I do feel that it takes up a lot of the A Level group's time in buying and putting up decorations etc and making all the arrangements. We also have to rely on the NVQ Catering students to do the buffet and sometimes it's better than others. By using the Club, I felt everything was done more professionally and, for example, those over 18 could drink if they wished to. It also made us realise the problems that there are in making sure that health and safety regulations are properly followed.

I think the most important thing I learned was that I should have got the others together earlier for perhaps a brainstorming session. I tried to solve the problem by myself at first and it would have been much easier if the others had put forward their ideas earlier, for example the Santa hats and buckets – a small thing that made a fair bit of money.

Also another time I would not have meetings in the lunch time because we kept having to cut things short because either we or A N Assessor had classes. A N Assessor had suggested that we meet after 4 pm but we did not want to stay on when we had coursework to do. Looking back, it would have been better to spend lunch time and any free time during the day in the library and be prepared to stay on for a meeting after 4 pm.

Signed *A Condidat*

Date 7/11/04

You must:

- PS3.1 Explore a problem and identify different ways of tackling it.
- PS3.3 Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.1.2 Select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problem; and
- 3.3.2 describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem; and
- 3.3.3 review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.

RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

Name A Candidate

Group A Level Sciences

Key Skill Area Wider Key Skills – Problem Solving

The following questions were asked of this candidate on the afternoon of 7/1/04.

Why did you eventually decide to go with Method 3 as your chosen method of solving the problem?

I am used to solving science problems by myself and I honestly thought that it would be the best way to approach this one - after all I had A Future plan to follow. But when I realised the hall could not be used and there were so many things to do I really could not cope on my own - I needed other people's problem solving skills to help me.

Your approach to costs/benefits worked out all right in the end but it could have gone wrong. What would you do in the future to make sure?

I definitely would have asked someone from the committee to check my figures and plans. In fact I think I would have had a small sub-committee dealing with everything to do with finance because I spent a lot of time checking other people's ticket taking etc and we could have shared this out.

You felt guilty because very few Clarence people attended the party. What are you going to do about that?

We have agreed that we will write to them inviting them to send representatives to the Committee so that we can plan the five-a-side competition - again we are going to try and raise money for charity.

The party was a great success but have you identified any weakness during the event itself that you would want to improve?

Well I suppose we could have written a note to parents of those Under 18 - most of the Committee members are 18 so we didn't think about that. Also we had not left enough time to tear up all the raffle tickets to put into the drum and we were rushed. Looking back I think we needed to have done things like that earlier in the day.

Level 3

You must:

PS3.3 Check if the problem has been solved and review your approach to problem solving.

Your evidence must show you can:

- 3.3.1** Apply systematically methods agreed with an appropriate person, to check if the problem has been solved; and
- 3.3.2** describe fully the results and draw conclusions on how successful you were in solving the problem; and
- 3.3.3** review your approach to problem solving, including whether other approaches might have proved more effective.

RUTHERFORD CITY COLLEGE

ASSESSMENT RECORD

Student A Candidate

Group A Level Sciences

Subject Problem Solving

Level 3

I have now assessed the evidence presented by the above student and can confirm that it meets the standards for Level 3 Problem Solving.

FEEDBACK

I offer you my congratulations A Candidate on a job well done. You certainly worked very hard to make sure that the Christmas Party was a huge success and the whole college is delighted by the amount of money made for the Mayor's charity appeal. You have earned the respect of your peers on the A Level Committee because you were willing to ask for their help and also used their ideas. You ensured that the targets you had set were met in full without resorting to aggressiveness, ie you were able to delegate the tasks that you knew you could not complete by yourself. You were also happy to accept my advice without continually coming to me for help. What I consider most important of all is that you were able to persuade someone external to the college to help you to solve your problem.

You certainly thought you had an easy job when you started and the fact that you could not use the college hall was the best thing that could have happened. It made you stand on your own two feet and face the problem fairly and squarely. I know you feel bad about not inviting Clarence students to the Committee meetings but this was a lesson well learned and it will stand you in good stead in the future. With regard to inviting the press to the party, I think that they might have turned up anyway because one of the posters was put in their window but it is something for you to bear in mind for the future. I certainly agree with your statement about lunch time meetings – there is little enough time for all of us without trying to cram in meetings; another lesson well learned I think!

I hope your weekend job goes well. Will you please let me have your assessment summary record so that I can sign and date it.

A. NABBS

9/1/04



Curriculum and Standards

Audience	Key skills candidates, practitioners, assessors and moderators, external verifiers and others involved in the delivery of key skills
Circulation lists	Key skills awarding bodies and the Key Skills Support Programme
Type	Exemplification
Description	Exemplification of the requirements for key skills portfolios
Cross ref	<i>The 2004 key skills qualifications standards and guidance (QCA/04/1294)</i> <i>Example portfolio: problem solving level 1 (QCA/04/1316)</i> <i>Example portfolio: problem solving level 2 (QCA/04/1317)</i>
Contact	The Key Skills Team (020 7509 5611; keyskills@qca.org.uk)

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