



Your Association with Expertise

PLASA NATIONAL RIGGING CERTIFICATE

The Professional Lighting and Sound Association (PLASA) is the leading trade association for the entertainment, architectural, communication and leisure industries

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Update and Developments - Assessment and Assessors

In previous bulletins, it's been our aim to provide you with information on why we need a rigging qualification, how the scheme is progressing, what skills and knowledge individuals will need and how the scheme will work in practical terms. If you'd like to revisit some of these earlier updates, you can find all the relevant information at www.plasa.org/rigging.

As most will be aware, the National Rigging Certificate is a competency-based assessment scheme: central to its value and integrity are both the assessors and the assessment process. This update is intended to give you further insight into that process, to explain what type of people the assessors are, what they've done to give them the credibility to assess others and what process they've gone through to become NRC Assessors.

Qualification Structure

Since the qualification is based on assessment, it requires an industry benchmark to assess to. PLASA has used government held National Occupational Standards - written statements of what someone should be able to do or know at a particular skill and responsibility level - as its benchmark. Quite simply a 'grouping' of these standards makes up a qualification. On this basis, the rigging qualification is made up of a specified number of these standards for each level.

It is important to stress that the qualification has been designed to reflect the core skills and knowledge expected of someone working in rigging at a particular level of responsibility. These skills will therefore apply to all sectors in the industry - including Film & TV, arena, theatre, events etc. However, as there are particular specialisms in different sectors, individuals can have an additional assessment at a later date, which is designed to acknowledge

specific individual achievements. This will prove invaluable to many freelancers who can then demonstrate that they have a range of assessed specialist skills in addition to the core skills assessed in the rigging certificate.

Assessor's Role

The role of the assessor is to make a judgement on whether a candidate's performance meets the skill and level of knowledge required in these Occupational Standards.

The assessor reaches their decision by reviewing the following three things:

- Practical performance - by directly observing a candidate carrying out rigging activities.
- Underpinning knowledge - that they understand and know why they do certain activities - assessed through questions.
- Prior experience - through witness testimonies, employer's endorsements and training certificates etc.

The assessor will inform the candidate whether they have achieved or not achieved, as there is no pass or fail.

If a candidate does not meet the standards, and therefore does not achieve in a particular area, the assessor will offer guidance to the candidate and jointly agree with them an action plan, providing them with support on what aspects they would need to further develop before re-assessment.

How did we select the initial assessors and how did they become an NRC Assessor?

NRC Assessors were selected initially through an election process held by the National Rigging Advisory Group (NRAG) with 12 potential rigging assessors being selected, based on the criteria

outlined below. Of these, 10 have continued the process and all have given a huge amount of time and commitment to learn how to become NRC Assessors.

At the start of the project, it was agreed that it was fundamental that each assessor be highly experienced in rigging, as well as being individuals who had the ability and the right approach with people. It was also considered essential that the assessors should attain a national qualification in assessment. This qualification - the A1 Award - is in itself a stringent and tough qualification to achieve. To achieve the award, a trainee assessor is observed assessing others by a qualified assessor and also seen to be following assessment procedures.

All of our trainee NRC assessors have been required to carry out a number of assessments on each other, together with others in the industry, to gain the necessary practice and evidence required. As well as being observed a number of times as assessors, they have also had to produce a portfolio of evidence and write a claim that explains that they know how and why they carry out certain procedures when assessing. Their collective evidence then goes through a three-tier quality assurance process.

Firstly, it is assessed by their assessor and then checked by another specialist - an internal verifier - before a further audit by the External Verifier who comes from the Awarding body and who makes the final decision on the successful achievement of the A1 Award.

To ensure the full integrity of the process, PLASA has delivered nine workshops for trainee assessors since March last year.

As well as gaining the A1 Award, every NRC Assessor has also had to achieve the National Rigging Certificate. Each assessor has had, on average, a minimum of four different assessments with different assessors covering each Level of the National Rigging Certificate. We know the NRC Assessors have gone through an incredible journey and are currently completing their portfolios of evidence for their own assessments as A1 Assessors. They have certainly helped shape the scheme and contributed to its development from their own experience of rigging.

What Next?

This rigorous assessment process now allows us to move to the next stage. The candidate pilot trials will commence in April and May 2007 and we will be selecting candidates from the registrations to take part in these assessments.

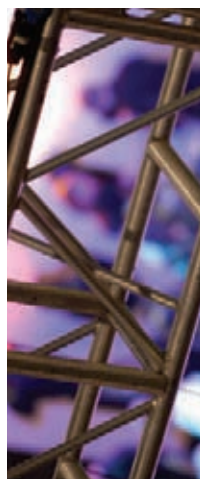
We are also in the process of approving Pilot Support Centres to deliver these initial assessments.

During 2007 we plan to review the outcomes of the pilots, produce a candidate handbook and provide more detailed links to where you can source information on what you may need to know for your assessments.

Future NRC Assessors will have to fulfil the same criteria as the initial assessors and go through the same training and assessment process. When we reach this part of the project, applications will be sought from the rigging industry.

In future, all qualified NRC assessors will be listed on the PLASA website and by September 2007 the first Assessment Centres will be up and running.

If you require more information please visit www.plasa.org/rigging or email rigging@plasa.org



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