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cCLEP!

Certified Competences for Live Events Professionals

REQUIREMENTS ANALYSIS FOR THE PROFESSION OF:
RIGGER, SCAFFOLDER, PRODUCTION MANAGER

PLASA

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RIGGER

- General context of the sector;

Introduction and scope

The Live events sector covers the following range of types of events (not exhaustive):

- Theatre
- Concerts
- Festivals
- Conferences / conventions
- Product Launches and trade shows
- Fashion shows
- Sporting events
- Live TV (cross-over with Pre-recorded TV and Film, but the “Live” element is missing)
- Publicity events and activations

Riggers can work in all of these areas, but for the purposes of this exercise we are focusing on live music events.

The live music sector covers a huge variety of events from major concerts held in stadiums and large music festivals, such as Glastonbury, which attract hundreds of thousands of people, to small local festivals that have audiences of a few hundred. In addition to these outdoor events, there are thousands of music events that take place each year indoors, held in a variety of venues from major arenas to pubs.

Glastonbury is one of the world’s most famous music festival – it draws in visitors from every corner of the globe and contributes more than £100 million to the economy annually.

Total audience that attended live music events in the UK - 30.9 million

Total festival attendance in the UK - 3.9 million

Total concert attendance in the UK - 27 million * appendix 2

Drivers for change

The UK is very strict on compliance with Health and Safety Legislation. Non-Compliance with legislation can result in huge penalties and in extreme cases imprisonment.

This has in effect been the biggest driver for change in working practices, and in making safety a priority. A good example is the construction industry whereby Health and Safety drivers led to them overhauling their system. They implemented the need for compulsory H&S awareness cards linked to proof of vocational competence, through the NVQ system, to work in a specified role on a construction site.

As we know the Technical Live Event industry, grew rapidly, it is still a relatively young industry when compared to construction. Most people learnt and invented their trade and roles as they went along and as things advanced. Now there is a greater demand for innovative special effects, the best ‘audience experience’ and over all bigger events. To achieve this, there has been a need to develop the skills of the workforce, along with a recognition that Health and Safety mattered.

Focusing on Rigging, it was in 2005 when the Working at Height Regulation was introduced in the UK, requiring all people working at height to be ‘competent’, this drove the UK Rigging Industry to review itself and what was needed. They approached PLASA a trade association to find a way to develop a system to measure competence. They were concerned that if they did not develop something they would have something imposed from construction, which would be wholly unsuitable. The industry worked with PLASA over three years and the NRC was launched in 2007. *Appendix 1. Over 900 riggers have been through the scheme in the UK and there is an Assessment centre in Sweden with further plans to role this out into Europe. It is now established in the UK as the industry standard to work as a Rigger. In 2017, a Government Apprenticeship was launched, ‘The Live Event Rigger’ – a mandatory part of the program is to have a successful NRC Level 2 Assessment and the PLASA Trainee Rigger Pathway is used to support their learning.

- Description (what they do, in their professional practice...);

In general Riggers in the Live Events sector carry out the following work:

- Designing, planning and specifying sometimes constructing (ground support) rigging systems to support a range of loads including production equipment, scenic elements, effects, products, performers and other items
- Coordinate load information from production suppliers and others into a coordinated rigging plot
- Assemble, lift and attach primary rigging points to support structures
- Attach manual and powered lifting machines to primary rigging points
- Assemble and attach rigging equipment such as trusses and spreaders
- Connect loads to lifting / rigging equipment
- Set up and operate control systems for powered lifting machines
- Lower loads, disassemble equipment and pack for transport

Note: There is a differing amount of complexity and responsibility behind each point above, so to answer the question of knowledge and skill needed below, it is essential to identify the responsibility of the role – simply put, ‘who’ are we talking about. **More detail on this and how PLASA identified and categorized this is under the section on ‘pathways’**

- Knowledge they need;

Note: Depending on the Responsibility of the role, for each of the following the awareness, understanding or knowing would be different, more detail on this is under the section on ‘pathways’:

- Legislative requirements regarding lifting operations and lifting equipment
- Legislative requirements regarding provision and use of work equipment
- Legislative requirements for working at height
- Legislative requirements for General Health and Safety
- Physical principles of forces within a system at rest
- Effects of dynamic forces
- Characteristics / limitations of different types of lifting equipment
- Characteristics / limitations of different types of access equipment

- Skills they need;

Note: Depending on the Responsibility of the role for each of the following the level of skill may be different, so from simple to complex installations - more detail on this is under the section on ‘pathways’:

- Ability to assess loads
- Ability to estimate / calculate forces in systems at rest
- Ability to set up, use and strike rigging equipment safely
- Ability to work at height safely
- Ability to plan and carry out lifting operations
- Ability to work effectively as part of the Production team
- Ability to maintain effective communications with others

- Background (what the educational and professional paths to acquire the profile);

Company owned Apprenticeships – Most Rigging Companies carry out bespoke apprenticeships. Many of these use the PLASA Trainee rigger to guide their trainees.

Working for Rigging suppliers as freelance and learning on the job or gaining ad hoc training that they pay for. They can elect to use the PLASA Trainee Rigger pathway.

Temporary Staff: Often commence in another role such as temporary staff to load in and shift boxes and learn on the job.

PLASA Trainee Rigger - PLASA, developed a pathway in which those who wish to pursue a career in rigging can identify and record the necessary training and experience. They will also be able to demonstrate their commitment to rigging to potential employers.

The scheme provides a way of logging experience against specific rigging tasks, building a picture of the trainee's practical rigging development and training undertaken. Over time they will be able to track their development and readiness to register for competence-based assessment at Level 2 of the National Rigging Certificate.

Training providers and Trainees have access to a syllabus of learning and the National Rigging Certificate Handbook. Each Trainee will have attended a health and safety course recognised by the National Rigging Advisory Group (formed with PLASA), as designed for the industry prior to registration. All Trainees hold a Trainee Rigger ID card which identifies them to potential employers as someone who is serious about a career in rigging and is committed to developing their knowledge and skills.

PLASA National Rigging Certificate

The certification is based on presentation of workplace sourced evidence experience, practical and theoretical assessment. It is **not** a training scheme leading to assessment. It is Assessment only, rather like the driving test. All Assessors and Internal Verifiers are trained to a National Recognised Qualification and must themselves be a minimum Level 3 NRC Qualified with 5 Years experience . During the assessment process, the candidates will complete a written examination to assess their underpinning knowledge of health and safety, working at height, equipment, rigging and communication. Candidates are given defined tasks in the form of practical scenarios to complete within a specified time, encompassing the skills required in rigging work using chain hoists, trusses and rigging accessories, relevant within any sector where entertainment rigging work is carried out. Level 3 assessment includes an on-site assessment to ensure the ability to supervise rigging and work at height in a real dynamic setting.

The simulated assessment is carried out at Industry Centres. The UK Rigging Industry are in effect ensuring the Certification remains relevant and PLASA ensures all consistency and standards are maintained to ensure the integrity of the certification. The certification is owned by PLASA and apart from voluntary time contributions from individuals in the rigging industry, no funding was received from outside sources. It was funded by PLASA.

The specific details for each are listed below:

Level 2 (Rigger)

- Understanding of basic legal requirements and personal responsibilities in rigging work.
- Knowledge and understanding of the terms used in entertainment rigging.
- Working safely and effectively as part of a team.
- Working from plans and marking out rigging points.
- Making pre-use checks of equipment.
- Preparing and assembling rigging.
- Making attachments to structures at height and at ground level.
- Controlling the lift.
- Knowledge of basket and choke hitches.
- Knowledge of dead-hangs and bridles.
- Using electric chain hoists (motors) and controllers safely.
- Using steel, chain and fibre slings, shackles and masterlinks correctly.
- Safe working at height, including using personal fall protection systems (PFPS) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Assembling, slinging and lifting trusses.
- Terminating steel wire rope using industry-standard methods.
- Using hauling lines and the knots used for safe lifting.

PLASA National Rigging Certificate Level 3 (Rigging Supervisor)- They must be a NRC Level 2 card holder.

- Writing risk assessments and implementing the control measures identified in them.
- Making rigging calculations and load estimations for trusses, bridles and slinging.
- Supervising other riggers on site and interpreting method statements.
- Understanding legal requirements, personal and organisational responsibilities in rigging work.
- Working safely, communicating effectively and supervising a team.
- Interpreting and devising plans and marking out rigging points.
- Controlling the lifting operation.
- Confirming the correct use of lifting equipment.
- Supervising work at height and use of personal fall protection systems.
- Knowledge of appropriate rescue planning.
- Ensuring correct use of truss system.
- Supervision of the operation of access equipment.
- Knowledge of rope work appropriate and knots used for supervising safe lifting with hauling lines.

Please note: rope access does not form part of the assessment.

Formal UK Government Apprenticeships - In the UK the 'Live Event Rigger Level 3' this was launched in 2017. The take up has been slow. It incorporates the PLASA Trainee Rigger and NRC LEVEL 2 as compulsory elements to be completed. The qualification is Level 3, but is not supervisory, and in that it would be extremely rare for someone to be considered ready to undertake the NRC Level 3 Rigging Supervisor following the apprenticeship, without some more work experience.

A synopsis of the assessment plan and details of this can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488431/Live_Event_Rigger_Assessment_Plan_aj.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/455150/LIVE_EVENT_S_Live_Event_Rigger.pdf

- Qualification Level at national or European level (if present);

- PLASA National Rigging Certificate Level 2 (Rigger)
- PLASA National Rigging Certificate Level 3 (Rigging Supervisor)
- Live Event Rigger - Apprenticeship Level 3
- Trainee Rigger Pathway – Level 1

- Required certifications (if any);

Many venues / Clients / Production Agencies require PLASA NRC

Many require other certifications such as IPAF to drive a cherry picker for example.

- Training opportunities, and necessity to receive any professional updating (if any).

Various commercial training schemes are available in the UK. For example, UK Rigging and Total Solutions are well known within the industry amongst others. There are 3 -day rigging courses, working at height courses offered. It is very easy to find rigging training in the UK. Some educational providers deliver training as well but generally they will use an industry specialist or company like Total Solutions to deliver this. More information is here:

<https://ukrigging.net/shop/category/courses/training-courses/>

<https://www.trussing.com/training/>

<http://www.cwc.ac.uk/Courses/Pages/AASRI.aspx>

As for professional updating, the NRC Level 2 and Level 3 Certification is renewable every 3 years.

Candidates on achievement have to renew their ID card. This is done by suitable peer assessment that they have continued to work in practice. At any point PLASA – through guidance by the rigging industry can ask these Riggers to undergo an assessment if they wish. This would only be done if there was a serious change to working practices or legislation that required a theoretical or practical assessment.

PRODUCTION MANAGER –

As part of our agreement we were not obliged to complete this section however here is some information in general, it is not extensive research by any means.

- **General context of the sector;**

Production Managers deliver the Technical Production elements of productions across a range of types of events (not exhaustive):

Theatre

Concerts

Festivals

Conferences / conventions

Product Launches and trade shows

Fashion shows

Sporting events

Live TV (cross-over with Pre-recorded TV and Film, but the “Live” element is missing)

Publicity events and activations

The precise responsibilities of the Production Manager differ across sub-sectors, for example a TV Production Manager does a slightly different job from a Theatre Production Manager, which is slightly different from the Production Manager on a Product Launch or tour.

- **Description (what they do, in their professional practice...);**

Work with producers, designers and directors to interpret the design of an event into the production resources required to deliver the event

Generate “clients’ brief” for production suppliers

Manage and coordinate the design process with production suppliers including lighting, sound, Audiovisual / projection / screen, staging, scenic, rigging, electrics, special effects, transport

Ensure Venue factors are considered during design work

Develop and implement schedules for pre-production, fit up and strike

Create and manage budgets

Provide leadership

- **Knowledge they need;**

Detailed understanding of the production process from concept through to delivery

Traditional and contemporary technical production services (lighting, sound, Audiovisual / projection / screen, staging, scenic, rigging, electrics, special effects, transport)

Principles of Theatre design

Health and Safety relationships between venues, producers/Promoters, artistes and audiences

- **Skills they need;**

Leadership

Problem solving

Project management and planning (people, procedures and control)

Financial control

Health and Safety

- **Background (what the educational and professional paths to acquire the profile);**

Many people currently in the role have started out in Stage Management or a technical department role and progressed into Production Management from there.

Recent course developments mean there are now direct professional paths, although it is still likely that other areas of Production will continue to feed the profession for some time. More information can be found here as well.

<https://ccskills.org.uk/careers/advice/article/production-manager>

- Qualification Level at national or European level (if present);

There are many related courses in the UK, up to MA (Bristol Old Vic Theatre School)

Theatre Schools and universities offer degree level qualifications that include Production Management within a broader Technical Theatre course.

Some courses are aimed at specific sub-sectors such as TV or Film or Theatre, some cover it all.

Not to be confused with Event Management, which typically does not cover Production Management in any great detail. More information can be found here as well.

<https://ccskills.org.uk/careers/advice/article/production-manager>

<https://www.backstage-academy.co.uk/degree-courses/>

- Required certifications (if any);

Varies across industry sectors, no common requirement

- Training opportunities, and necessity to receive any professional updating (if any).

Many venues / production agencies provide informal in-house training / experience. Many people currently in the role have started out in Stage Management or a technical department role and progressed into Production Management from there.

Appendix 1



First launched in 2007, the National Rigging Certificate (NRC) is a qualification designed to give riggers recognition for their skills, knowledge and expertise, and a means of demonstrating that they've attained a professional standard within their chosen rigging discipline.

On gaining the award, individuals are issued with a certificate and their own official PLASA ID Skills Card. You can find more detailed information on the development of the scheme, together with an insight into what will be required of those who take the Certification, by using the links provided.

Background

It became apparent to a number of individuals in the entertainment and event rigging industry that there was a need to develop a way of measuring competence in rigging. These individuals approached PLASA to act as a neutral body and to administer the scheme, and together they formed the National Rigging Advisory Group.

One of the first activities the group undertook was to define rigging and the role of a rigger in their sector.

Rigging

- The installation, removal, or other activity using lifting, or suspension equipment, or accessories used in tension for lifting or supporting display, production, performance, or event technical requirements.

Rigger

- A competent person employed to carry out rigging.

What is the NRC?

- The NRC is the only qualification that assesses the competence of riggers carrying out rigging as defined within the entertainment and events industry. It is not a training scheme.
- The NRC uses standards set by the rigging industry to measure the competency of an individual.
- On achievement of the assessment, the individual attains a certificate and an industry ID Skills Card that states the level and qualification achieved.
- The NRC provides a recognised route for employers and venues to know an individual is competent to rig through the mechanism of the Industry ID Skills Card.
- The NRC works to recognised UK Government qualification frameworks.
- The NRC only uses assessors who are both subject experts and qualified to be an assessor to the national required standards.
- The NRC assesses the competency of an individual's skill and knowledge of health & safety, communication, risk and supervision, as well as rigging techniques and working at height.
- The NRC measures the minimum core requirements of someone working at a particular level and role.

References

Regulations mentioned

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/loler.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/the-law.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg174.pdf>

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Business Visits & Events Partnership: Events are Great

UK Music - Music Tourism: Wish you were here

UK Music – Measuring Music 2016

Nyman Lipson Paul – The Future of the UK Entertainment Sector

National Rigging Certificate Handbook Published by PLASA