

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

**Unit code:** D7MB 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to allow candidates to develop the skills and techniques used by creative writers in their craft and to study and practice different forms and genres. The Unit is designed to develop skills in affective writing, ie writing which produces a desired or required response in the reader. It will therefore be appropriate to candidates studying within the vocational areas of the media and communication industries such as journalism, advertising and publicity or public relations.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Write discourse in a chosen form and genre to reveal characteristics of the speaker(s)
2. Sustain reader interest using the conventions of narrative technique in a chosen genre
3. Write to manipulate reader response in a chosen form and genre

**Credit value:** 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

*SCQF (the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) brings Scottish qualifications into a single framework of 12 levels ranging from SQA Access 1 to doctorates. The SCQF includes degrees; HNC/Ds; SQA National Qualifications; and SVQs. Each SQA Unit is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at a specific level. 1 SCQF point = 10 hours of learning. HN candidates are normally expected to input a further number of hours, matched to the credit value of the Unit, of non-contact time or candidate-led effort to consolidate and reinforce learning.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. This Unit can be undertaken by candidates who have no previous experience of creative writing. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had a sound grasp of written language as shown by possession of at least one of the following:

- National Unit EE3T 12 (7110055) *Communication (NC)*
- Higher *English and Communication* or its component Units
- Higher *Media Studies* or its component Units

and are familiar with genre and forms, as shown by possession of at least one of the following:

- National Unit E9X8 12 *Literature 1*
- National Unit DOYF 12 *Creative Writing 2*

## **General information for centres (cont)**

**Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

**Core skills:** There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

**Assessment:** It is recommended that this Unit is assessed by three assessments which may be written or oral. The assessments need not be undertaken in the order in which they are presented. While candidates may choose to work on more than one assessment at a time, it is important that a specific deadline for each assessment is set and adhered to, in order to replicate the conditions operating in the creative and cultural industries.

Assessment should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

### **Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Write discourse in a chosen form and genre to reveal characteristics of the speaker(s)

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Conventions of chosen form
- Conventions of chosen genre
- Monologue
- Dialogue
- Point of view
- Characterisation
- Voice
- Language techniques to reveal character, word choice, dialect, ambiguity, irony, humour
- Creative use of spelling, syntax and punctuation
- Layout for professional submission

#### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- produce a monologue or a dialogue in an identifiable form and genre
- create a character or characters through discourse
- manipulate a minimum of three language techniques so that character is revealed implicitly
- present a monologue or dialogue using appropriate layout for professional submission.

The form and genre chosen by the candidate will normally govern the length of the assessment and therefore no minimum or maximum word length can be specified here. Work should be submitted in the format, style and standard required by the relevant media industries. Where evidence is submitted orally, it should take the form of dictation, and include instruction on layout of copy.

Assessment should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work. The assessment should be open-book.

Candidates may have access to online research facilities, books, notes, rough drafts and word processors with spell-check facilities.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates should be encouraged to revise and redraft work in the formative stages and build on assessor and peer feedback. However, it is important that work submitted for assessment should be completed by the candidate unaided. While the candidate may wish to work on more than one Outcome at a time, it would replicate the demands of the media industries if deadlines were set for each individual Outcome.

### **Outcome 2**

Sustain reader interest using the conventions of narrative technique in a chosen genre

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Conventions of chosen form
- Conventions of chosen genre
- Narrative techniques
- Plotting
- Creating suspense
- Purpose and readership
- Creative use of spelling, syntax and punctuation
- Layout for professional submission

#### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- produce a narrative in an identifiable form and genre
- employ narrative techniques to sustain reader interest
- submit work in the format, style and standard required by the relevant media industries.

Where evidence is submitted orally, it should take the form of dictation, and include instruction on layout of copy.

Assessment should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work. The assessment should be open-book. Candidates may have access to online research facilities, books, notes, rough draft, word processors with spell-check facilities.

### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates should be encouraged to revise and redraft work in the formative stages and build on assessor and peer feedback. However, it is important that work submitted for assessment should be completed by the candidate unaided. While the candidate may wish to work on

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

more than one Outcome at a time, it would replicate the demands of the media industries if deadlines were set for each individual Outcome.

### **Outcome 3**

Write to manipulate reader response in a chosen form and genre

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Conventions of chosen form
- Conventions of chosen genre
- Purpose and audience
- Techniques appropriate to purpose and audience
- Affective language
- Persuasive writing
- Relationship between writer and implied reader
- Creative use of spelling, syntax and punctuation
- Layout for professional submission

#### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can:

- produce a piece of writing in a chosen form and genre
- employ techniques to generate a specific, intended response
- submit work in the format, style and standard required by the relevant media industries

Where evidence is submitted orally, it must take the form of dictation, and include instruction on layout of copy.

Assessment should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work. The assessment should be open-book. Candidates may have access to online research facilities, books, notes, rough drafts, word processors with spell-check facilities.

#### **Assessment guidelines**

Candidates should be encouraged to revise and redraft work in the formative stages and build on assessor and peer feedback. However, it is important that work submitted for assessment should be completed by the candidate unaided. While the candidate may wish to work on more than one Outcome at a time, it would replicate the demands of the media industries if deadlines were set for each individual Outcome.

## **Administrative Information**

**Unit code:** D7MB 34

**Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

**Superclass category:** KB

**Date of publication:** October 2001

**Source:** SQA

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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### **Guidance on the content and context for this Unit**

The Outcomes in this Unit concentrate on specific techniques of creative writing and will allow the candidate to perceive creative writing as a craft that can be learned and developed. The Unit is intended to underpin the creative element in vocational courses for the creative and cultural industries. Candidates undertaking courses in Communication, Creative Writing, Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations or Media will find that, since assessments require that creative work be produced for specific purposes, the demands of the Unit will provide excellent preparation for work. The concentration on producing work which demonstrates the use of specific skills and techniques to fulfil a specific function not only makes professional demands on the candidate and prepares him/her for a disciplined creativity but also allows for objective assessment of work. For this reason, it is unlikely that integration of assessment within the Unit will be helpful or beneficial to the candidate. However, the assessments can be integrated with work in other Units in the vocational area. The setting of deadlines, the submission of work in a format appropriate to the media industries, will stimulate in the candidate a practical and business-like approach to creativity.

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

It would be beneficial for candidates to spend time exploring and studying different forms and genres, looking at models, identifying and evaluating the techniques used in mainly, but not exclusively, contemporary texts before producing their own creative work.

Strategies employed should allow candidates to negotiate the form and genre in which they write but where this Unit is delivered within a group award, it would be most beneficial to the candidate if form and genre chosen were vocationally appropriate.

A workshop approach could be useful. On a whole-class basis, the assessor should provide reading lists or texts for study using extracts. The literary forms of short story, poetry and drama should be taught and analysed. A brief outline of genre classification should allow candidates to understand the concept of genre conventions. Candidates, however, should be encouraged to explore other forms within their own particular vocational area such as journalism or advertising copy which may also employ graphical representation. In all cases, formative study of forms and genres should instil in the candidate a firm grasp of techniques and conventions employed. Candidates should be made aware that all form and genre conventions may be deliberately subverted or mixed, such as the production of a piece of advertising copy written as a dramatic monologue. Formative work should build on class discussion and critique of texts and should concentrate on building skills in manipulating

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

language in short or part works and in class exercises before moving on to drafting complete pieces of work.

It is impossible to stipulate minimum length for summative assessments – a poem, or a piece of advertising copy, for example, may well be very short, but fulfil all evidence requirements. Candidates should be advised to consider the maximum length of a short story or feature, for example, as ranging between 800-1000 words and should be reminded that they will be expected to discuss and redraft and rework texts and that lengthier pieces, while not proscribed, may well prove unwieldy. Peer and assessor discussion and constructive criticism should be encouraged at all stages. Summative assessment, however, should be the candidate's unaided work.

Since the thrust of this Unit concentrates on developing the skills available to the writer who seeks to involve the reader — to sustain interest, to persuade - the Unit will specially benefit those seeking to apply these skills within a vocational context. Candidates should therefore be encouraged to develop a disciplined attitude to their work. Candidates should be encouraged to submit work presented to a professional standard, making use of word processors and desktop publishing techniques, where appropriate, in order to comply with industry standard layout for copy. Work should be submitted to pre-set deadlines where possible, to replicate the demands of the media industries.

Where the Unit is delivered within a vocational framework, opportunities for integration with other Units should be explored at the beginning of teaching so that informed choices can be made by candidates. It may be possible, for example, to integrate assessments with Units such as HN Unit D7LR 34 *Writing for the Media*, and Journalism or Public Relations Units. While it may be possible for the assessor to outline integration paths at the outset, it is more likely that integration will be negotiated on an individual basis, depending on form and genre choices.

Candidates could be encouraged to submit appropriate work for publication. Therefore, the discussion of markets, the preparation of covering letters, may well be useful, but should not be undertaken at the expense of learning and refining writing techniques and the production of texts.

#### *General*

Where this Unit is being linked with other Units in the course, eg Journalism and/or Advertising Units, the importance of deadlines must be stressed.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

#### Outcome 1

##### Discourse

Monologue – either a single character, using forms such as the monologue, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, formal speech, first person narrative, newspaper columnists' contribution, letter, diary.

Dialogue – two or more characters using for example conversation — face to face, or telephone, the epistolary form, using letters or email.

Assessor input for Outcome 2 should outline narrative conventions and study of models should allow for appreciation and understanding of the conventions of narrative technique. Since extracts are unlikely to allow for the understanding of narrative shape and conventions it is likely that whole, shorter pieces only be studied. Exposition from creative writers should be encouraged.

#### Outcome 2

##### Narrative techniques

Traditional devices such as plotting, creating suspense and deferring the ending which engages readers and encourages them to read to the end of the piece, extended metaphor, allegory, running jokes and other contemporary techniques which invite the readers to work with the text to create or complete meaning.

For Outcome 3, assessor input should include discussion and analysis of affective techniques. The use of models should be encouraged and candidates should be encouraged to discuss ideas in a workshop setting.

#### Outcome 3

Affective techniques such as persuasive writing, emotive writing, rhetoric, humour, irony used deliberately to achieve the desired effects.

The use of models and assessor exposition should help candidates identify techniques for creating character. Formative work will ideally be carried out in a workshop setting, with peer and assessor input. Summative assessment must be the candidate's unaided work. It is likely that formative workshop sessions will be punctuated by sessions during which candidates are allotted time on summative assessment work in open-book, controlled conditions where arrangements have been put in place to assure the authenticity of the candidate's work, and the candidate has worked without assistance. Summative assessment should be submitted to strict pre-arranged deadlines and presented in a professional manner using the appropriate guidelines laid down in, for example, professional handbooks such as the *Writers' and Artists' Year Book*. While assessments need not be undertaken in the order in which they are presented, and, while candidates may choose to work on more than one

assessment at a time, it is important that a specific deadline for each assessment is set and adhered to in order to replicate the conditions operating in the creative and cultural industries.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)**

**Unit title:** Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

### **Open learning**

The Unit is well-suited for delivery in an open learning, or distance learning format. Indeed, where a variety of delivery patterns is required within a course, or if self-discipline and time management are vital qualities in the vocational area, then it may be preferable.

Discussion of models is an important aspect of the learning undertaken, and while copyright difficulties may prevent the assessor from supplying models in open or distance learning pack formats, reading lists could well be provided.

It must be conceded that while there are possible gains through such delivery, open or distance learning denies the candidate participation in writing workshops and since these are the places where creative ideas are generated and refined, it is strongly recommended that where possible face-to-face group meetings are arranged, and that online support is offered, with candidates able to contact the assessor for feedback and encouragement.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 — publication code A1030).

### **Special needs**

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs and Candidates for whom English is an Additional Language* (SQA, 2000).

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Creative Writing for Vocational Purposes

Creative writing can be undertaken for pleasure or for profit. Whatever your reason for undertaking this Unit, you will be encouraged to think of creative writing not in terms of inspiration, exceptional talent or an elitist gift, but as a craft which can be learned, practised and honed. The creative and cultural industries depend on new ideas and new talent and this Unit will offer a grounding in the techniques available to the creative writer and will encourage you to think about creative writing in a vocational context.

While the Outcomes make specific demands, you should not find the amount of assessment burdensome. In most cases you will be encouraged to keep texts to around a maximum of 1000 words. This will allow you to revise, redraft and polish your work. You may find that integration with other Units is possible — for example, Journalism Units. Discussion on integration at an early stage with your assessor is recommended so that it can inform your choices on form and genre.

While you are free to choose the form and the genre in which you write, however, each of the three Outcomes demands that you demonstrate mastery of specific skills – skills which underpin effective and affective writing. This means that as well as mastering the creative elements of writing, the nuts and bolts of producing effects, you will also be learning self-discipline. Both creativity and self-discipline are required for success. You will also be expected to read other writers' work, to seek models which will offer you ideas and insights into writers' techniques and their use but above all you will be encouraged to be innovative and bold, to experiment and enjoy the creative process.

You will be encouraged throughout to adopt a business-like approach to your work by submitting work in a professional manner so that it conforms to the industry demands of layout and presentation, and to work to pre-arranged deadlines. You may find that you wish to market the work you have produced or combine work into a class magazine. Neither option, however, is necessary for successful completion of the Unit.

Before you are assessed you will have the opportunity to discuss and develop these skills and ideas.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

1. Write discourse in a chosen form and genre to reveal characteristics of the speaker(s)
2. Sustain reader interest using the conventions of narrative technique in a chosen genre
3. Write to manipulate reader response in a chosen form and genre