

Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: News Gathering

Unit code: F1TM 35

Unit purpose: This Unit will enable candidates to develop expertise in producing content for a news programme. This Unit will develop skills and knowledge in journalism and content production for news inserts with restricted programme durations and set transmission deadlines.

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

- 1 Produce a vox pop news insert.
- 2 Produce a local event based news insert.
- 3 Produce a news insert to an exact running time to meet set deadlines.

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

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: While access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if the candidate has completed or is undertaking the following Higher National Units;

DM22 34	<i>Camera: An Introduction</i>
DM28 34	<i>Sound Recording: An Introduction</i>
DM11 34	<i>Lighting: An Introduction</i>
DM0X 34	<i>Editing: An Introduction</i>

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 5, Information Technology at SCQF level 5, Problem Solving at SCQF level 5 and Working with Others at SCQF level 5 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: Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 will involve candidates individually producing three separate news inserts. It is recommended that candidates are issued with news stories or topics by the delivery lecturer and that Outcome 3 is carried out within strict time limits to reflect the working practices of the industry eg transmission deadlines.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit code: F1TM 35

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

Produce a vox pop news insert

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Scriptwriting for on camera reports
- ◆ Question construction for vox pop interviews
- ◆ Location selection
- ◆ Equipment selection
- ◆ Shot types and styles for news production
- ◆ Sound recording techniques for news production
- ◆ Health and Safety regulations
- ◆ Producers' guidelines
- ◆ Copyright laws

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can produce and edit a vox pop insert. The candidate will be required to:

- ◆ produce a script for an on camera report with a run time of thirty seconds
- ◆ construct five open questions suitable for vox pop interviews appropriate to the script
- ◆ include Interviews from a minimum of five different interviewees
- ◆ select a suitable location that meets the aesthetic of the shoot in terms of relevance to the story
- ◆ select a suitable location that meets the practical needs of the shoot in terms of sound, lighting and accessibility
- ◆ construct an equipment checklist identifying and evaluating all relevant equipment
- ◆ complete risk assessment documentation identifying and resolving all potential hazards
- ◆ capture images and audio suitable for a vox pop news insert. The images must include establishing shots and interviews which use standard framing techniques that are in focus and steady. Audio should be recorded without unwanted background noise.
- ◆ edit images and audio into a vox pop news insert with a run time of 2–3 minutes
- ◆ identify legal, ethical and compliance issued
- ◆ completed copyright reporting forms.

Appropriate production paperwork plus the edited vox pop news insert should be submitted for assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: News Gathering

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1 is a practical assessment which involves individual candidates producing a short vox pop news insert. Candidates could be issued with a brief, press release or pre-selected news story by the delivery lecturer. It is recommended that this assessment is carried out over one week, though this may depend on centre resources.

It is suggested that candidates become familiar with producers guidelines and copyright law in order to understand the constraints and regulations adhered to the production of news content. Guidelines are available from Ofcom.

Outcome 2

Produce a local event based news insert

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Research Skills
- ◆ Story angle and tone
- ◆ Target audiences
- ◆ Scriptwriting for voiceover
- ◆ Image and audio techniques used to illustrate local events
- ◆ Health and Safety regulations
- ◆ Producers' guidelines
- ◆ Copyright laws

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ research a local event thoroughly. The research must include identification of relevant facts, events, suitable contributors and locations.
- ◆ select an appropriate story angle and tone relevant to the target audience
- ◆ write a voiceover script that emphasises the main points and is factually accurate
- ◆ complete risk assessment documentation identifying and resolving all potential hazards
- ◆ capture images and audio which illustrate the local event these should include establishing shots, action shots, appropriate cutaways and a minimum of one interview relevant to the chosen event. Audio should be recorded without unwanted background noise.
- ◆ edit images and audio into a local event based news insert with a run time of 2-3 minutes
- ◆ completed copyright reporting forms.

Appropriate production paperwork plus the edited news insert should be submitted for assessment.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: News Gathering

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 2 is a practical assessment which involves individual candidates producing a short news insert based around a local event. A clear brief may be issued to each candidate. The assessment may be carried out within one month to allow time for candidates to find suitable events. Examples of local events that could be covered are awards ceremonies, campaigns, local festivals and cultural events.

Outcome 3

Produce a news insert to an exact running time to meet set deadlines

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Importance of time within news programming and production
- ◆ Workflows used within news production
- ◆ Technical standards required for news production and broadcast

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ organise the capture of images and audio to illustrate a news story to meet the set deadline
- ◆ complete risk assessment documentation identifying and resolving all potential hazards
- ◆ capture appropriate images and audio.
- ◆ edit images and audio into a news insert of exactly two minutes running time
- ◆ ensure bars, tone and vt clock ident are added to edit
- ◆ completed copyright reporting forms.

Appropriate production paperwork plus the edited news insert should be submitted for assessment.

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 3 is a practical assessment which involves individual candidates producing a short news insert to an exact running time. Candidates may be issued with a brief, press release or pre-selected news story by the delivery lecturer. It is recommended that this assessment is carried out over one day, though this may depend on centre resources.

Administrative Information

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Unit title: News Gathering
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: News Gathering

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

This Unit will give candidates the opportunity to mirror current industry practice and become familiar with the skills, knowledge, techniques and timescales required within the news industry.

The first Outcome requires candidates to produce a vox pop news insert. This Outcome will involve candidates becoming confident in asking open questions which will evoke a full response from the interviewee. Interview techniques may be learned and practiced by the candidate. Framing of the interview may be discussed by looking at examples of what works in a news item, including edit techniques. Candidates could also view various 'on camera reports' from a variety of news channels to become familiar with the style, language and structure used in news reporting. What makes a good news story may also be discussed.

For the assessed news insert, it is suggested that the topic of the news article is issued by the lecturer using current news topics from local papers and websites. This is not a timed assignment but it is extremely important that the candidate meets the allocated deadline. The edited insert, equipment checklist and related production paperwork form part of the assessment

The second Outcome requires candidates to produce a local event based news insert. This Outcome involves the researching and filming of a local event for a news insert. Examples of local event news items may be viewed and discussed in terms of angle/viewpoint, commentary, structure and specific shots and research methods may also be discussed. Candidates could be given the opportunity to choose their own local event with guidance from the lecturer. Local websites such as online events guides and local papers are good starting points. Assessment for this Outcome involves the candidate researching and producing a news item based on a local event. The edited insert, research notes, and related production paperwork will form part of the assessment. This is not a timed assessment but it is extremely important that the candidate meets the allocated deadline.

The third Outcome requires candidates to produce an edited news insert to a specific running time, whilst meeting a set deadline. Knowledge and skills from Outcome 1 and 2 are further utilised in this Outcome and combined with knowledge of working practices within the news industry. This is a timed assessment with high importance placed on the candidate meeting the allocated deadline. The candidate could be issued with a news story by the lecturer on the morning of the assessment, and tasked with completing the news insert and the necessary related production on the same day. However, deadlines set as part of the timed assessment may be dependent on equipment and facilities available.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: News Gathering

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit may be combined with the Unit DM15 34 *Multi Camera: Camera Techniques*, where candidates produce content for the live studio productions. As a freestanding qualification, this Unit may be suitable for infill or part time candidates.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may offer opportunities to develop components of the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 5.

Within all Outcomes, candidates are encouraged to interpret factual information, identify key facts, decide on an appropriate story angle, summarising this information in an on camera report or a voiceover script. This is further developed with all candidates producing short news articles using images and audio to communicate information, via the story, to an audience.

As part of the learning and teaching process candidates may view news articles from a variety of channels and analyse the intended audience based upon the house style.

As part of assessment for all Outcomes, candidates are also asked to produce factual documentation which identifies and resolves issues concerning health and safety, copyright, equipment choice and legal, ethical and compliance concerns.

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the Core Skill of Information Technology at SCQF level 5

Within all Outcomes of these Units, candidates may make use of the internet as a research tool, use e-mail to communicate with contributors and use word processing software and relevant templates to produce production documentation. Editing of the news inserts may involve candidates using non-linear software, connecting equipment, storing information in a logical and safe manner, backing up files, overcoming technical problems and outputting the news insert to an accepted delivery format.

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may offer opportunities to develop components of the Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 5.

Within all Outcomes of this Unit candidates are required to identify appropriate story angles based upon research, identify technical and creative problems with locations identifying and resolving health and safety issues. Throughout all stages of productions candidates may have to continually identify, assess and resolve technical or creative issues in order to produce their news inserts.

All Outcomes within this Unit require candidates to plan and produce short news inserts generating production paperwork to document this process. Within the teaching process the importance of planning should be emphasised in order for candidates to produce news inserts with the correct running times and to meet given deadlines. Real life examples of the workflow and timescales used within news production could be used to illustrate this.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: News Gathering

Within all Outcomes of this Unit candidates will be required to continually identify, assess and resolve technical or creative issues in order to produce their news inserts. More specifically as part of editing process candidates will review audio and images in terms of technical and creative quality making judgments as to what should be included in the final edit. Throughout the Unit, it may be beneficial to critically analyse all news inserts, summative and formative as a tutor and peer review.

The delivery and assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the Core Skill of Working with Others at SCQF level 5.

Within this Unit candidates may work within a team, with peers allocated crew roles in areas such as camera or sound. Candidates may organise their peers depending on suitability for the given role. Selecting and encouraging appropriate contributors to appear as vox pops and interviewees, negotiating access and locations may also allow the candidate to demonstrate their ability to plan and negotiate.

Open learning

This Unit may be suited to delivery by open learning, providing the candidate is able to carry out the practical project work and has regular access to the specialist equipment required.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

Unit title: News Gathering

This Unit is designed to enable you to develop expertise in producing content for a news programme. It will develop your skills and knowledge in the areas of journalism and content production, particularly whilst considering running times and the constraint of adhering to strict deadlines.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- 1 Produce a vox pop news insert.
- 2 Produce a local event based news insert.
- 3 Produce an edited news insert to a specific running time to meet set deadlines.

There will be three separate practical assessments which will each involve you producing a news insert. Doing so will encompass research, scriptwriting, organisation, and the capture and editing of images and audio. You will learn about and follow current practices used within the industry, and gain an understanding of relevant legislation such as copyright law and health and safety requirements.

By the end of the Unit, you will understand how to create good news content efficiently and to be able to do so within set time constraints.

There is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components within this Unit but there may be opportunities for you to develop important Core Skills. These may include Components of Communication, Information Technology, Problem Solving, Working with others all at SCQF level 5