



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio

**Unit code:** F20C 34

**Unit purpose:** The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to the fundamental concepts of digital audio production, in terms of defining project requirements, planning and production. Practical experience will be gained in the acquiring and editing audio data to a given project brief. This Unit will also introduce candidates to wider areas of consideration in digital audio production in terms of health and safety and copyright issues.

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

- 1 Define requirements for digital audio content for a project brief.
- 2 Plan the acquisition and/or creation of digital audio content for a project brief.
- 3 Acquire digital audio content for a project brief.
- 4 Create content for inclusion in a digital audio project.

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

*\*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:** Access to this Unit will be at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended that candidates should have a working knowledge of personal computers. This may be evidenced by the possession of relevant National Units, HN Units, or relevant work experience.

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop elements of the Core Skill of problem solving 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.

This Unit is included within the framework of the HNC Interactive Media although it can also be delivered within other frameworks which require the inclusion of digital audio acquisition. This Unit may be delivered as a free standing Unit but benefits greatly by being integrated with other practical Units within the context of a larger project.

There is potential to integrate this Unit with other practical or content creation Units.

## General information for centres (cont)

**Assessment:** Evidence is required that candidates have achieved all Outcomes.

Candidates are encouraged to use the internet in any research, etc however, the evidence produced must be the candidate's own words. Assessors should assure themselves of the authenticity of candidate's evidence.

Written and/or oral recorded, performance and product evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidate has achieved the requirements of all of the Outcomes to show that the candidate has appropriate knowledge and understanding of the content of this Unit.

This Unit should be based upon a practical project that allows the candidate to demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to work within a production environment.

The candidate will implement a solution based on:

- ◆ Presentation documentation/materials
- ◆ Planning documentation
- ◆ Acquired digital audio
- ◆ Edited digital audio
- ◆ Finished product

All assessments within this Unit should be presented as open-book and carried out under supervised conditions. Due to the nature of this open-book assessment presentation assessors should assure themselves of the authenticity of each candidate's submission.

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

**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio

**Unit code:** F20C 34

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**

Define requirements for digital audio content for a project brief

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Purpose
- ◆ Content
- ◆ Digital audio formats
- ◆ Audio recording and acquisition hardware
- ◆ Editing and manipulation software
- ◆ Digital audio distribution media
- ◆ Current health and safety regulations relevant to audio acquisition
- ◆ Copyright implications of digital audio acquisition
- ◆ Identify sources of and/or propose creation of digital audio material appropriate to the given brief

### **Outcome 2**

Plan the acquisition and/or creation of digital audio content for a project brief

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Identify technical resources
- ◆ Identify human resources
- ◆ Produce a schedule of activities for acquisition and/or creation of digital audio content within the timescale specified by a given brief
- ◆ Identify all health and safety implications for the acquisition activity and propose precautionary measures as necessary
- ◆ Obtain appropriate copyright clearances and permissions

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

**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio

### Outcome 3

Acquire digital audio content for a project brief

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Acquire audio material which meets the requirements
- ◆ Digital audio material conforms to the technical requirements
- ◆ Acquire material within the timescale prescribed by a production schedule
- ◆ Acquire digital audio material in a manner consistent with health and safety guidelines

### Outcome 4

Create content for inclusion of digital audio for a project brief

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Edit and mix digital audio material according to the requirements of a project brief
- ◆ Output edited material in the format specified within the requirements of a project brief

#### Evidence Requirements for the Unit

Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 should be assessed as one integrated project and this project should be based on one given project brief throughout all the Outcomes. The assessment covering all these Outcomes are open-book but should be carried out in supervised conditions. All Evidence Requirements for each Outcome must be achieved.

Candidates will be required to provide the following evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills:

- ◆ in the production of a Requirements Documentation for the project brief and this must at include at least:
  - purpose of the project
  - content to be included in the audio sequence(s) eg voiceover, music, sound effects and the order in which they should be
  - digital audio formats including edited and unedited
  - audio recording and acquisition hardware required
  - editing and manipulation software required for production
  - digital audio distribution media eg DAT, CD, DVD
  - current health and safety regulations relevant to audio acquisition that must be considered
  - copyright implications related to acquiring audio sequence
  - sources of digital audio material
- ◆ in the production of a Production Document for the given project brief which should contain:
  - a script and/or storyboard
  - itemised technical and human resources
  - a detailed plan/schedule of acquisition and creation activities
  - a risk assessment identifying any health and safety implications for the acquisition and stating precautionary measures that have to be taken
  - copyright implications related to acquiring audio sequence

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

### Unit title: Digital Media: Audio

- ◆ to acquire for the given project brief eg record, capture, source, audio material
  - audio material must meet the requirements of the project
  - digital audio material must conform to the technical requirements of the project
  - acquire material within the timescale prescribed by a production schedule
  - acquire digital audio material in a manner consistent with health and safety issues
  - at least one clip must be recorded using a microphone
- ◆ to edit and mix digital audio material to script/storyboard for the given project brief
  - apply at least one edit eg cut, copy, paste, normalisation, manipulate
  - mix two pieces of audio
  - the choice of edit(s) and mix(es) should be relevant to the project brief
- ◆ to output edited material in the format specified within the requirements of the given brief
- ◆ original, edited and mixed material which conforms to the requirements of the project brief which must be presented and submitted to the assessor.

### Assessment Guidelines for the Unit

Candidates could base this project on a choice of topics offered by the centre or alternative of their own choice, however, this should be approved by the assessor. Knowledge should be demonstrated within the context of the interpretation of the brief and the strategy proposed to fulfil the requirements of this project brief.

Candidates should be given the project brief early on in the delivery of the Unit to familiarise themselves with what they have to achieve.

It is expected that the Requirements Document would consist of approximately 1,000 words. Audio storyboards could also be used to define the sequence of the clips to be used. The Production Document could comprise of a combination of documents — word processed reports, spreadsheets, project management schedules and copyright emails/letters. The plan should clearly indicate a list of tasks and timescales with a summary of the tasks to be undertaken. A one page document would not be deemed sufficient evidence.

It is recommended that the digital audio sequence comprise of more than two pieces of audio and should last for at least 3 minutes. Candidates should be given the opportunity to demonstrate a number of edits and manipulations, beyond the minimum stated in the Evidence Requirements of the Unit.

It is expected that candidates should be able to complete this assessment in about 10 hours.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F20C 34  
**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio  
**Superclass category:** KG  
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### History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

**Source:** SQA

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

### **Unit title: Digital Media: Audio**

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 is included within the framework of the HNC Interactive Media although it can also be delivered within other frameworks which require the inclusion of digital audio acquisition. The Unit may be delivered as a free standing Unit but benefits greatly by being integrated with other practical Units within the context of a larger project.

There is potential to integrate this Unit with other practical or content creation Units.

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to the fundamental concepts of digital audio production. Discussion, throughout this Unit, should cover how to use portable audio recorders, analogue to digital conversion, streaming audio, file formats eg RAW, MP3, WMA, WAV, MIDI etc. The various pieces of equipment and staffing required should also be introduced along with current health and safety legislation. Candidates will not be expected to be sound engineers at the end of the Unit but should be able to demonstrate basic skills and knowledge.

Candidates should be given the opportunity to explore the various aspects of defining a project based on clients needs, planning projects based on time and resources and the necessity to produce clear plans of their activities.

Case studies could be used to highlight the importance of adhering to health and safety regulations and obtaining copyright permission. Examples of risk assessment documents should be used. Pro forma industry risk assessments exist and BBC training has an excellent on-line training resource for this.

Candidates should be given plenty of practical experience acquiring audio and producing digital audio sequences. There are opportunities for group work to be used in these instances.

At the time of writing, there are a number of applications for use in the delivery of this Unit. These include: Sony Sound Forge, Adobe Audition, SoundEdit Pro, Pro Tools. This list is not exhaustive, however, the software that candidates are exposed to should allow them to achieve the requirements of the assessment without any limitations.

The Unit should allow for candidates to optionally create their own audio, eg music, sound effects. Formative exercises could address the requirements of a scenario, eg animation, presentation, game, newsreel, whereby candidates can source sound effects, wild tracks and record dialogue and narration.

There is also the opportunity to combine this Unit with the HN Unit AA99 99 *Interactive Media: Video* to provide a sound bed for the video footage that the candidate has created.

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

### Unit title: Digital Media: Audio

The Unit exists to provide centres with the opportunity for their candidates to work with audio within an interactive media context and to allow centres the freedom to integrate the content within their own context of delivery.

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

The assessment of this Unit could be contained as part of a larger project plan or integrated with the HN Unit F20D 34 *Digital Media: Video*.

Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 should be assessed holistically by the use of one project. Candidates could be given a choice of topics from a given list to base this project on. Candidates could base this project on a choice of topics offered by the centre or an alternative of their own choice, however, this should be approved by the assessor. Knowledge should be demonstrated within the context of the interpretation of the project brief and the strategy proposed to fulfil the requirements of this project brief.

The relationship of the assessor to the candidate is analogous to that of a client or an executive producer. As the Unit is a single credit Unit at level 7, care should be taken to avoid providing a project brief which is too complex for delivery within the given time scale and available resources. The acquired material need not all be original material produced by the candidate themselves. For example, the brief could be to produce a sound track for a piece of work that the candidate has produced for another Unit eg an animation, video, presentation or website.

It is recommended that the project brief be issued early on in the course, so that candidates are given adequate time to form and try out different ideas.

#### Outcome 1

For this Outcome, the candidates are required to analyse the requirements of a given brief and then present their solution to the assessor. Assessors should be looking for the application of the Knowledge and Skills for the Outcome within the solution.

An assessor should make sure that a candidate is aware of the technical constraints, timescales and deadlines that they are working to.

From the project brief, candidates could produce documentation such as a requirements document. It is expected that the documentation would consist of approximately 1,000 words. Centres may wish to make successful submission of this Outcome as a pre-requisite for progressing on to Outcome 2.

Audio scripts or storyboards could also be used to define the sequence to be used.



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

**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit (cont)**

#### **Outcome 2**

This Outcome is where the candidate plans the acquisition of the material. For example, identifying who does what, where, when and how. The Production Document could comprise of a combination of documents - word processed document, spreadsheets, project management schedules. The plan should clearly indicate a list of tasks and timescales. A one page document would not be deemed sufficient.

If candidates are acquiring the material themselves, then it is important that current health and safety legislation are adhered to. Reference to this should be evidenced in the documentation, possibly in a risk assessment report. For example, if recording loud music or loud noises for sound effects, then there are implications for hearing damage and adequate precautions need to be taken.

Candidates should adhere to current copyright legislation and provide evidence that they have requested copyright permission for clips used, that aren't of their own creation.

Centres may wish to make successful submission of this Outcome a pre-requisite for progressing on to Outcome 3.

#### **Outcome 3**

In this Outcome, the candidate physically acquires the material, either by creating it themselves or by sourcing and acquiring from third parties. The material acquired should conform to appropriate legislation and be fit for purpose as proposed in the Requirements Document, script, storyboard and/or plan. The candidate should also acquire the material according to the schedule they produced.

Centres may wish to make successful submission of this Outcome a pre-requisite for progressing on to Outcome 4.

#### **Outcome 4**

In this Outcome, the candidates will be preparing the material for editing, editing the acquired material and preparing it for inclusion/distribution in the format specified by the given brief. Candidates should be encouraged to experiment with the different features of the software used, for editing, manipulating and mixing sounds.

The finished product should be an accurate realisation of the candidate's initial presented creative solution. There may be occasions where an initial idea hits problems or an opportunity to enhance the initial solution presents itself. Under these circumstances the assessor (client) should approve these changes and these should be noted in the production-documentation.

The final sequence should be output in the format specified within the project requirements.

All files used, originals and edits, should be supplied to the assessor.

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

**Unit title:** Digital Media: Audio

### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

The assessment of this Unit may contribute towards the component ‘Planning and Organising’ of the Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 5. Candidates may have to develop a plan for their own research in Outcome 1 and 2. The general skill that candidates may have to complete is ‘Plan, Organise and Complete a Task’.

Assessment of this Unit may allow candidates to develop the ‘Critical Thinking’ component of the Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 5. Candidates may have opportunities to gather evidence to support their thinking and analysis. The general skill that candidates may complete is ‘Analyse a Situation or Issue’.

### **Open learning**

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional planning and resources may be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

A combination of new and traditional authentication tools may have to be devised for assessment and re-assessment purposes.

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

### **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Digital Media: Audio

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce you to the fundamental concepts of digital audio production in terms of defining project requirements, planning and production. You will gain practical experience in the acquiring and editing audio data to a given project brief. This Unit will also introduce you health and safety and copyright issues that relate to digital audio production.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- 1 Define requirements for digital audio content for a project brief.
- 2 Plan the acquisition and/or creation of digital audio content for a project brief.
- 3 Acquire digital audio content for a project brief.
- 4 Create content for inclusion in a digital audio project.

In Outcome 1, you will be given a brief by your assessor (the client) which you will be required to interpret. You will then present your solution to the brief to your assessor who will approve your solution and you will proceed to Outcome 2.

In Outcome 2, you will plan how you are going to acquire the material you require for your solution and plan a schedule for this within any deadlines set by your assessor (client).

In Outcome 3, you actually undertake the acquisition of your digital audio material according to your schedule.

In Outcome 4, you will prepare the material for editing, undertake the edit and then output the finished solution in the format specified in the brief. The finished product will be presented to your assessor (client) and as specified in your initial project brief.