



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

**Unit code:** DV73 34

**Superclass:** BA

**Publication date:** November 2014

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 03

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to give candidates an understanding of copywriting, by balancing creativity with the conventions of the advertising industry. It not only focuses on writing advertising copy, it also focuses on the target audience.

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

- 1 Evaluate copy across a variety of media.
- 2 Produce advertising copy appropriate to selected media.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended that candidates have an awareness of the advertising industry which could be demonstrated by achievement of the HN Unit Advertising: The Advertising Industry or equivalent. Also competence in communications is beneficial. This may be demonstrated by possession of Core Skill *Communications* at SCQF level 5.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

## **General information (cont)**

### **Core Skills**

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6 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**

In order to achieve this Unit, candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have satisfied the minimum Evidence Requirements for each Outcome. A variety of assessment methods could be used for this Unit.

It should be noted that Outcome 1 refers to the evaluation of a variety of written copy across various media so this Outcome could be completed under restricted open-book using extended response questions.

Outcome 2 refers to the production of copy within one campaign for specific media so could be assessed by the production of two separate pieces of copy for two distinct media.

The evidence generated from Outcome 1 can also be assessed in Outcome 2, which requires those knowledge and skills, encouraging a more holistic assessment process.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

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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

Evaluate copy across a variety of media.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Types of advertising media
- ◆ Conventions of professional copy in relation to specific media
- ◆ Copy length
- ◆ Professional script format
- ◆ Appropriate language and style for audience
- ◆ Call to action and response mechanisms
- ◆ Voluntary codes and legal requirements
- ◆ Objectives of campaign

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills of the broad conventions of copywriting by evaluating one piece of copy from broadcast and one piece from non-broadcast.

Each candidate must correctly:

- ◆ define at least two objectives of the campaign material
- ◆ state three distinctions between above and below the line media
- ◆ identify the target market of the respective copy
- ◆ state advantages of appropriate use of media for delivery of message
- ◆ explain the importance of convention in terms of copy length, layout and use of language
- ◆ identify adherence to relevant voluntary codes and legal requirements

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

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

### Assessment Guidelines

Assessment for this Outcome could take a variety of forms. For example, candidates could be supplied two pieces of copy, one from broadcast and one from non-broadcast media at a suitable time prior to the assessment being undertaken. For the assessment, candidates then answer a set of extended response questions related to the Evidence Requirements of the Outcome. Alternatively, candidates may produce a report.

A dedicated checklist may be employed to ensure all Evidence Requirements are covered.

The evidence generated from Outcome 1 can also be assessed in Outcome 2, which requires those knowledge and skills thus encouraging a more holistic assessment process.

### Outcome 2

Produce advertising copy appropriate to selected media.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Target market recognition
- ◆ Media platforms, conventions and controls
- ◆ Brand consistency over different media
- ◆ Industry format

#### Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can fulfil the requirements of a creative brief.

The candidate must provide evidence to show they can:

- ◆ fulfil a creative brief producing copy for both broadcast and non-broadcast media
- ◆ use media platforms to identify appropriate copy length, style and language
- ◆ adhere to voluntary and legal requirements
- ◆ meet agreed deadlines

#### Assessment Guidelines

A range of assessment methods could be used for this Outcome. For example, candidates could be issued with a creative brief referring to a product or service. After relevant self-directed research using a variety of sources has been undertaken, the candidate produces suitable copy for the broadcast and non-broadcast media.

Candidates should use appropriate language for intended audience, adhere to all voluntary and legal requirements and utilise industry standard layouts appropriate to media.

Length of copy will be dictated by chosen medium.

The evidence generated from Outcome 1 can also be assessed in Outcome 2, which requires those knowledge and skills thus encouraging a more holistic assessment process.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

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 is a mandatory Unit within the Group Award HNC/HND Advertising and PR and may also form part of other Higher National programmes. It may be offered as a Unit within other Group Awards.

This Unit is intended for candidates who wish to pursue a career in the creative side of advertising. It is a specialised Unit, however the skills gained and the knowledge learned can serve well candidates who may find employment in other areas within the structure of an advertising agency or other media entity.

As part of the learning process for Outcome 1, candidates may initially wish to work in groups. Time should be allocated for group discussions and evaluation of copy, although the copy examples used for the actual assessment could be presented to candidates on the day of the assessment. Time should be allocated for each candidate to familiarise him/herself with the material prior to assessment.

The copy chosen could be selected by the assessor. Copy should have been published or broadcast and could range from newspaper and/or magazine advertisements, sales/information brochures, corporate/governmental website copy, television/cinema and/or radio scripts, billboard/poster copy and copy used in ambient media.

The following notes give additional information on each Outcome:

#### Outcome 1

Types of advertising media to be covered:

- ◆ Above the line advertising: classified: press and magazines, television, commercial radio, outdoor (billboards, six-sheets), transport and cinema, internet.
- ◆ Below the line advertising: classified, direct marketing, sponsorship, point of sale, exhibitions, sales literature
- ◆ Digital media: mobile marketing, internet banner advertisements, email marketing etc.

Conventions of professional copy in relation to specific media and target audience

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

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

### Outcome 2

Target audience: who is the message aimed at? This will affect style, tone and language.  
Professional format: the correct way to present (especially) broadcast scripts.

Length of copy: crucial for radio commercials, which are always produced in blocks of ten seconds, thirty seconds being the average length, however 20 and 40 second scripts are also common.

Timing: Candidates should be encouraged to time their own radio scripts by reading them aloud, and this need not be done in the classroom.

Television format: A simple format is to divide an A4 sheet into two columns. The left hand column is headed VIDEO, the right, AUDIO. Succinct descriptions of visuals are recommended. Sound effects (SFX) are placed under the audio column, as is any speech. Like radio, TV is sold in blocks of ten seconds, and thirty seconds is the recommended length for candidate scripts.

Redrafting: In all cases, be it broadcast media or otherwise, revisiting work over again is the key to writing good copy. Candidates may wish to seek one another's opinions, emulating a standard in the industry.

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

An integrated approach is adopted in the delivery of this Unit. Candidates and assessors will identify a tangible link between Outcomes 1 and 2, making for a holistic learning method.

In both Outcomes 1 and 2, it is suggested that selecting examples of work broadly targeted to candidates will encourage a deeper understanding. Many resources exist, in particular on the Internet, where successful and notable examples of relevant material are archived.

Advertising agencies are often happy to supply briefs, scripts, and even end-products in the form of printed advertisements, CDs of radio commercials and examples of television commercials on video or DVD. These are excellent, dynamic support materials.

As part of the learning process for Outcome 2, candidates are required to craft their own examples of copy. The references to client meetings are important in emulating so far as possible, a celebrated industry convention.

It would be helpful, where appropriate for this Unit, to make candidates aware that the rapid growth of digital media is having a significant impact on marketing communications — and that its use is only likely to increase. New forms of digital marketing techniques are emerging all the time and it is important that candidates are made aware of these and their application within advertising.

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

### Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

Assessment for Outcome 1 could take a variety of forms. For example, prior to assessment being undertaken, candidates are supplied with two pieces of copy — one from broadcast and one from non-broadcast media. Candidates then answer a set of extended response questions covering the Evidence Requirements of the Outcome. Alternatively, candidates may produce a report — a suggest word count of 1,000 to ensure all Evidence Requirements are covered.

A dedicated checklist may also be used to ensure all Evidence Requirements are covered.

Where candidates are unable to undertake a written response, it is suggested that oral responses be restricted to 10 minutes per candidate. Oral responses may be conducted under normal classroom conditions and may be recorded.

Candidates unable to undertake a written assessment may wish to supplement oral responses, with the employment of visual aids such as AV slides or IT applications.

Assessment for Outcome 2 can also take a variety of forms. Candidates could be issued with a creative brief for a product or a service and be encouraged to initially discuss the brief in groups before answering it. Self-directed research should also be encouraged, utilising a variety of sources (internet, libraries, relevant media titles).

Where possible the brief should originate from an advertising agency, although assessors may prefer to either construct their own brief, or manipulate an actual professional brief at his/her own discretion.

After relevant self-directed research using a variety of sources has been undertaken, the candidate produces suitable copy for the broadcast and non-broadcast media.

Candidates should use appropriate language for intended audience, adhere to all voluntary and legal requirements and utilise industry standard layouts appropriate to media.

Length of copy will be dictated by chosen medium.

The evidence generated from Outcome 1 can also be assessed in Outcome 2, which requires those knowledge and skills thus encouraging a more holistic assessment process.

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

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

### Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are no Core Skills embedded in this Unit. However, the following table gives some examples of the opportunities for developing Core Skills within this Unit.

Core Skill	SCQF level	Opportunities for development
<b>Communication</b>	Level 6	The tasks required by this Unit can contribute to the reading and writing aspects of this Core Skill.
<b>Written Communication</b> (Reading)	Level 6	Candidates are expected to read and understand complex written information.
<b>Written Communication</b> (Writing)	Level 6	Candidates will be expected to source, produce and present written materials to an industry acceptable level. Candidates have to produce well-structured and clear responses addressing the Evidence Requirements. This has to be in appropriate copy length, style and language.
<b>Oral Communication</b>	Level 6	Candidates, by producing copy for broadcast media in Outcome 2, will have an opportunity to develop the component 'Oral Communication' of the Core Skill Communication.
<b>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b>	Level 6	Candidates have the opportunity to include appropriate software packages to support accuracy and the effective presentation of materials.

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

**Unit title:** Advertising: Copywriting

### **Open learning**

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the Centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate's evidence.

### **Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs**

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
03	Insertion of short guidance in Support Notes of this Unit re inclusion of the impact and application of digital media on advertising and some updated examples of digital media.	04/11/14
02	Recommended prior knowledge and skills section — now includes recommendation that candidates have awareness of the advertising industry before taking this Unit. Outcome 1 — deleted an item of Knowledge/Skills (on teams in the advertising industry) and corresponding two Evidence Requirements as these are not appropriate and are covered in another Unit. Outcome 2 — minor amendment to Outcome title. Assessment Guidance — made more flexible and increased guidance in Support Notes. Core Skills — enhanced information to assist centres. Information for candidates — minor amends to reflect changes in Unit.	24/03/11

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## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

This Unit is designed to give you a competent grounding in advertising copywriting.

It balances the creativity of the craft with the conventions found in the industry itself. The Unit focuses not only on what you are producing, but also crucially who the target audience is.

It is important to put yourself in your target audience's position. Broadly speaking, who are they? What language are they familiar with? What will engage them? What will turn them off?

In the first Outcome you are asked to evaluate copy - to discuss it and deconstruct it.

You will be given the opportunity to evaluate advertising copy over different media before your assessment.

Outcome 1 will give you the knowledge and skills you will require to complete Outcome 2. This Outcome sees you crafting your own copy in one campaign for two distinct media: one from broadcast (TV or radio) and one from the variety of non-broadcast media like the press, magazines, outdoor advertising, transport etc.

On completion of this Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ evaluate copy across a variety of media, recognising the importance of style, tone and length of copy in relation to target audience
- ◆ produce advertising copy within one campaign over two specific media.

The assessments for this Unit can take a variety of forms such as extended responses to questions or a short report and the production of appropriate copy for a given brief. But your tutor will confirm the exact assessment arrangements.