



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

**Unit code:** FD5W 34

**Superclass:** KD

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**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to identify and gather items of radio news, script/adapt them for radio, and present them on radio programmes.

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

- 1 Select news items for radio broadcast.
- 2 Script long and short-form news bulletins.
- 3 Present radio news bulletins suitable for both CHR and mixed-format radio stations.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have good communication skills. These may be demonstrated by the possession of a suitable NQ *English or Communication* Unit (SCQF level 6). Candidates who do not possess these qualifications may be considered on the basis of other relevant experience. It is not necessary for candidates to have previous experience of radio broadcast or production.

### 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 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.

This Unit is delivered as part of the HNC in Creative Industries: Radio Broadcasting. It is likely to be taught and assessed within the subject area of that Group Award. However, it may also be delivered on a stand-alone basis, or as part of a limited package of HN Units from the award, to candidates interested in, for example, community or hospital radio.

### **Assessment**

It is recommended that the assessment of this Unit should take the form of a complete project which covers the skills and knowledge and/or understanding for all three Outcomes.

The assessment for this Unit will be product based in the form of:

- ◆ completed script for two radio news bulletins
- ◆ an audio file containing each bulletin

Candidates must also produce a production file containing written evidence of planning, selection of items for inclusion in news bulletin and sources of material used.

Evidence of sourcing and selecting the stories should be retained for Outcome 1. The script constitutes the evidence for Outcome 2, the recording for Outcome 3.

Outcomes 2 and 3 may be linked, with the script produced for Outcome 2 recorded for Outcome 3.

The tutor may stipulate that the Outcomes be undertaken for existing stations. He/she may wish to designate different stations for different Outcomes. Where radio stations are mentioned in this document this is for illustration only and does not preclude the tutor from selecting different brands.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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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

Select news items for radio broadcast.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Evaluation of news sources
- ◆ Selection of stories in terms of news worthiness
- ◆ Appropriate selection of items for audience and purpose
- ◆ Prioritising of stories in terms of news worthiness

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ select and prepare a minimum of four news stories which differ in type and style and are appropriate to a given station style.

Candidates must also produce a production file containing stories, records of sources used, own notes and any other supporting documentation.

#### Assessment Guidelines

Candidates should be familiarised with the possible sources of news (eg local events, news diary, and news taken from other media such as newspapers, radio and television) and be encouraged to question and evaluate news sources. Practical exercises could follow which require the candidates to investigate current news stories from suggested sources, perhaps with assistance from the tutor.

They should build notes in which stories are identified and checked for accuracy and authenticity against other available sources. They could be encouraged to take a balanced and impartial view, which should be reflected in their treatment of the stories. Finally, they should decide an order for the stories which reflects the relative importance of the items while observing the conventions of presenting news items on radio (ie humorous or lighter item/sporting item at end).

Candidates should select not less than four news stories in terms of news worthiness (eg news values such as locality, human interest, topicality, running story, royalty/celebrity etc.)

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

**Unit title:** Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

### Outcome 2

Script long and short-form news bulletins.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ How to write an appropriate headline to match the story
- ◆ Producing appropriate material
- ◆ Writing of appropriate voice piece and cues
- ◆ How to ensure impartial and balanced treatment is given to news stories
- ◆ Material produced to given deadlines
- ◆ Script checked for any infringements of the law as it relates to broadcasting

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ produce a 90" script for a news bulletin featuring not less than four news stories appropriate to a fast-paced youth-oriented format (eg. Galaxy, BBC Radio 1, Kerrang). This bulletin does not use any audio cuts.
- ◆ produce a script for a 2 minute, illustrated news bulletin appropriate to a mixed format (eg. Real Radio, Northsound 2, Central FM). This piece must include a vox-pop and another report.

An assessor's checklist must be used to record the required assessment information.

#### Assessment Guidelines

Candidates should script two bulletins featuring not less than four news stories each.

The tutor could base this exercise on scripting a bulletin for an existing station. A variety of types of stories could be included, and candidates should be aware of possible differences in treatment between one story and the next, within the demands of impartiality and balanced reporting, and the news policy of an existing station. The script should amount to exactly the time allocated for broadcast.

For the first bulletin, the stories should be appropriate to a young audience in selection, style and tone.

For the second bulletin, candidates should select and script stories appropriate to a more general audience, including a short vox-pop and another cut of at least 20" duration.

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

### Unit title: Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

Candidates will need to be shown how to write a professional script for radio, including the basic conventions of script layout, perhaps based around the news items selected for Outcome 1. If possible, exemplar materials of scripts should be provided. They should be made aware of the use of headlines and cues, and how these are used in news bulletins and broadcasts. Candidates should be allowed to practise the timing of short news broadcasts and be made aware of appropriateness of content, both in terms of a station's audience and the purpose its news.

The tutor may wish to set this exercise as if for an existing station, to allow candidates to examine a particular station's news policy. The written script should meet specified deadlines and should be carefully checked for any legal infringements. It is probable that this Outcome will take up the longest amount of time in the Unit, as candidates may find the demands of summarising and discriminating between biased and objective viewpoints very demanding.

### Outcome 3

Present radio news bulletins suitable for both CHR and mixed-format radio stations.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Style of presentation appropriate to audience and purpose
- ◆ Content of presentation appropriate to audience and purpose
- ◆ Broadcasts commence on deadline and accurately fill the given slot

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ present radio news broadcasts to meet the requirements of a given brief.
- ◆ insert headlines and cues at appropriate points in the broadcast.
- ◆ cue and insert audio cuts and vox-pops at appropriate points in the broadcasts.

Candidates should record two bulletins as-live. The bulletins should feature not less than four news stories each. The bulletins must be professionally presented using appropriate formatic elements and should exactly match the duration set out in the assessment.

For the first bulletin, the stories should be appropriate to a young audience in selection, style and tone. Presentation style should be appropriate to the target audience.

For the second bulletin, candidates should select and script stories appropriate to a more general audience, including a short vox-pop and another cut of at least 20" duration. Again presentation style should reflect the content and target audience.

Both bulletins must be recorded 'as-live', with the deadline for transmission and slot length indicated before the assessment starts.

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

**Unit title:** Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

An assessor's checklist must be used to record the required assessment information and a recording of the finished news broadcasts retained as evidence.

### **Assessment Guidelines**

The tutor could base this exercise on scripting a news broadcast for an existing station, and the content of the broadcast could be the bulletin prepared for assessment in Outcome 2. Candidates should be aware of possible differences in treatment between one story and the next, within the demands of impartiality and balanced reporting, and the news policy of an existing station.

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

**Unit title:** Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

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 primarily concerned with equipping candidates with a basic grounding in radio journalism. It is suitable for the candidate with little or no radio or journalism experience, but may also suit a candidate with experience who wishes to enhance his/her existing skills.

The Unit may be delivered in a way which allows candidates some opportunity to identify their own stories, and script and present them for a radio station of their choice. Alternatively, the tutor may wish to provide candidates with existing stories, leads, examples of scripts, recorded models of presentation style etc.

Candidates should be encouraged to understand the similarities and contrasts between the work of this Unit and the practices of print journalism. They should also be made aware of the necessity for multi-skilled personnel in the media industries, and the ways in which a journalist's eye for a story can be used beyond the confines of preparing and presenting the news.

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

This Unit is designed to be practical in nature, and, as such, the keeping of an accurate logbook/production file containing all relevant paperwork (scripts, news sources and written evaluation) will be an important part of assessment evidence.

### **Open learning**

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that the assessments for the Outcomes were undertaken in suitable (professional radio studio) conditions.

### **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

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## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

This Unit is designed to provide you with the Knowledge and/or Skills necessary to produce radio news bulletins in the role of a radio news journalist. The Unit is suitable for a candidate with no previous experience of radio journalism, but could also be relevant to those already working in journalism.

The work of the Unit will introduce you to all aspects of professional radio journalism. It has three main areas, each of which is a practical activity, and each of which is the subject of a separate Outcome.

You will learn about and be responsible for selecting and preparing a variety of stories for broadcast. Your production file with evidence of your planning, notes, and sources of news used will be a key part of your assessment evidence. You then move on to writing scripts for two different news bulletins. The first is a fast-paced bulletin appropriate to a music-intensive format. The second is a longer bulletin of the type that would air on a mixed-format station. The latter bulletin will include two pieces of audio.

Your scripts will be marked and retained by your tutor as evidence of the assessment. Finally, you have to present your news broadcasts 'as-live' for a radio station nominated by your tutor. Your performance here will be assessed by the tutor, using an appropriate assessor's checklist, and you will need to retain the completed recordings in your portfolio of evidence for the Unit.

An important part of the Unit is its demand that you can identify a story, prepare it for broadcast, and present it in an appropriate manner. Appropriateness for purpose means that you should be able to treat raw information in a way that brings out its potential as a news story, while observing the boundaries of taste and law. Appropriateness for audience means that over and above these boundaries, you must treat your stories in a way suitable for the demands of the radio station for which the broadcast is intended.

Overall, you should use the knowledge and skills learned in this Unit to increase your knowledge of the way news stories are found and presented on radio. You will find this process much easier if you listen to as much news on radio as you can, and analyse it carefully to see how professional journalists and broadcasters approach this task.