



## Higher National Unit specification: general information

**Unit title:** Podcasting

**Unit code:** FT64 35

**Superclass:** KA

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### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to develop an understanding of podcasts, how they differ from other forms of digital media, their technical requirements and how to make them accessible to an audience.

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

- 1 Explain the concept of podcasting.
- 2 Explain the technical features of Podcasting.
- 3 Produce and publish a series of podcasts.

### Recommended prior knowledge and skills

In order to attempt this Unit, candidates should be able to record and edit audio programmes. Candidates who have successfully completed Unit *DM1C 34: Radio: Technical Operations, Recording and Editing* or produced a radio feature in their Creative Project at level 7 will have appropriate skills. However candidates with some understanding of programme making but no Unit passes would still be able to attempt this Unit, as it is assessed on understanding of podcast nomenclature and techniques as opposed to programme making.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

## **General information (cont)**

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

### **Context for delivery**

This Unit is delivered as part of the HND in Creative Industries: Radio. 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 online radio.

### **Assessment**

The Unit is assessed by three separate submissions:

- ◆ Outcome 1 could be assessed as a written submission, oral examination or group discussion.
- ◆ Outcome 2 could be assessed as a written test, multiple choice test or orally.
- ◆ In Outcome 3, candidates will upload content to the web and produce an RSS feed using free internet tools.

Outcomes 1 and 2 may be jointly assessed.

## Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

**Unit title:** Podcasting

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

### Outcome 1

Explain the concept of podcasting.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Podcasting
- ◆ Differences between Podcasts and other online content delivery methods
- ◆ Advantages and Disadvantages of Podcasting

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ provide a definition of podcasting that differentiates it from other online content delivery methods
- ◆ explain the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting compared to other delivery formats in terms of economics and artistic intent:
  - as a means of delivering repurposed content
  - as the primary method of delivering content
- ◆ explain the implications of intellectual property.

#### Assessment Guidelines

This learning Outcome lends itself to a written or recorded oral assessment requiring a series of answers to questions about podcasting and its purpose. It would also be possible to run the assessment event as a group discussion in which the assessor should note the candidate's responses in respect of the knowledge required on a checklist.

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

**Unit title:** Podcasting

### Outcome 2

Explain the technical features of Podcasting.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Cost
- ◆ Blogs
- ◆ File types
- ◆ 'Enhanced' Podcasts
- ◆ Video Podcasts
- ◆ Bit rate and file size
- ◆ Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds
- ◆ Podcast directories

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Explain the main technical terms associated with podcasting, including:
  - Scalability of costs compared to Broadcast
  - Blog
  - File types
  - 'Enhanced' podcasts
  - Video podcasts
  - Bit rate & file size
  - RSS feed
  - Podcast directories

The assessment should be closed-book, in controlled circumstances.

#### Assessment Guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed as a written examination, multiple-choice exam or orally. The assessment should take no longer than an hour to complete.

This Outcome can be assessed separately or jointly with Outcome 1.

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

**Unit title:** Podcasting

### Outcome 3

Produce and publish a series of podcasts.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Podcast production
- ◆ Uploading podcasts
- ◆ RSS feeds

#### Evidence Requirements

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

- 1 produce podcast programmes
- 2 upload them to the internet
- 3 provide an RSS feed that can be subscribed to in regular podcast clients.

A minimum of three pieces of linked audio uploaded to either a blogging site or standard web space. A feed which can be subscribed to in popular podcast listening software must be provided.

#### Assessment Guidelines

The process of producing and recording the programme does not form part of this assessment. The three pieces of content can be produced for another part of the candidate's course work. In this case, the work can be edited to an appropriate length or recut into a series of files. If work is produced specifically for this Unit, care should be taken to ensure that is of a reasonable standard for public consumption and adheres to reasonable standards for taste, decency and content.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Podcasting

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 primary purpose of this Unit is to equip the candidate with the Knowledge and Skills to publish their own content directly to the internet as a subscribable podcast.

To do this cost effectively students will need to consider the content they put online and its appropriateness for purpose and audience. They should also consider how they would market their podcast, perhaps via a website, blog or podcast directory.

Candidates should also consider appropriate file sizes and types for the content they upload and consider how they will be downloaded and consumed.

For Outcome 3, candidates should upload and test their podcasts without assistance other than help locating an appropriate web host.

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

This course is designed to be practical in nature with around 40% of course time taken up on Outcomes 1 and 2 and the remainder on Outcome 3.

Candidates should keep on file, copies of appropriate supporting information (such as copyright clearances).

Assessors will also need to record candidate's progress on the three Outcomes on appropriate checklist.

Outcomes 1 and 2 concentrate on the definitions and terminology of podcasting, while Outcome 3 is a practical exercise in making a series of podcasts available online with an appropriate RSS feed to make it downloadable by popular podcast listening software.

As the technology and techniques involved in this type of syndicated programming is constantly evolving, assessments should reflect current practice and software usage.

For Outcome 1 candidates should be able to differentiate podcasts from straightforward downloadable content. They should be able to demonstrate the concept and advantages of subscription. They will also be able to comment on ideal durations for podcasts and consumption patterns. They will also be able to draw a distinction between podcasts produced by individuals and self-published and those provided by broadcasters as a 'catch-up' service. For the latter, candidates will wish to consider any repurposing required for creative or compliance reasons.

For Outcome 2, candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the technical features of podcasting as a media platform. For example, they should be able to contrast podcasting with traditional broadcasting and show that costs go up as downloads increase.

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

### Unit title: Podcasting

As the technologies involved in podcasting develop, centres should consider the mix of technical definitions assessed, but the core issues of subscription, scalability, methods of finding podcasts and methods of listening to podcasts should always feature.

For Outcome 3 the files should be mastered to an appropriate format for the type of content being produced. For a speech-only audio programme, a 64k mono mp3 file is more than sufficient. More challenging content might require a different bit-rate or file type. Title and episode metadata should be accurate. The files can be uploaded to any web-host which supports podcasting and an appropriate RSS feed generated either using either on-site tools or third party services. The test of the RSS feed is the ability to subscribe to the podcast in a common client and have the programmes self-download with appropriate metadata and images correctly displayed. The content generated for Outcome 3 does not have to be specially prepared for this Unit. If produced outwith the Unit consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the content for podcast distribution. Centres may wish candidates to repurpose content produced elsewhere. The candidate is assessed on the appropriateness of the content, its successful upload and the ability to download it into a podcast client.

Where possible, provision has been made for content produced for this Unit to be assessed jointly for other parts of the course. For example, rather than produce bespoke content for the podcast programmes in Outcome 3, it is recommended that this content (or content that can be repurposed as a podcast series) is also produced for other Units on the course.

The Unit could be assessed by three separate submissions:

- ◆ Outcome 1 can be assessed as a written submission, oral examination or group discussion.
- ◆ Outcome 2 can be assessed as a written test, multiple choice test or orally.
- ◆ In Outcome 3, candidates will upload content to the web and produce an RSS feed using free internet tools.

Outcomes 1 and 2 may be jointly assessed.

### Open learning

This Unit can be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

### Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

## **Opportunities for developing Core Skills**

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit; however there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components.

## **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: Podcasting

This Unit is designed to give you the opportunity to publish your content online as a Podcast. It will give you an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of podcasting as a medium in its own right. You will be able to shape existing content or produce new programmes that are appropriate to the medium and put them on the web for automated download by your listeners.

These skills will be useful in building an audience for your content or in showcasing your work to potential employers.

The Unit is designed to test your knowledge of the medium and the concepts involved.

To begin with, you will be examined on your understanding of what Podcasts are, how they differ from other kinds of digital media and how they are used by both existing broadcasters and new entrants.

You will go on to look at the technical features of Podcasting including the types of file that can be used, how they are downloaded and the web technology that is used to make it all happen. While you won't be expected to write the code needed from scratch you will be expected to know how to access tools that can complete the process for you.

Finally you will upload a series of podcasts, which your tutor will have to download from the feed address you give them. This is not a Unit in programme making, though you should consider the content you upload as it may be accessible by anybody with the feed details. The test of your ability is that your tutor can download and listen to your podcast with all the additional details, (eg artwork) that you provide.