



## **National Unit specification: general information**

**Unit title:** Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

**Unit code:** D6V7 12

**Superclass:** KA

**Publication date:** October 2011

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 03

## **Summary**

This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to analyse in depth press and magazine texts and the skills and techniques which contribute to their production. He/she will apply this knowledge to the production of a press and/or magazine product.

The Unit, as part of a tailored programme of relevant Units and/or courses, may prepare the candidate for entry to Further Education and Higher Education courses and degree programmes.

## **Outcomes**

- 1 Analyse press and magazine texts.
- 2 Participate in a group production.

## **Recommended entry**

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, the candidate would normally be expected to have attained one or more of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ National Course or National Unit(s) in Media Studies or other relevant subject at Intermediate 2
- ◆ Standard Grade in English at Credit Level  
or
- ◆ National Course in English and Communication at Intermediate 2.

## **General information (cont)**

### **Credit points and level**

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 6: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6\*)

*\*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.*

### **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.

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

### **Unit title:** Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

#### **Outcome 1**

Analyse press and magazine texts.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Analysis in terms of narrative is justified by close reference to the text.
- (b) Analysis in terms of language is justified by close reference to the text.
- (c) Analysis in terms of representation is justified by close reference to the text.
- (d) Analysis in terms of audience is justified by close reference to the text.
- (e) Analysis in terms of institution is justified by close reference to the text.

#### **Outcome 2**

Participate in a group production.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Contribution to planning is positive and effective.
- (b) Contribution to implementation is positive and effective.
- (c) Review and evaluation of the production is exemplified by close reference to the production process.

#### **Evidence Requirements for this Unit**

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

##### **Note on range for the Outcome**

Press and magazine texts: a minimum of two whole publications. One should be magazine and one should be a press publication that is not a magazine.

##### **Evidence Requirements**

Please refer to *Evidence Requirements for the Unit* at the end of the Statement of Standards.

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

**Unit title:** Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

### **OUTCOME 2**

#### **Note on range for the Outcome**

Production: magazine product or press product that is not a magazine.

Planning: from brief provided by the teacher/lecturer, which outlines purpose, genre, form and target audience; unfamiliar topic; deadlines set; number of pages/sheets agreed; impact of audience and internal and external institutional controls taken into account.

Implementation: of the brief provided; performance of technological and non-technological roles.

Review and evaluation of: contribution of individuals; finished product in relation to the brief; the effect of audience and institutional contexts on the production.

Evidence may be in hand-written, word-processed, diagrammatic, scribed and/or oral form. For Outcome 2 it may also be in the form of recorded observation of performance. Responses may be elicited by supportive questioning on paper, disk, tape or through a personal interview situation. Oral evidence should be on audio or video tape, or evidenced through question and response checklists. Evidence for this Unit should provide exemplification of all the Performance Criteria and the range.

Where an instrument of assessment, such as an essay, has been suggested it is not mandatory. The centre is free to use any instrument of assessment which meets the needs of its candidates provided that it covers the criteria and range for the Outcome and fulfils the Evidence Requirements.

The assessment for Outcome 1 will take place under controlled conditions. The candidate may refer to pro formas or other material completed during formative assessment where this was produced under controlled conditions and has not been commented on by the teacher/lecturer.

#### **Outcome 1**

An extended response to two texts which together cover all pcs and all items in the range. This could take the form of an essay or extended notes. The response will comprise a minimum of 800 words, excluding diagrammatic material and quotations.

The texts used may have been studied in class previously.

While two whole publications should be studied, the response may demonstrate the candidate's knowledge and understanding by analysing particular items or extracts.

#### **Outcome 2**

Evidence should demonstrate the individual contribution to planning, implementing and evaluating a group production. The brief will be on an unfamiliar topic so that there is some demand in terms of research.

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

### **Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)**

The following items should be retained by the teacher/lecturer in an individual folio:

- i a copy of the pre-production brief;
- ii performance evidence recorded by means of a teacher/lecturer observation checklist recording the candidate's technological and non-technological contributions;
- iii individual log or other appropriate record which records decisions/actions made on individual and group research, planning and implementation. The candidate should use appropriate technical terms in planning and should record the steps taken to carry out individual tasks;
- iv individual evaluation of the production. The candidate should describe the strengths and weaknesses of the production in relation to the brief, identify the strengths and weaknesses of his/her and others' technological and non-technological performance in individual and co-operative planning and implementation. He/she should suggest improved or alternative individual and/or co-operative strategies and describe what has been learned about the effects of the institutional and audience contexts. The evaluation will be a minimum of 500 words in length.

Any group materials produced such as group plans and the final product should be retained in a group folio but will only be called for at the discretion of SQA.

## National Unit specification: support notes

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

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 offers the candidate the opportunity to further develop knowledge and experience of the media gained in the National Units and/or National Course in Media Studies at Intermediate 2. In particular, it offers progression from the Unit Media Studies – Press and Magazines 1 (Intermediate 2). It provides a basis for progression to further study in relevant subjects at Advanced Higher, or equivalent, or relevant Further Education or Higher Education courses and degree programmes. It may also contribute to a Scottish Group Award.

For the purposes of this Unit, media categories have been applied as follows:

- ◆ medium (eg press, television, film, radio, Internet)
- ◆ purpose (eg to inform, to entertain, to persuade, to educate, to gain profit)
- ◆ form (eg TV drama, radio light entertainment)
- ◆ genre (eg soap operate, action movie, tabloid, broadsheet)

These definitions are consistent with those used in National Courses in Media Studies.

Corresponding to Outcomes 1 and 2:

#### Outcome 1

Exemplar content for Outcome 1 is provided below. It is not suggested that all items should be covered as time is limited in a 40 hour Unit.

For PC(a), which deals with narrative, the candidate should be able to recognise the narrative conventions associated with press and magazines. He/she could consider:

- ◆ story: who, where, what, when, why, how
- ◆ narration: eg viewpoint (first person, third person; single/multiple viewpoints); structure (normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality); investigation; plot (chronological, non-chronological)
- ◆ story treatment: eg tabloid (news for 'ordinary' people, personalisation, news as entertainment) vs broadsheet (news for 'middle classes', news as information and analysis)
- ◆ narrative codes: eg typical characters, actions, enigmas, themes, realism
- ◆ explicit meanings: eg what is this news story telling us about the institutions in our society?

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

For PC(b) which deals with language, the candidate should demonstrate awareness of the relevant technical and cultural codes associated with press and magazines, and the ways in which the preferred reading is anchored. He/she could consider:

- ◆ conventions of print genres (eg, layout, language, text, graphics) and features such as page size (tabloid, broadsheet), text elements (masthead, headline, subheads, copy, caption), character formatting, font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style (plain, italic, bold, underline), colour
- ◆ graphic elements (photographs, mug shots, logos, colour)
- ◆ denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; anchorage and polysemy
- ◆ relation to myth and ideology.

For PC(c), which deals with representation, the candidate should be aware of the way in which representations are constructed by the producers of the text and the associated ideological discourses. He/she could consider:

- ◆ stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nationhood, trade unions, pressure groups
- ◆ non-stereotypical representations
- ◆ mediation (news values and their effects on selection, representation in news)
- ◆ fictional representation of social issues and social groups
- ◆ relation of representation to ideologies and myths of a society
- ◆ the need for diversity of representation and opinion in a democracy; diversity or lack of diversity in print media

For PC(d), which deals with audience, the candidate should demonstrate understanding of concepts such as target audience, preferred reading and differential decoding. He/she could consider:

- ◆ identification of target audiences for products through genre, content and tone
- ◆ different reactions to print texts (eg, interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger)
- ◆ pleasures of print media (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to stars/personalities/characters, fandom, social gossip, individual reading, surfing the Net)
- ◆ identification of reasons for different reactions (eg, individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge, actual knowledge of an issue)
- ◆ the notion of the individual as a complex of different cultural identities (eg linguistic, local, Scottish, Asian, British, European) and subcultural identities (eg special interests, lifestyle, fashion); effects on reaction to texts.

For PC(e), which deals with institution, the candidate should demonstrate understanding of concepts such as target audience, preferred reading and differential decoding. He/she could consider:

- ◆ ownership (eg, public service, commercial, transnational corporation, independent)
- ◆ controls (legal, self-regulatory, market)
- ◆ roles and choices of main production personnel
- ◆ comparison of print industry with other media industries in terms of market structure
- ◆ links with other media
- ◆ general effects on product (eg, editorial freedom, objectivity, diversity, quality, access).

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

There are no Performance Criteria for the other two key aspects of Media Studies, but the study of texts could also involve the candidate in consideration of the following:

#### Categories

- ◆ purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
- ◆ form: newspaper, magazine, web page
- ◆ genre: tabloid, broadsheet, freesheet newspapers; teen/womens'/mens'/special interest magazines
- ◆ tone: serious, humorous, objective, personal, scientific
- ◆ style: traditional, modern, unconventional
- ◆ analytical categories for print media (eg as sexist, racist).

#### Technology

- ◆ technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of traditional and electronic publishing products
- ◆ general effects on product (eg, access, diversity)
- ◆ new developments

### Outcome 2

The production should be appropriate to Higher level and be sufficiently complex to allow the candidate to meet the requirements of the Outcome. Eight pages should give the candidate sufficient opportunity to demonstrate his/her skills. For the purposes of the Unit a technological role should be defined as one which involves the use of appropriate technology. The log book should focus on the candidate's personal perspective of group dynamics and his/her own contribution to the production process. The emphasis is on the candidate's participation in and evaluation of the process, rather than the relative success or failure of the completed product.

The candidate's performance in the production should demonstrate his/her understanding of the analytical concepts and generic conventions required in Outcome 1.

Candidates could be encouraged to plan their production in line with the production stages listed below. It is not suggested that all items should be covered as time is limited in a 40 hour Unit.

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Production Stages</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ planning and research</li><li>◆ layout design</li><li>◆ production of copy and images</li><li>◆ selection of copy and images</li><li>◆ editing and sub-editing</li><li>◆ production</li><li>◆ distribution</li><li>◆ debriefing</li><li>◆ review and evaluation</li></ul> |
|--------------------------|---|



## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

#### *Planning and Research*

- ◆ category (medium, purpose, form, genre) target audience; subject matter, tone
- ◆ narrative: (story, narration and structure; narrative codes; dramatic effect (where appropriate))
- ◆ representation: (where relevant) news values and balance; representation of individuals/social groups and social and political issues; relation to target audience and internal and external contexts
- ◆ identification of resources and constraints; institutional (economic-budget, sales, advertising, editorial policy, house style, layout, deadline, self-censorship, health and safety); technical: available hardware and software; external (legal and self-regulatory controls, censorship, ethical and representation issues)
- ◆ identification of roles and remits; non-technological (production editor, advertisement manager, report, writer, researcher, proof-reader, legal adviser); technological (copy editor, photographer, sub-editor, picture editor, layout editor). Certain roles may combine technological and non-technological eg a reporter might enter her/his copy and e-mail it.
- ◆ product research, readership research on potential advertisers
- ◆ identification of sources: primary, secondary and alternative sources, reporter, stringer, press agencies, press release, public relations, pressure groups, lobby correspondents, experts, leaks, other media, use of reference materials (cuttings, encyclopaedias, archives, Internet)
- ◆ remits and production schedule.

#### *Technical Terms*

- ◆ hardware (microcomputer system, printer, digital camera, SLR camera, scanner, photocopier, offset-litho)
- ◆ software (desktop publishing, word processing, drawing, painting, image manipulation, type, manipulation software, scanning, spreadsheet)
- ◆ page formatting – size (eg A4, tabloid, broadsheet), orientation, margins, columns, gutter, rig, dummy).
- ◆ text elements (masthead, headline, subhead, copy, caption, sidebar, pull quote, byline, photo credit, header, footer index, jump line)
- ◆ character formatting - font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style (roman, italic, bold, underline), tracking (normal, loose, tight), colour
- ◆ paragraph formatting (indentation, lending, alignment, line length)
- ◆ graphic elements (photograph, mug shot, logo, promo, diagram, box, rule colour, white space, cropping, digital manipulation).

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

<i>Use of Technical Codes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ rules of thumb for technical codes and text and graphic content</li><li>◆ connotations of words and images</li><li>◆ anchorage and polysemy</li><li>◆ print product</li><li>◆ conventions and breaking conventions</li></ul>
<i>Evaluation Criteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ brief</li><li>◆ spelling and grammar</li><li>◆ legibility</li><li>◆ visual impact</li><li>◆ unity</li><li>◆ variety</li><li>◆ originality</li><li>◆ audience interest</li><li>◆ use of words and pictures</li><li>◆ (where relevant) news values and balance</li><li>◆ narrativisation</li><li>◆ (where relevant) dramatic effect</li><li>◆ legality</li><li>◆ ethical issues</li><li>◆ representation issues</li></ul>

### Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

In Media Studies, practice should inform theory and theory should inform practice, so throughout the Unit there should be continuing interaction between analysis and practice. It is not recommended that either Outcome is dealt with in isolation. Therefore it is recommended that while the candidate should have gained enough knowledge from the study of Outcome 1 to inform choices in Outcome 2, Outcome 1 should not be completed before Outcome 2 is started as the experience of production is likely to inform his/her understanding of theory.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

For Outcomes 1 and 2 satisfactory performance will be evidenced by the achievement of all the Performance Criteria.

Where an instrument of assessment, such as an essay, has been suggested, it is not mandatory. The centre is free to use any instrument of assessment which meets the needs of its candidates as long as it covers the criteria and range for the Outcome(s) and fulfils the Evidence Requirements. It should be noted that the content of a response will be more important than the ways in which it is expressed.

Written responses need not be in continuous prose nor in essay format. Extended notes and justifications will be equally acceptable. Oral responses need not always be fluent or logically structured. The candidate should not be penalised for his/her written and/or oral expression, but it is likely that illegible or incoherent responses will be self-penalising.

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

Formative assessment should be ongoing. For Outcome 1 it might involve the candidate in completing a pro forma headed up with the wording of the Outcome and Performance Criteria. Where such pro formas or other similar materials have been completed by the candidate under controlled conditions they may be referred to when the candidate produces the extended response.

If a summative assessment is not completed in one sitting the candidate should be allowed to refer to the work already completed at earlier sittings. However, this work should not have been commented on or marked by the teacher/lecturer in the interim.

The candidate should be made familiar with any pro formas, checklists and other documents on which evidence of his/her attainment is recorded.

#### Outcome 1

The specified range of media texts requires the candidate to analyse two whole publications, one magazine and the other a press publication that is not a magazine. It may be possible to integrate the analyses of both texts, although comparison is not a requirement of the Outcome. In this case, care will need to be taken to ensure that all Performance Criteria and the range for each Outcome are covered.

#### Outcome 2

The class size should be appropriate for practical activity, allowing all candidates the opportunity to make an effective contribution.

It is recommended that the following are maintained during the production exercise to ensure that the completion of evidence documents is accurate:

- ◆ teacher/lecturer observation checklist
- ◆ candidate log
- ◆ candidate notes for production evaluation.

#### SPECIAL NEEDS

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).

## National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Media Studies — Press and Magazines (Higher)

### 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 social software. 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

In this Unit candidates will develop skills in producing text for press and/or magazine products.

Candidates will:

- ◆ research a variety of press and magazine texts and analyse effectiveness of narrative, language, representation, audience and institution
- ◆ work with others to devise a group production that meets the requirements of a given brief
- ◆ contribute to planning the production in line with associated production stages
- ◆ contribute to the identification of resources, constraints, technical terms, roles and remits
- ◆ discuss, agree and carry out individual tasks
- ◆ review and evaluate effectiveness of the production process in terms of: meeting requirements of the brief, technological and non-technological performance, individual and co-operative planning and implementation
- ◆ suggest improved or alternative individual and/or co-operative strategies for future use

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit they will be developing aspects of the Core Skills of Communication, Problem Solving and Working with Others.

### 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	Updated to match the new shell, Core Skills statement updated and 31/07/2012 finish date removed.	11/10/2011

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