



## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism  
(SCQF level 6)

**CODE** F57S 12

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to primary and secondary research sources that can be used by journalists. This is a practical Unit in which candidates will have the opportunity to use this knowledge to carry out secondary research and primary research, in the form of an interview.

This Unit is suitable for candidates with no prior knowledge or experience of research and interview skills.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the key elements for journalism research.
- 2 Carry out journalism research on given topics using secondary sources.
- 3 Plan and conduct a research interview on a given topic.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Whilst entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial for candidates to have achieved the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ D01B 11 — Communication (Intermediate 2)

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#### Administrative Information

**Superclass:** KD

**Publication date:** February 2009

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

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### **CREDIT VALUE**

1 credit at Higher (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**

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

There are opportunities for Core Skill development; these are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

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

### **UNIT        Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism (SCQF level 6)**

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**

Describe the key elements for journalism research.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Describe secondary sources for research.
- (b) Describe primary sources for research.
- (c) Describe the different types of interview used as primary sources for research.
- (d) Describe a range of questioning techniques used within interviews.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Carry out journalism research on given topics using secondary sources.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Identify and obtain appropriate secondary sources of information to research given topics.
- (b) Review appropriate secondary sources.
- (c) Accurately summarise key findings from each secondary source.
- (d) Accurately record sources of evidence for each secondary source.
- (e) Accurately present findings.

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Plan and conduct a research interview on a given topic.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Select an appropriate interviewee for the topic.
- (b) Carry out secondary research on the topic for interview.
- (c) Carry out secondary research on the interviewee.
- (d) Produce appropriate questions.
- (e) Organise an appropriate time and location for the interview.
- (f) Use effective questioning techniques during the interview.
- (g) Produce an accurate record of the interview.

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

### **UNIT        Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism (SCQF level 6)**

#### **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT**

Evidence is required which demonstrates that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Evidence will be gathered at appropriate points in the Unit under open-book conditions.

#### **Outcome 1 — Written and/or Oral Evidence**

Candidates will be required to show they can:

- ◆ describe the following secondary sources for research; reference books, libraries (general and specialised), published material (including newspapers and magazines), archive material, and internet search engines
- ◆ describe the following primary sources for research; interviews, witness accounts, questionnaires and surveys, personal investigations, and personal observation
- ◆ describe the following interview types: general interviews, doorstep interviews, and telephone interviews
- ◆ describe questioning techniques including; leading, neutral, open-ended and closed questions

#### **Outcome 2 — Performance Evidence and Written and/or Oral Evidence**

Candidates will be given a range of topics for research in Outcome 2. Candidates will be required to research these topics using the following secondary sources of information:

- ◆ reference books
- ◆ libraries (general and specialised)
- ◆ published material (including newspapers and magazines)
- ◆ archive material
- ◆ internet search engines

Performance evidence, supported by an observation checklist, is required to show that candidates can individually:

- ◆ identify and obtain appropriate secondary sources of information to research given topics
- ◆ review appropriate secondary sources

Written and/or Oral evidence is required to show that candidates can perform the following tasks individually:

- ◆ accurately summarise key findings from each secondary source
- ◆ accurately record sources of evidence for each secondary source
- ◆ accurately present findings

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

### **UNIT           Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism (SCQF level 6)**

Evidence should be placed in a folio which also contains copies of the original sources of information (which can be used by the assessor as an indicator of the accuracy of the summary of the key findings).

#### **Outcome 3 — Written and/or Oral Evidence and Performance Evidence**

Written and/or Oral evidence is required to show that candidates can individually:

- ◆ select an appropriate interviewee.
- ◆ carry out secondary research on the topic for interview including subject title, intended audience and background context.
- ◆ carry out secondary research on the interviewee including name, designations, area(s) of expertise and background context.
- ◆ produce appropriate questions. These must be appropriate to the interview's purpose, sufficient for the duration of the interview, and include at least two different questioning techniques. The questions must be presented in a logical sequence with supplementary questions where appropriate.
- ◆ produce an accurate record of the interview.

Performance evidence is required to show that candidates can perform the following tasks individually:

- ◆ organise an appropriate time and location for the interview
- ◆ use effective questioning techniques during the interview

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT           Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism (SCQF level 6)**

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 an optional Unit within the National Certificate Group Award in Media (SCQF level 6), but can be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit offers the candidate the opportunity to develop research and interview skills for journalism.

Outcome 1 requires candidates to be aware of the difference between primary and secondary source material. Primary source material can be obtained in a variety of ways such as personal interviews, witness accounts, questionnaires and personal observation. Candidates should be aware of the range of secondary source material such as reference books, published material in book form, back numbers of newspapers and general and specialised magazines etc. In addition, candidates should be made aware of the range of interview techniques including how to ask 'open' rather than 'closed' questions. Instruction in recording and microphone technique may be necessary if this equipment is used.

Outcome 1 will provide candidates with the underpinning knowledge to allow them to undertake Outcome 2. Candidates should be given topics which cover the range of sources detailed in the Evidence Requirements of Outcome 2. Topics allocated should not be too complex as the Unit requires a basic knowledge of secondary sources only.

Outcome 3 is practical and candidates will be expected to plan and arrange the interview themselves. Outcome 3 of this Unit may be integrated with the F57R 11 *Media: News Writing for Print* (SCQF level 5) and F57M 12 *Media: Feature Writing* (SCQF level 6).

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

Outcome 1 will provide the underpinning knowledge required for Outcome 2 and 3.

It is recommended that Outcome 1 is taught through teacher/lecturer exposition and description of the various primary and secondary sources. This could generate classroom discussion as to the relative merits of each source from a journalism research point of view. It may be useful for candidates to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each source, eg the rights and wrongs of 'doorstepping' and the individual's right to privacy.

Some tutor guidance will be necessary in supporting candidates with the planning of the interview and the direction which the interview should take during Outcome 3. The planning of the interview may take some time and tutor input could be substantial, especially if candidates wish to interview individuals or institutions outwith the centre.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT           Media: Research and Interview Skills for Journalism (SCQF level 6)

A visit to the centre's library or an arranged visit to a local library where candidates could be made aware of sources of information would also be useful. A visit from a professional journalist would be beneficial.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates will be producing written and/or oral communication evidence as part of the assessment. This offers ideal opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Communication*.

During the process of planning and carrying out an interview candidates will have opportunities to further develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Communication* and the Core Skill of *Working with Others*.

#### GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The following approaches to assessment are suggested:

Outcome 1	Extended response essay
Outcome 2 and 3	Practical exercise

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

#### 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 communications 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)*.

#### 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)*.