National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Media: Scriptwriting (SCQF level 5)

CODE   F583 11

SUMMARY

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to the key elements of scriptwriting for the media. Candidates will be introduced to the characteristics and conventions to allow them to develop their scriptwriting skills across a range of audio and visual media. Candidates will also have the opportunity to study a range of professionally produced scripts which should contextualize their learning. This is a practical Unit in which candidates will have the opportunity to produce a script for a chosen medium.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who have no prior knowledge or experience of scriptwriting and who are interested in developing their personal scriptwriting skills.

OUTCOMES

1   Investigate the key elements of scriptwriting for audio and visual media.
2   Produce a script in accordance with a given brief.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

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.

Additional copies of this Unit Specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre, telephone 0845 279 1000.

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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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

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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

Investigate the key elements of scriptwriting for audio and visual media.

Performance Criteria

(a) Identify a range of audio and visual media.
(b) Identify a range of genres for audio and visual media.
(c) Describe the key characteristics of scriptwriting for given audio and visual media.
(d) Explain the conventions of scriptwriting for given audio and visual media.
(e) Select a range of professionally produced scripts and identify the key scriptwriting elements of each.

OUTCOME 2

Produce a script in accordance with a given brief.

(a) Select an appropriate medium.
(b) Select appropriate content for the chosen genre and audience.
(c) Develop an original script to meet the requirements of the given brief.
(d) Produce a finished script using appropriate conventions and terminology.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1 — Written and/or Oral Evidence

Evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidate has achieved Outcome 1 to the standard specified in the Outcome and Performance Criteria. This evidence will be gathered under open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit.

Candidates will be required to identify a minimum of:

♦   two types of audio media
♦   two types of visual media

For each identified media, candidates will then be required to identify two different genres and describe the key characteristics of scriptwriting for each type of media. The key characteristics of scriptwriting for each media type must cover:

♦   generic conventions (eg characterisation, presenter, voice over and voice tracking)
♦   narrative codes and conventions (eg series/serial formats, cliffhangers, narrative hooks, sequencing, and causality)
♦   likely effects of anchorage (eg voice over, captions, and music)
♦   script layout

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Candidates must then:

♦ explain the conventions of scriptwriting for audio and visual media
♦ select a different script for each type of media and identify the key scriptwriting elements including the media, genre, target audience, generic conventions, narrative codes and conventions, and script layout.

Outcome 2 — Product Evidence

In Outcome 2 candidates will be provided with a brief which will ask them to choose the medium, genre, and target audience, and produce a finished script based on these choices. The completed script must be produced on an individual basis and will be a minimum of six double spaced, single sided A4 pages in length and must show continuity, narrative development, and must fit with the script conventions and terminology of the chosen medium and genre.

Evidence will be gathered at appropriate points throughout the Unit. The assessor must authenticate that the evidence produced is the candidate's own work.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Media: Scriptwriting (SCQF level 5)

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.

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to the key elements of scriptwriting for the media. Candidates will be introduced to the characteristics and conventions to allow them to develop their scriptwriting skills across a range of audio and media. Candidates will also have the opportunity to study a range of professionally produced scripts which should contextualize their learning. This is a practical Unit in which candidates will produce a script for a chosen medium.

For Outcome 1, candidates will examine professionally-produced scripts from a range of media and across a range of genres. Candidates should be able to recognise the conventions and terminology in these scripts and how they relate to the target audience.

For Outcome 2, candidates will be provided with a brief which asks the candidates to choose the medium, genre and target audience and produce a script based on these choices. The finished script must show continuity and narrative development, however narrative closure is not required.

It would be beneficial for candidates to have good written English and communication skills prior to undertaking this Unit.

This Unit can be integrated with appropriate television and radio Units, ie F587 11 *Media: Making a Radio Programme* (SCQF level 5).

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It is suggested that the Outcomes are approached sequentially and that much of the work for Outcome 1 is undertaken before progressing to Outcome 2.

Candidates would benefit from obtaining scripts from television and radio stations to contextualise Outcome 1. It may therefore be beneficial for centres to contact such organisations to obtain scripts. There are also many online sources of downloadable scripts and screenplays available, which candidates should be encouraged to use.

It may be helpful to initially study scripts with which candidates are familiar. It would also be beneficial for candidates to work in small groups to discuss the essential elements of scripts that they have examined. Candidates should be encouraged to study scripts from a variety of genres.

During Outcome 1 it may be beneficial for candidates to compare a hard copy of a script with its performance. As an example, they could compare a passage from a classic novel with its dramatised script, or the script of a news bulletin. This would allow candidates to realise the impact of the written script on the actual performance. It may also be beneficial for candidates to examine how a radio script creates 'visuals' through the use of sound effects (SFX) or verbal description.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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It may be beneficial for candidates to be aware that in some productions (eg cinema and TV) there may be different scripts supplied to the different crew members (eg camera operator, actor, director). If possible, candidates should be given the opportunity to compare the instructions on these different scripts and consider how the crew members co-operate on the one production. Candidates should also be aware that some productions have scripts in different formats for different sequences (eg location single-camera, studio multi-camera set-up).

At this level, some tutor guidance may be required for Outcome 2. Candidates should also be encouraged to carry out web research for advice on how to write scripts and to view a range of script templates.

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*.

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop aspect of the Core Skill of *Information Technology*, should they choose to research aspects of scriptwriting using the internet.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The following approaches to assessment are suggested:

Outcome 1   Extended response essay/Annotating unseen scripts
Outcome 2   Practical scriptwriting exercise

It is recommended that scripts produced are word processed in accordance with industry standards.

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**).