



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Media: Sound Recording for Single Camera (SCQF level 5)

CODE F58E 11

SUMMARY

The purpose of this Unit is to provide candidates with the basic knowledge and skills required to identify, select and use a range of microphones and recording equipment to record the sound track for a single camera television or video production. This is a practical Unit in which candidates will have the opportunity to use this underpinning knowledge to select appropriate microphones for a production, set up audio equipment and record audio.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to gain knowledge and understanding of microphones and recording equipment used to record sound for single camera television or video production, and who wish to gain practical skills in setting up and operating microphones and associated sound recording equipment for television or video production.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the role and key properties of microphones.
- 2 Justify microphone selection for a given production.
- 3 Set up audio equipment to record audio for a given production.
- 4 Record audio for a given production.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KG

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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.*

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

Describe the role and key properties of microphones.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the role of the microphone within an audio signal chain.
- (b) Describe the key properties of dynamic and condenser microphones.
- (c) Describe of the way in which microphones can be used to avoid extraneous noise.
- (d) Describe the key properties of shotgun, lapel and handheld microphones.

OUTCOME 2

Justify microphone selection for a given production.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify appropriate equipment and microphones for recording audio.
- (b) Identify potential acoustic factors which may affect the quality of the recording.
- (c) Justify the selection of microphones.

OUTCOME 3

Set up audio equipment to record audio for a given production.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Correctly connect required audio equipment and microphones.
- (b) Effectively position microphones to achieve appropriate level and quality.
- (c) Select appropriate equipment settings.
- (d) Carry out a test recording.
- (e) Satisfy health and safety requirements.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 4

Record audio for a given production.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Effectively carry out sound level checks for all sources being recorded.
- (b) Monitor and adjust microphone levels.
- (c) Check the recording for defects.
- (d) Produce a final audio recording that is free from defects.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence must be produced to demonstrate that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been met.

Outcome 1 — Written and/or Oral evidence

Candidates are required to show that they can describe:

- ◆ the role of the microphone within an audio signal chain
- ◆ properties of dynamic and condenser microphones (this must include reference to their sensitivity and robustness)
- ◆ the way in which microphones can be used to avoid extraneous noise
- ◆ shotgun, lapel and handheld microphones in terms of directional characteristics and appropriate placement in relation to a sound source

Evidence for this Outcome must be produced under closed-book supervised conditions at an appropriate point in the Unit.

For Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 candidates will be given a video or TV production. Candidates will conduct the role of Sound Recordist for a recording of a sequence of a minimum of five shots. This must include two sound sources. Candidates will be required to use a minimum of two types of microphones.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2 — Written and/or Oral evidence

Candidates are required to generate evidence that shows they have:

- ◆ identified appropriate equipment and microphones for recording audio
- ◆ identified location acoustic factors which may affect the quality of the recordings in the chosen locations
- ◆ justified their selection of microphones in terms of:
 - their pick up pattern and suitability for the sound sources
 - acoustic environment
 - aesthetic requirements of the production

Evidence for this Outcome will be produced under open-book supervised conditions at an appropriate point throughout the Unit.

Outcome 3 — Performance evidence

Evidence is required to demonstrate the candidate's ability to set up audio equipment for one production. Candidates are required to show that they can:

- ◆ correctly connect required audio equipment
- ◆ position microphones to achieve appropriate level and quality for the required sound sources throughout the recording
- ◆ select appropriate equipment settings to enable recording of the microphone signals
- ◆ carry out a test recording to ensure recording is free from interference and/or signal defects
- ◆ satisfy health and safety requirements

An assessor observation checklist will be used to record that all tasks have been undertaken by the candidate.

Evidence will be gathered at an appropriate point in the Unit under supervised conditions.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4 — Performance evidence

Performance evidence, supported by an assessor observation checklist, will be used to record that the candidate has:

- ◆ carried out sound level checks for all sources being recorded
- ◆ monitored and adjusted microphone levels to achieve a recording at an appropriate level
- ◆ checked recording for defects and taken action where necessary (for example, by informing relevant personnel where necessary)

Product evidence is required in the form of an audio production.

Evidence will be gathered at appropriate points during the Unit under supervised conditions.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Media: Sound Recording for Single Camera (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 is an optional Unit within the National Certificate Group Award in Media (SCQF level 6), but may also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is intended to provide candidates with the basic knowledge and skills required to record production audio for a television/video programme. The ability to select and use a range of microphones appropriately is an important aspect of the role. Outcome 1 provides the underpinning knowledge of different microphones, their properties and their applications. This will enable the candidate to make informed microphone choices for a given production. This knowledge will assist the candidate in carrying out Outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

Outcome 1 explains the basic purpose of all microphones within the signal chain. It explores the properties, advantages and disadvantages of Dynamic and Condenser microphones which should be explained within the context of practical applications. Microphone placement and basic location acoustic factors should be covered. A selection of microphones commonly used in television/video production should be made available for candidates to try out in different situations and identify their different properties and appropriate placement. The use of microphones both inside and outside should be explored and the problems and solutions associated with extraneous noise (wind noise, popping and handling) should be addressed.

Outcome 3 requires the candidate to apply theoretical knowledge in setting up and preparing the required microphones and equipment for recording. They are required to carry out test recordings and should be introduced to common recording faults and their solutions. Appropriate Health and Safety procedures should be covered throughout practice sessions to reinforce knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the importance of Health and Safety in all situations.

Outcome 4 requires the candidate to apply the knowledge gained from Outcome 1 and utilise the microphone(s) selected in Outcome 2 to record the production audio required for the given production. Candidates should be able to monitor levels and quality throughout the recording process and carefully determine microphone positioning/placement.

This Unit could be taught alongside F57W 12 *Media: Lighting for Single Camera* (SCQF level 6), F586 12 *Media: Directing a Single Camera Production* (SCQF level 6) and other Units within this suite.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It is recommended that the Outcomes are taught sequentially.

Outcome 1 could be taught through class demonstration, showing different types of microphones and microphone techniques. Examples could be given of good sound recordings and sound recording which contain defects. Candidates could also be given the opportunity to experiment individually or in small groups with microphones.

Outcome 2 requires the candidate to identify audio requirements for a given production and to justify and select appropriate microphones to record the audio. Case studies of productions with supplied documentation could be provided for candidates to identify production audio requirements and approaches to recording. Candidates could also be provided with a variety of situations and locations in which to practice recording with different microphones and reviewing/comparing results.

In Outcome 3 candidates would benefit from class demonstrations on the connection of microphones and recording equipment. Learning through observation would be an effective approach here.

In Outcome 4 candidates would benefit from initial class demonstrations on the recording of audio. Candidates could then work in small groups to carry out sound level checks, monitor levels and check for defects etc.

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 may have the opportunity to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Problem Solving* during Outcomes 3 and 4 when setting up audio equipment and recording audio for a given production.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The following instruments of assessment are suggested:

Outcome 1 — Short answer questions.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 — Practical Project where the candidate performs the role of sound recordist alongside candidates undertaking Units such as F57W 12 *Media: Lighting for Single Camera* (SCQF level 6). The production may be from a brief supplied by the centre or originated as part of a group or individual project.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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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)*.