National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Writing, Editing and Publishing Online
(SCQF level 5)

Unit code: H1TD 11

Superclass:	KC
Publication date:	September 2012
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Version:	02

Summary

This Unit provides candidates with an understanding of the fundamental principles of writing, editing written text/s, preparing text/s for publication and self-publishing on the internet. It provides candidates with the opportunity to enhance their writing skills in the areas of fiction and creative non-fiction.

This is an optional Unit in the National Certificate in Creative Industries at SCQF level 5 but is also available as a freestanding Unit. The Unit is suitable for candidates who have an interest in writing and in the publishing industry, particularly publishing online.

Outcomes

1   Write a text for publication.
2   Edit texts produced by others.
3   Self-publish on the internet.

Recommended entry

Whilst entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that candidates have attained English at SCQF level 4 or equivalent.

General information (cont)

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Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5: (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

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill   None

Core Skill component   Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5
                              Written Communication at SCQF level 5

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which 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

Write a text for publication.

Performance Criteria

(a) Identify potential internet publishing outlets for the publication of a written text.
(b) Write a short fictional or creative non-fictional text in the style of a chosen publishing site.
(c) Produce a word processed draft of the text.

Outcome 2

Edit texts produced by others.

Performance Criteria

(a) Identify basic errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
(b) Evaluate readability and coherence of the text.
(c) Evaluate the suitability of the text for an intended publishing site.

Outcome 3

Self-publish on the internet.

Performance Criteria

(a) Design a blog using publishing tools.
(b) Prepare text for publication.
(c) Publish the text as an internet blog.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence will be gathered under open-book conditions at appropriate points in the Unit.

Outcome 1 — Written Evidence

Candidates are required to identify at least three possible publishing outlets suitable for the publication of a text. They will then produce a short fictional piece or piece of creative non-fiction, of between 750─1,000 words, and word process the piece.

The piece must meet the following requirements:

♦   Content is relevant and appropriate for purpose and audience, reveals some depth and complexity of thought and some sustained development, clear descriptions of character and setting
♦   Structure takes account of purpose, audience and genre; content is sequenced and organised in ways which are effective
♦   Competent use of techniques relevant to the genre and appropriate choice of words, vocabulary and sentence structures
♦   A style and tone is established which communicates a point of view/stance consistent with purpose and audience
♦   The piece is technically accurate, including spelling, grammar and punctuation
♦   Layout/presentation reflects engagement with font size and style, line spacing, margins and paragraphing
♦   The piece of writing is authentic: unassisted

Outcome 2 — Product Evidence

Candidates are required to produce evaluation in the form of written feedback in a supervised feedback session or via a feedback form designed for the purpose. There should be evidence of the editing of at least two creative fictional and/or non-fictional texts produced by others. The evidence can be electronic and/or paper-based.

Outcome 3 — Product Evidence

Product evidence is required in the form of a published internet blog, paying attention to the suitability of layout and accompanying artwork.

The candidate's blog should be live on the internet. It should show that lessons learned during the editing and proofreading phase have been implemented, and that consideration has been given to design and appearance.

National Unit specification: support notes

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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 broadly aligned to the following National Occupational Standards from Creative Skillset:

- ♦ PUB 6   Develop and maintain a plan for publishing
- ♦ PUB 18   Create content
- ♦ PUB 19   Edit content
- ♦ PUB 20   Proofread content

This is an optional Unit in the National Certificate in Creative Industries (SCQF level 5), but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit.

This Unit introduces candidates to the imaginative process and professional disciplines of the creative writer, showing the journey from initial idea to realisation in the form of a published text. Candidates should be shown how to unlock their memories and imaginations to produce characters and narratives and shown the technical skills needed for their ideas to be realised in a published creative work. The Unit should provide them with transferable skills that can be applied to many creative projects and it therefore has the potential to integrate with other relevant Creative Industries Units.

Writing workshops could be set up for candidates to present their own work and give feedback on the work of others. These workshops could make use of writing exercises set in advance by the tutor. This approach could be augmented by referring to the work of published writers of fiction and creative non-fiction, since all writers may learn from other writers.

The research elements of the Unit require that candidates have access to the internet to search for potential publishing outlets, and are given advice on how to become published. Candidates should be made aware of some of the basic issues involved in seeking to be published such as copyright law, plagiarism and 'vanity publishing'. Tutors may wish to encourage candidates to focus on UK or Scotland-based publishing opportunities and to consult the websites of relevant organisations such as Creative Scotland and The Scottish Book Trust.

In Outcome 2, candidates should be given the opportunity to use the grammar and spell check facilities on word processing packages. Tutors may use set practice editing and proof reading exercises.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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In Outcome 3, candidates should be encouraged to explore the internet to discover the diversity of blogs in terms of subject matter and presentation. Tutors should identify blogs that may serve as examples in terms of quality of the writing and appearance. It may also prove helpful if the tutor sets up their own blog and is therefore able to advise candidates on the practical steps that need to be taken, as well as the pitfalls that need to be avoided.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Complementary skills in reading and learning about a variety of texts whose purposes are informative, expressive and creative/imaginative, can also be developed. A high level of reading skill can be developed as texts are studied and evaluated for information, for meaning and as models of writing.

Candidates should be encouraged to read a wide variety of creative texts in the fictional and non-fictional genres. They should be encouraged to consider writing in an area of personal interest. Candidates should learn about the techniques of proposal/synopsis writing, the fundamentals of researching the internet and different house styles of their researched sites.

Candidates will require access to e-magazines, e-journals and websites to explore and understand the conventions of their chosen creative forms in an accessible way and to undertake research.

Candidates should be given the opportunity to produce synopses for proposed pieces of writing. Drafting should be seen as a means of moving the text from the private to the public arena.

Published writers' work can be used as texts in Outcome 1 to illustrate contrasting subjects, styles, language, tone etc. Candidates could be introduced to creative texts through tutor exposition and class discussion. Following this, candidates could be given creative writing to discuss in groups and then report their findings to the class, generating further class discussion and preparing the ground for the writing workshops. Understanding of creative writing (both fictional and non-fictional) and of editing should derive from direct experience of analysis of others' styles of writing and of the fundamentals of proofreading and editing. If possible a talk from a professional writer and/or editor would give invaluable information to candidates.

The tutor should be knowledgeable in the national standards for proof reading, editing, journalism and editing for online distribution (see http://www.creativeskillset.org/uk/scotland/) and such standards should form part of the preparation for the Unit and the ongoing feedback throughout.

When candidates' chosen genre requires the storing and referencing of source material, tutor help should guide them as far as possible, in replicating industry practice. Possible publication sites can include e-magazines, e-journals, websites, etc. Tutors should provide guidance on the suitability of intended sites. Candidates should be able to provide the site title, web address and submission information as a minimum.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Outcome 1

The piece of writing may be a short story or a piece of creative non-fiction such as a memoir. Note: depending on the purpose, content is likely to be reflection, ideas, opinion, argument, information.

The work produced must be authentic. It is recommended that it is produced under a system of supervision requiring candidate to submit the following at appropriate stages, eg:

♦ draft title and proposals
♦ outline plan
♦ first draft
♦ final version

Outcome 2

Whether candidates produce feedback in person or via a form devised for the purpose, they should demonstrate knowledge of the key issues involved in proofreading and editing a text: eg grammar, spelling, punctuation, fluency of writing and layout. Precision and accuracy of feedback is crucial. For example, specific examples of errors in punctuation or spelling should be identified, as well as ways of resolving them. Simply saying that something 'looks bad' or is 'poorly punctuated' is not enough.

Outcome 3

The candidate's blog should be live and available to view on the internet. It should show that the lessons learned during the editing and proofreading phase have been implemented and that attention has been given to design and appearance.

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).*

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will:

♦ produce written text for internet publication
♦ word process text
♦ edit text and provide feedback
♦ post text on an internet blog

As they are doing this Unit, candidates may develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication, Problem Solving* and *Information and Communication Technology.*

In addition, aspects of *Working with Others* could be developed where candidates discuss creative fictional and/or non-fictional texts in groups and report findings to a group.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving and the Written Communication component of Communications embedded in it. This means that when candidates achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 5 and Written Communication at SCQF level 5.

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**

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Title changed from "Editing and Publishing (Writing) in the Creative Industries" to "Writing, Editing and Publishing Online".	27/09/2012