National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT   Desktop Publishing (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER   D976 11

COURSE

SUMMARY
This unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the hardware, software, practical techniques and stages involved in the production of printed publications. It is also intended to develop the candidate's knowledge of the main typographic and desktop publishing terms, which are used in page design, layout and pre-stress production.

OUTCOMES
1   Identify the hardware and software commonly used in the production of a printed publication.
2   Explain the terminology and main stages involved in the production of a printed publication.
3   Use appropriate software to incorporate display type, text, graphic images and elements to a prescribed format.
4   Produce a publication to a personal design specification.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY
Candidates enrolling for this unit do not need any prior knowledge of publication design and production. However, skills in the use of information technology will be an advantage.

CREDIT VALUE
1 credit at Intermediate 2

Administrative Information

Superclass: KH

Publication date: Decemsber 1998

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02 (*Version 01 is National Certificate Module 91128*)

CORE SKILLS
Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in
Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications (SQA, 1999).

The achievement of this unit may contribute to the development of core skills, but the assessment arrangements of the unit do not guarantee that the candidate will produce sufficient evidence of core skills achievement. This means that there is no automatic certification of core skills for this unit.

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1
Identify the hardware and software commonly used in the production of a printed publication.

Performance Criteria
a)   An accurate description is given of the hardware commonly used in the production of a printed publication.
b)   An accurate list is compiled of the main software applications used in publication production.
c)   The purpose of each software application is stated correctly.

Evidence Requirements
Written or oral evidence that the candidate can identify and describe the hardware and software as detailed in performance criteria (a) to (c) across all items in the range.

OUTCOME 2
Explain the terminology and main stages involved in the production of a printed publication.

Performance Criteria
a)   The sequence involved in designing and producing a publication for print is described accurately and chronologically correct.
b)   An accurate explanation is given of the main typographic, page make-up and pre-press terms used in publication design.
c)   The explanations and descriptions are concise and complete.

Note on range for the outcome
Main stages: design; copy preparation; page make-up; proofing; image setting; cromalin proofing; platemaking; printing; finishing.

Terminology: scanning; image setter; film output; colour separation; proof registration marks; crop marks; page size; master pages; facing pages; pasteboard; margins; columns; gutter; importing' cropping; scaling; screening; bleed; typeface; typestyle; case font; baseline; point size; leading; set width; track; kerning alignment; folio.

Evidence Requirements
Written or oral evidence the candidate is able to chronologically structure the sequence involved in the production of a printed publication. They must also provide a definition for each of the technical terms specified within the range statement for this outcome.

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OUTCOME 3
Use appropriate software to incorporate display type, text, graphic images and elements to a prescribed format.

Performance Criteria
a)   Page setup parameters are applied accurately in relation to the publication design.
b)   Graphic images and elements are incorporated accurately to specifications.
c)   Typographical elements are specified correctly and positioned accurately.
d)   Files are saved, named and backed-up correctly.

Note on range for the outcome
Appropriate software: Industry standard software for page make-up.

Evidence Requirements
Performance evidence that the candidate can transform a fully-specified visual into an accurate page layout as detailed in performance criteria (a) to (d). The minimum requirements for this outcome is the production of one A4 page containing display type, text, a graphic image, two lines and two boxes, one of which should contain a fill.

OUTCOME 4
Produce a publication to a personal design specification.

Performance Criteria
a)   Suitable images, displays and textual copy are sourced accurately.
b)   An accurately specified visual design concepts of the publication is produced.
c)   Page designs are aesthetically appealing in terms of visual; quality and balance.
d)   Graphic images and elements are incorporated accurately to design specifications.
e)   Typographical elements are correctly specified and positioned accurately.

Note on range for the outcome
Appropriate software should be restricted to page make-up applications specifically designed to produce multi-page documents.

Evidence Requirements
Performance evidence that the candidate can transform their own design concept into an accurate page layout as detailed in performance criteria (a) to (d). The minimum requirements for this outcome is the design and production of two A4 pages containing display type, text and graphic images, three lines and three boxes, one of which should contain a fill.

National unit specification: support notes

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This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

Over the past few years it has been recognised that effective desktop publishing demands a level of skill and knowledge normally beyond that of the typical 'in-house' user, whether it be those in employment, or still in education. This unit is designed to introduce such individuals to the basic skills in desktop publishing for print and to broaden their knowledge of the hardware, software, equipment, terminology and stages of design and production.

While the creative and technical ability to design pages is desirable it is recognised that not all candidates have the expertise to do so. Accordingly, the assessor should take this into consideration where the situation demands.

Achievement of this unit provides a basis for further study, for example, Desktop Publishing (Higher) or at Higher National level in both print and multimedia related units.

Prior to undertaking this unit, candidates may find it advantageous to have achieved the unit, Computer Applications: Design, at Intermediate 2 level.

Outcomes 1 and 2
These are specifically intended to cover the theoretical requirements of the unit and develop the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the complete, sequential, process from design to final production, including the relevant terms and their definitions. It also demands awareness of the specific hardware and software normally used in the process.

Outcome 1
PC (a) This requires the candidate to identify computer hardware devices and peripherals used in all stages of the production processes. In addition, printing presses and post-press equipment – finishing facilities such as guillotining, folding, binding, laminating etc. should also be mentioned.

PC (b) and (c) here the candidate should demonstrate knowledge of the main software applications used in the process. Although the candidate may name software, it is important that the functions of the applications are also described. Candidates would be expected to define software applications relating to: system; word processing; page make-up; scanning; graphic generation and electronic illustration; image grabbing and manipulation.

National unit specification: support notes(cont)

Outcome 2
PC (a) The candidate should be able to describe the process, from design to final production, in correct chronological sequence.

PC (b) and (c)
It is important that the candidate shows knowledge an understanding of the major terms used in design, typography and print production and can use them to communicate when undertaking the practical elements of the unit. When providing a definition for each term the candidate's response should be concise and accurate.

Outcome 3
This outcome involves the first of the practical aspects of the unit. Here the candidate is required to interpret a supplied, fully marked-up visual and then electronically recreate the page layout. The range statement provides tutors with advice on the particular type of software that should be used. At the time of writing, possible software for this particular activity could be Adobe PageMaker or Quark XPress – both being the main applications currently used within the print-based publishing industry. Although the minimum artefact required is the completion of one A4 page the tutor may consider this to be part of a larger publication.

PC (a), (b) and (c)
These require the candidate to create elements on the page as prescribed in the visual, matching the specifications accurately.

PC (d)
This performance criterion asks the candidate to demonstrate his/her competency in basic file management by saving, naming and backing up files correctly.

Outcome 4
This outcome requires the candidate to produce a publication from his/her own design concept. In order to do some tuition in simple page design and planning and the use of a scanner or digital camera may be required. However, pictorial elements may source from CD Rom. Text and display type should also be sourced and generated by the candidate and a fully-specified, predetermined layout produced prior to the electronic stage of the activity.

As in outcome 3, the tutor may wish to set a brief where more than one page is produced but only one is submitted for assessment.

PC (a)
The candidate should show evidence that an appropriate range of materials has been researched, considered and correctly selected for the design.

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PC (b), (c) and (d)

The final concept should reflect the synthesis of the development work undertaken and be specified to a level whereby an accurate electronic page can be created. Where necessary, pictorial or graphic elements of the design should be created using appropriate scanning and/or image generation/manipulation software.   Text should be prepared using suitable word processing facilities and display headings typeset within the page make-up application itself.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

A candidate-centred. resource-based approach is recommended with the initial stage in the delivery and introduction to the typical hardware normally associated with the production of printed publication. This, for example, could include:

- keyboard
- mouse
- CD drive
- Digital camera
- flatbed scanner
- laserprinter
- drum scanner
- image setter
- colour proof printer
- print down frame
- printing plate
- printing press
- guillotine
- laminator

As far as possible the function of each item should be explained and demonstrated.

Where is it not possible to demonstrate pre-press reprographic hardware and printing equipment the tutor should have adequate reference material available to describe an illustrate those particular stages.

Ideally, the tutor should show examples and explain the function of software packages available to designers practising within the publishing Industry.   These would normally include:

- system
- word processing
- page make-up
- scanning
- image manipulation
- electronic illustration

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The tutor could identify to the candidate the contents of a software package, explaining its attributes and any recognised limitations. At this point aspects of software purchasing, licensing and legality may be discussed.

It would also be useful if a range of printed publications is made available to the candidates, thus promoting discussion on the possible software packages used in their preparation. Aspects of printing techniques could also be explained at this stage.

It is suggested that the best approach to preparing for assessment of outcomes 3 and 4 is a series of formatively assessed exercises, the combination of which would result in a completed page. The tutor should ensure that these activities are constructed in such a way that the necessary terminology can be explained in a comprehensive manner. This approach would also provide preparation for assessment of performance criterion (b) in outcome 2 and candidates would find it helpful if a glossary of terms was issued at this stage. The techniques involves in file management could also be covered during these exercises.

Candidates should work singly and have access to their own workstation for all practical activities. Ideally, they should also have use of drawing boards, equipment and materials to produce visuals.

The following table offers a suggested timescale for each outcome.

Outcome1	8 hours
Outcome 2	12 hours
Outcome 3	8 hours
Outcome 4	12 hours

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT
Outcome 1 and 2 could be assessed by an extended response question paper where the candidate is asked to:

a)   provide a list of the hardware normally used within the print design and publishing process, explaining the function and purpose of each items as it is listed.

b)   compile a list of software packages relevant to the print design an publishing design process.

c)   describe, in correct order, the stages involved in the production of a printed publication.

d)   provide a definition for a selection of typographic, page make-up and pre-press terms as determined by the assessor.

Either a written or oral response to the above would be acceptable. In the case of an oral response the assessor should record the candidate's performance by means of a checklist.

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It is recommended that the above assessment takes place after candidates have had a minimum 20 hours of combined theoretical and practical experience in the use of desktop publishing systems and software.

Outcome 3 could take the form of an assignment where the assessor provides the candidates with a fully-specified, predetermined layout, in the form of a working drawing. Text and graphic images should be supplied in electronic format. The minimum assessable requirements is one A4 page containing the items stipulated in the range statement. However, the tutor may wish to set an assessment where the material, in terms of number of pages produced, exceeds this.

Candidates are required to construct and output the page(s) exactly to the specifications supplied. As an aid to measuring performance the assessor should hold a solution copy and record achievement by means if a checklist.

It is suggested that assessment instruments for outcome 4 takes the form of a project which affords candidates the freedom to select subject materials of their own choice and to design and produce a publication that contains display types, text and graphic images. It is vital that the graphic elements identified in the range statement are included in the layout and that a fully-specified, working drawing is produced for each page prior to the electronic page make-up stage. Again, the minimum artefact asked for is one A4 page but the assessor may wish to incorporate this within a multi-page document.

As with any practical assessment, the assessor must take steps to ensure that the evidence produced is that of the individual candidate.

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 alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements* (SQA, 1998).