

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Acting for Radio

Unit code: DG3R 34

Unit purpose: This unit is designed to equip candidates with practical knowledge and understanding of acting in radio. It will develop these skills by giving them the underpinning knowledge required as well as voice and acting techniques for radio. These will be developed through a series of practical exercises.

It is primarily intended for candidates who wish to work as performers/practitioners in the entertainment industry. It would also be relevant to those candidates on media/broadcasting courses who have to use voice/speech as a considerable part of their work situations.

On completion of the Unit candidates should be able to:

1. Explain and describe the major principles and processes for acting in radio.
2. Demonstrate the development and application of the candidate's voice and speech production to acting in radio.
3. Perform in a radio script using appropriate acting technique.

Credit value: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**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.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access will be at the discretion of the centre and the following recommendations are for guidance only.

Where a candidate has achieved the course entry criteria for HNC/D Acting and Performance, they will have shown sufficient knowledge and skills for access to this unit. For this unit, candidates should have good vocal skills. This may be demonstrated by the achievement of Higher Drama (C037 12), or NQ Unit: Voice (DOH2 12), or NQ Unit: Making a Radio Programme (EF5V 12), or NQ Unit: Media Studies: Radio (DOYW 12). It would be beneficial if the candidate had some experience as a performer but it is not essential, although they should have some appreciation of the role of a performer in radio and/or radio drama.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

General information for centres (cont)

Context for delivery: This unit is included in the optional framework of HNC/D Acting and Performance. If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Assessment: This unit could be assessed by three instruments of assessment in which the candidate produces evidence which shows they have developed the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for acting in radio.

For Outcome 1, a written assignment is the recommended instrument of assessment in which the candidate will demonstrate an understanding of the major principles of acting for radio.

Outcome 2 should be a practical exercise which assesses the candidate's performances in a range of appropriate radio exercises which should be audio-taped.

Outcome 3 should consist of a performance on radio of a scripted piece which demonstrates the candidate's technical and interpretative awareness. An evaluation, approximately 750 words, of the process of Acting for Radio should be submitted.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Outcome 1

Explain and describe the major principles and processes for acting in radio.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Awareness of radio studio space, personnel and equipment
- ◆ Understanding of appropriate use of voice/microphone technique
- ◆ Understanding of recording procedures for acting in radio

Evidence requirements

Candidates will generate evidence through a written assignment of approximately 750-800 words. They will demonstrate an accurate understanding of the process of acting for radio by describing typical radio recording procedures from the casting through to recording of the radio exercise.

Candidates must:

- ◆ identify the main areas of a professional and/or basic radio studio space, personnel and equipment
- ◆ describe the main processes involved in acting for radio
- ◆ describe the main procedures for producing a radio recording.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome should be assessed through a restricted response assessment event undertaken in controlled conditions, lasting one hour. Candidates may not bring in text books, hand-outs or other material to the assessment event.

The written assignment may utilise the knowledge and experience gained during the candidate's own recording experiences in Outcome 2.

Outcome 2

Demonstrate the development and application of the candidate's voice/speech production to acting in radio.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ practice and development of radio vocal techniques
- ◆ practice and development of acting technique for radio

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Acting for Radio

- ◆ analysis of progress and development of acting technique for radio

Evidence requirements

Candidates will generate evidence by producing a range of short radio exercises. These may include advertisements, voice-overs or extracts of radio dramas in a variety of genres. A minimum of two radio exercises will be audio-recorded.

The candidate must:

- ◆ demonstrate the main technical aspects of voice/speech production applicable to acting in radio
- ◆ demonstrate the main aspects of acting technique applicable to radio

Assessment guidelines

Candidates' progress and development will be supported and assessed by observational checklists, which will assess performance against the evidence requirements. Each candidate will practise exercises to develop their acting skills and will work on a variety of texts.

Completion of this Outcome may provide knowledge and experience which candidates can utilise in Outcome 3.

Outcome 3

Perform in a radio script using appropriate acting technique.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Presentation of radio script on audio
- ◆ Effective interpretation of style, mood and character
- ◆ Use of appropriate vocal acting techniques for radio
- ◆ Application of rehearsal process from initial read through to performance
- ◆ Evaluation of the process and performance

Evidence requirements

Candidates will perform a short radio script lasting approximately 5-7 minutes. The script should include a variety of acting techniques where possible and may take the form of a compilation. The radio script will be selected to demonstrate the range of experiences and application of knowledge and/or skills developed in Outcomes 1 and 2. Candidates will present the radio script to performance standard.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Acting for Radio

Candidates must:

- ◆ demonstrate the ability to act effectively on radio using appropriate characterisation, mood and atmosphere
- ◆ demonstrate appropriate use of voice and microphone technique
- ◆ rehearse the script to an appropriate standard and take direction
- ◆ evaluate the process of preparation and performance.

The performance scripts should last 5-7 minutes and must be audio recorded. Upon completion of the performance, candidates must submit an evaluation of the audio evidence of the preparation and performance.

Assessment guidelines

The evidence should be assessed by tutor observational checklist.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DG3R 34
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Superclass category:	LC
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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Page 2, Outcome 2 last sentence deleted. Page 2, Outcome 3 sentence added to end. Page 4, first paragraph last sentence deleted, third bullet deleted. Outcome 1 becomes Outcome 3. Page 5, additional final paragraph Evidence Requirements. Page 10, deleted part of last paragraph. Guidance on delivery and assessment. Page 12, deleted part of last paragraph.	July 2007

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Acting for Radio

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 primarily intended to, prepare candidates for a broader experience and opportunity as performers by giving them the essential underpinning knowledge and/or skills for performing in radio in which actors use only voice techniques to create characters. This inevitably may lead to some constraints when considering the range of acting opportunities available but also provides additional opportunities for those actors who go on to specialize in acting careers in radio as voice-over actors, advertising work, voices for speaking books for the visually impaired or audio recorded stories for adults and children. Work done in this unit utilizes the skills gained in the core units; voice, acting and production and applies them in a quite different way. Candidates have to make the jump from acting with their whole bodies, to acting with only the voice to portray character. This is actually a very challenging skill to acquire. The use of costume, stage make-up and set do not exist in radio and cannot help the actor to convey the role. This unit could be useful in encouraging candidates to increase their skills base, widen their horizons and improve their employability, as there are many opportunities for work in areas related to the skills acquired in Acting for Radio. Candidates should be encouraged to consider the unit as part of the general training required as an actor.

When offering this unit as part of an acting and performance course, it is very important to provide the candidate with the most appropriate learning environment in which to achieve the knowledge and skills. A soundproofed recording studio, with standard broadcast -quality equipment would be the minimum requirement. This facility need not be large but should provide the candidate with the opportunity to perform in an acoustically appropriate space which would assist the candidate in developing the appropriate acting skills for performing in radio.

Outcome 1 looks at the whole concept of acting for radio. The candidate will learn about acting in a radio studio. They should know the main areas and equipment as well as the main support staff who work there as well as what they do, the vocabulary and terminology used, how to use the equipment correctly and what skills are required to act for radio. Candidates should become aware of the difference between acting on stage and acting for radio. The minimum technical information candidates should be familiar with would be the following:

- ◆ live/dead studio: control room/green room
- ◆ acoustic table/microphones/headphones : cue lights & cueing
- ◆ director's relationship with the actor/ performer from casting to recording
- ◆ technical Operators
- ◆ actors/performers ("talent")

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Acting for Radio

When becoming familiar with the processes for acting in radio candidates should understand the following:

- ◆ analysis of the script to identify textual clues relating to interpretation and portrayal of character using only voice & speech delivery and accent
- ◆ the rehearsal process using voice/microphone/interaction with others

When describing the main procedures for producing a radio recording they should include the following:

- ◆ studio etiquette: punctuality, manners, clothing
- ◆ knowing script and voice choices for character prior to recording day
- ◆ responding to read through/notes/ timing/ script adjustments/director's notes
- ◆ handling/annotating script
- ◆ recording procedures/the take(s).

One approach might be to set the scene within which radio is produced by initially asking each candidate to perform a short 'read' in a simulated radio environment which puts them in the position of broadcaster immediately. The candidate would immediately have an impression of the atmosphere, the effect of radio and the excitement of recording voice on microphone.

Another approach might be to encourage candidates to listen to professionally produced radio. Various genres should be considered. Radio dramas of every type produced by public service broadcasting companies or commercially produced dramas, radio advertisements including dramatizations and voice-overs, radio recordings of novels etc could be sampled as background acquired knowledge. If feasible, a visit to a professional radio studio might enhance the learning experience. Candidates might also be encouraged to read any current textbooks on acting for radio.

It is important that the candidate has an impression of the immediacy of radio. They should understand the role of the audience (the listener) who hears the voice only once. They should therefore be aware of the necessity for all radio to be read and produced with 100% accuracy every time.

In Outcome 2, the candidate will start to develop the skills identified in Outcome 1. A series of short radio exercises should be practised. It is important that the material used provides the candidate with a broad range of genres of radio scripts in order that the candidate will have the opportunity to identify individual strengths which will develop a range of acting styles. They should be encouraged to practice as many of the following types of radio styles as possible:

- ◆ radio advertisements: voice-overs, 2-handers, timed at exactly: 30 seconds, 40 seconds and 10 seconds. Promos.
- ◆ radio stories: children's stories, using animal type voices and fantasy character voices (Eileen Paterson, Roald Dahl & J. K. Rowling). Adult stories : romantic/classical literature and horror/adventure

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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- ◆ radio dramas: adaptations of novels, plays adapted for radio, radio comedy.

Within these examples suggested, it is essential that the candidate should practice as many types of voices as possible in order to analyse the candidate's own development of vocal skills for radio as well as the effect created by different character voices when listened to by others.

Technical aspects of voice/speech production applicable to acting in radio should include the following:

- ◆ pitch, volume, breathing, tone
- ◆ pace, pause
- ◆ accent, dialect
- ◆ articulation.

Acting technique applicable to radio should include the following:

- ◆ using sensory imagination to create the place (setting)
- ◆ creating, developing and presenting the character(s) emotion and acting styles through vocal technique
- ◆ acting with script/microphone/spot
- ◆ performing exercises with other actors while being aware of technical requirements.

Candidates should also develop consistent accuracy in reading skills. Candidates who have specific problems with accuracy in reading should be identified, and alternative arrangements for reading accuracy should be implemented.

Candidates should work as individuals as well as in pairs and small groups. Seldom, if ever, should more than four people work together as it would be too difficult to manage technically. Most small studios are likely to be set up with four microphones; this would also determine the limits of the scripts, although it would be useful for candidates to have experience of working with scripts where more than four people are used, to understand the way that recording sessions are broken down scene by scene.

Candidates should also become used to working with and/or without spot. Music beds should be added to enhance the development of vocal technique where possible. Library music and BBC sound effects CDs are available.

Outcome 3 builds on the skills developed in Outcomes 1 & 2 and should be introduced once the candidates have developed satisfactory skills and experience as well as a good grasp of the concepts of acting for radio.

The candidate should be allowed a realistic time allowance for the rehearsal process prior to the recording of the assessment. Some candidates may require longer preparation time due to previously identified special needs.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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The candidate should have some element of choice where possible as to which script(s) should be used for the final assessment. It should be chosen in negotiation with the tutor who should have a comprehensive overview of the candidate's strengths. The role of the tutor throughout this unit is one of teacher, director, producer and technical operator.

It is important that consideration is given to time constraints for assessment of this Outcome and all three Outcomes and that radio scripts are selected on the basis that all candidates must have equal opportunity to be recorded on audio and that equal time for playback for evaluation purposes is allowed for.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit is likely to form part of a group award, which is primarily designed to provide candidates with technical and professional knowledge and skills related to working as actors/performers in the entertainment industry. It would be expected that those who successfully completed the award would be likely to progress to looking for work as performers. In these circumstances, the unit is likely to be delivered in year two of the award by which time, candidates will have a good grasp of the training in voice and acting skills which would be applied to this unit. This should allow the unit to be delivered in a way that enables candidates to appreciate its relevance to the entertainment industry. Wherever possible, materials used should be related to specific occupational requirements.

Assessment will be by three instruments of assessment which will be undertaken throughout the delivery period of the unit at times when the tutor feels that the candidates are ready to be assessed, bearing in mind the time constraints already mentioned. The assessment of this unit requires tutor observation and support of each candidate at work. All practical assessments must be audio recorded.

Open learning

The Outcomes in this unit rely on developing skills through interaction with a lecturer and/or fellow candidates, and so the opportunities for distance learning are very limited. Centres may, however, find it possible to develop solutions, provided all unit and moderation requirements are met in full. Technological advances may make the possibility of such creative solutions more widespread in the future.

Because of the intensive nature of the training and the rehearsal requirements for this unit when taken as part of a course, part-time provision would be most unusual and difficult to achieve.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance and Distance Learning (SQA 2000)*.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Acting for Radio

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).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Acting for Radio

This unit is designed to enable you to identify, develop and apply the practical knowledge and skills necessary to act in radio. It is primarily intended to prepare you to extend your vocabulary of acting skills in order to assist you to work as an actor/performer in either public service or commercial radio.

On completion of this unit, you will have gained a wide range of different practical performance experiences in radio.

To begin with, in Outcome 1, you will learn about the way radio works as a performance medium, you may listen to different types of radio where acting skills are required and you will learn how to work in a radio studio, with radio personnel and equipment. Specifically, you will identify and learn how to use acting skills to perform roles where you have to portray the character (s) only through your vocal skills. You will find that acting for radio involves some quite different skills from acting on stage or for a camera.

Once you have covered the background knowledge to working in radio, you will then go on to practising these skills and applying them in a variety of different contexts in Outcome 2. Much of this section of the course is practical. You will work with scripts which could range from radio advertisements and voice-overs to children's stories, or reading theatre/film reviews or acting in a radio play. You will learn through this practice to use your voice in many different ways. You will learn how the recording procedure for radio is implemented. One generic skill which will be developed through practice is that of accurate reading and this may help you in other areas of your course. As you work your way through scripts, you will listen to recordings of your voice to assess your own development as a performer in radio.

Finally, you will rehearse, perform and evaluate a piece for radio. This should demonstrate how your acting/vocal skills have developed throughout the course.

In order to complete this unit successfully, you will be required to complete three assessments. The first one will be a written assignment in which you will demonstrate that you understand the major principles of acting for radio. The next one will be a practical radio acting exercise. The final assessment will again be a practical exercise which will be the rehearsal, performance and evaluation of a scripted piece for radio in which you should demonstrate your technical and interpretative awareness of radio as a performance medium.