

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Location Sound: Single Microphone Recording and Boom Operations

Unit code: DM14 35

Unit purpose:

This Unit is designed to allow the candidate to develop the skills necessary to make a sound recording on location.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Evaluate sound requirements for a location shoot.
2. Line up, check and prepare equipment prior to a location shoot.
3. Pick up sound using a hand held pole.
4. Make and log sound recordings on a location shoot.

Credit points and level: 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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 to this Unit will be at the discretion of the Centre. However it would be beneficial if the candidate possessed the following HN Units: Sound Recording: an Introduction.

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.

Context for delivery: 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: Assessment for this unit should be based upon candidates undertaking three distinct location recordings. Candidates will also be required to undertake observed pre-shoot checks and preparation and to perform boom operations under lecturer observation. There is potential for integration with other Units such as HN Units *Camera and Lighting*.

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.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Evaluate sound requirements for a location shoot

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Identify sound requirements for a location shoot.
- ◆ Identify acoustic factors which are likely to affect the recording.
- ◆ Plan the acquisition of sound on a location shoot
- ◆ Specify equipment for a location shoot.

Outcome 2

Line up, check and prepare equipment prior to a location shoot.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Check that all required equipment items are present and meet safety requirements.
- ◆ Connect mixing and recording equipment and record reference tone.
- ◆ Check all microphones cables and monitoring equipment through the sound mixer.
- ◆ Disconnect and pack equipment in preparation for the location shoot.

Outcome 3

Pick up sound using a hand held pole.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Rig a hand held pole.
- ◆ Identify where the microphone is to be positioned.
- ◆ Operate the pole for optimum sound coverage.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Location Sound: Single Microphone Recording and Boom Operations

Outcome 4

Make and log sound recordings on a location shoot.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Record sound to required technical and aesthetic standard.
- ◆ Log recordings so that they can be easily identified.
- ◆ Label recording media so that it can be easily identified.

Evidence requirements for the Unit

Performance evidence covering all items in K&S for outcomes 1-4 in the form of:

- ◆ production notes, location plans and equipment requisitions for three distinct locations.
- ◆ lecturer observation checklist of pre-shoot checks and preparation.
- ◆ three correctly logged, labelled and distinct audio recordings on a format specified by production requirements.
- ◆ lecturer observation checklist of boom operation performance.

The candidate should participate in a production meeting involving the director and other members of the crew.

The candidate will provide a list of equipment required for the shoot and notes made as a result of the production meeting. These notes should include reasons for the choice of equipment. The location recordings will demonstrate the effectiveness of the planning.

Equipment checks and preparation should be undertaken prior to each location shoot. Location recording media should include the recording of reference tone.

The candidate should rig and operate a hand held pole in a location project or a simulated location exercise. In either case there is potential for the assessment being integrated with assessment of other members of the crew. The candidate should participate in a location production as a sound recordist.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DM14 35
Unit title:	Location Sound: Single Microphone Recording and Boom Operations
Superclass category:	KG
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Location Sound: Single Microphone Recording and Boom Operations

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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Outcome 1 of this Unit requires the candidate to consider, in advance of a location shoot, the factors which will influence the final recording. This should be done in conjunction with the director and other members of the crew. The candidate should demonstrate an understanding of different location acoustics and should liaise with the director on choice of location where appropriate. Final choice of location requirements should be made following a production meeting.

Outcome 2 covers the preparation required for a location recording. It is important that candidates are given a number of opportunities to practise these skills and on completion of this Unit the preparation for a location recording should be a well established routine.

Industry practise often requires the handheld pole operator to also control and monitor sound levels. However at this level it would be sensible for the pole operator to develop skills and be assessed independently of the mixing process.

The candidates undertaking this Unit should develop an appreciation of the importance of microphone technique and acoustic environment on the recorded sound quality.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcome 1 - Acoustic properties such as reverberation and acoustic isolation should be presented in the context of practical situations. There are many examples from film and television which could be used to illustrate these concepts.

The candidate should be encouraged to contribute fully in the production planning and identify any problems which might arise so that these can be considered in advance. He/she should liaise with the director and other technical staff to ensure that sound requirements are fully understood and considered. Where the choice of method of sound coverage is important to the style of the programme e.g. use of tie clip microphones or gun microphones, then this should be agreed with the director. Candidates will also require to work within available human and technical resources.

Outcome 2 – The candidate should demonstrate the ability to complete the line up procedure quickly, reliably and efficiently.

Outcome 3 – The candidate should rig the hand held pole to ensure that there is no mechanical noise when the pole is moved.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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The candidate should demonstrate the ability to:

- ◆ position the microphone to discriminate against unwanted sound sources.
- ◆ minimise unwanted shadows and reflections caused by the microphone and its support.
- ◆ position the microphone to avoid impeding and endangering performers.
- ◆ make acceptable compromises in the captured sound quality when the microphone is moved to eliminate shadows and reflections.
- ◆ capture sound which has accurate perspective
- ◆ respond to each cue with smooth physical co-ordination, anticipating movements of the sound source and any shot changes.

Outcome 4

The recordings produced should demonstrate that the candidate is able to control sound sources to achieve the required level, tonal quality and intelligibility required. The logs produced should facilitate the identification and locating of recordings when required.

Open learning

Due to the specialist nature and the need for working as part of a crew, this unit is not able to be delivered by Open learning.

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. 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. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

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The first part of this Unit is designed to give you an understanding of acoustics as they affect the practical requirements of a location sound recording. You will be required to use this knowledge whilst planning a location recording along with the director and other members of the crew.

The remainder of the Unit will require you to plan, prepare for and undertake three location sound recording(s).

You will also be observed performing pre shoot checks and preparation and observed using a hand held boom microphone.