



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Audio Post Production: An Introduction

Unit code: H1M3 34

Superclass: KG

Publication date: June 2012

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to give candidates an introduction to audio post production. Candidates will have the opportunity to learn about many of the techniques used in audio post production and put those techniques into practice.

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

- 1 Produce a sound map for a visual sequence.
- 2 Prepare audio for use within a visual sequence.
- 3 Mix the sound elements for a visual sequence.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it will be beneficial if candidates have completed the Unit *Sound: Design* (SCQF level 6) and have a basic grasp of sound production skills and audio production software.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit 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.*

General information (cont)

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

Context for delivery

This is an optional Unit in the HNC/D Sound Production framework. It is recommended that the Unit should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The assessment exemplar for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable Instrument of Assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the assessment exemplar to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment exemplars are available on SQA's secure website.

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

Produce a sound map for a visual sequence.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Using appropriate terminology produce a sound map detailing the sound requirements for a given sequence
- ◆ Diegetic and non-diegetic sound
- ◆ Point-of-audition sound
- ◆ Soundscape
- ◆ Establishing sound
- ◆ Empathetic and non-empathetic sound
- ◆ Room tone
- ◆ Synchresis

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can produce a sound map for a given visual sequence. A candidate's response can be judged satisfactory where the evidence shows they can:

- ◆ produce a sound map incorporating appropriate terminology to identify all of the sound requirements for a visual sequence with reference to at least four of the terminologies expressed in the Knowledge and/or Skills

Evidence should be generated in the form of a sound map which should describe sequentially all of the audio requirements for a visual sequence. The visual sequence should be of between 2 and 3 minutes' duration.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

Prepare audio for use within a visual sequence.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Create original audio elements as identified in the sound map
- ◆ Import audio elements as identified in the sound map
- ◆ Demonstrate file management skills
- ◆ Apply audio elements to a visual sequence using appropriate software
- ◆ Edit gathered sounds appropriate to the visual sequence

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can gather all of the audio elements they identified in the sound map and apply them appropriately to a visual sequence. A candidate's response can be judged satisfactory where the evidence shows they can:

- ◆ create original audio elements as identified in the sound map
- ◆ import pre-recorded audio elements as identified in the sound map
- ◆ name and archive all gathered audio elements correctly
- ◆ accurately 'spot' and edit gathered audio elements to a visual sequence using appropriate software

Evidence should be generated in the form of a sound library organised into appropriately named folders with all audio files named consistently and a session file generated in an appropriate piece of audio software showing all audio elements accurately synchronised with the visual sequence.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Audio Post Production: An Introduction

Outcome 3

Mix the sound elements for a visual sequence.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Apply spatial effects appropriate to the visual sequence
- ◆ Balance the level and panning of audio elements appropriate to the visual sequence, using automation where required
- ◆ Produce a final mix of the visual sequence in an appropriate format, adhering to current industry protocols

Evidence Requirements

Evidence should be generated in the form of a video file in an appropriate format and a session file generated in an appropriate piece of audio software showing all audio elements accurately synchronised with the visual sequence.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Audio Post Production: An Introduction

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

The Unit is primarily intended to give candidates knowledge and practice in the area of audio post production for use within, but not exclusively, the HN Sound Production framework.

Outcome 1 — requires the candidate to identify the sound requirements for and produce a sound map for a given visual sequence. Candidates would benefit from an understanding of the following concepts:

- ◆ Diegetic and non-diegetic sound
- ◆ Point-of-audition sound
- ◆ Soundscape
- ◆ Establishing sound
- ◆ Empathetic and non-empathetic sound
- ◆ Room tone
- ◆ Synchresis

During the delivery of this Outcome candidates would benefit from analysing examples of professionally produced films, television programmes, animations and/or games. The sound map itself could take one of several forms. See the assessment guidelines for more detail.

Outcome 2 — requires the candidate to gather audio elements and apply them to the visual sequence. Original sounds may be recorded or synthesised. Candidates should be encouraged first to collate a sound library of material informed by their sound maps, with audio files named appropriately and organised into folders.

The process of applying the sounds to the visual sequence should be carried out using appropriate audio software which allows the candidate to accurately 'spot' sounds to specific timecode locations.

The Outcome would benefit from practical demonstration of the appropriate techniques in the relevant software. The Unit *Digital Audio Workstations 1* would be ideal for augmenting the delivery of this Outcome.

Candidates may benefit from being introduced to common terminology, phraseology and concepts specific to the post production process by audio and picture editors. These may include (but will not be limited to):

- ◆ ADR; dubbing; looping; voiceover; foley; music and effects (M&E)
- ◆ Edit decision lists (EDLs); bins; frames; handles; transitions; scrub; shuttle
- ◆ Timecode; longitudinal timecode (LTC)
- ◆ Open media framework (OMF)

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 3 — requires the candidate to edit and mix their collated sound elements for the visual sequence. Again, this process should be carried out using appropriate audio software. Candidates would benefit from an understanding of the following processes:

- ◆ Time stretching/compression
- ◆ Pitch shifting
- ◆ Stem mixing
- ◆ Audio layering
- ◆ Effects busses
- ◆ Automation

It is anticipated at this level that audio mixes will be in stereo. However, should multi-channel mixing be covered, candidates would also benefit from an understanding of the LFE channel. Candidates would also benefit from a demonstration of the use of reverberation to achieve appropriate spatial characteristics for all of the different sound elements for the visual sequence.

In terms of the format of the final mix, current industry standards should be considered, for example the BBC's 'Technical Standards for Delivery of Television Programmes'.

Due regard should be given to copyright throughout the Unit.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as an optional Unit in the HN Sound Production framework. It is possible that this Unit could be delivered concurrently with other Units from the HN Sound Production framework such as *Sound Production Theory 1*, *Sound Production Practice 1* and *Digital Audio Workstations 1*.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

While each Outcome can be assessed individually it is anticipated that the assessment for the Unit is undertaken holistically in the form of a project to a given brief.

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that the assessment for this Unit is a single holistic project, whereby the candidate is given a visual sequence and asked to produce a soundtrack to a given brief.

Outcome 1

Appropriate evidence for the sound map could be in the form of an annotated script, a series of annotated still images from the visual sequence or a storyboard.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcomes 2 and 3

It is recommended that the evidence for Outcomes 2 and 3 be submitted together, as it is likely that the sound library will continue to evolve up to the final mix. The sound library should be submitted separately from the session file(s).

It is specified that an Evidence Requirement for Outcomes 2 and 3 is a session file, however it is recommended that a single session file submitted at the end of the project in addition to the video file containing the final mix should provide sufficient evidence for both Outcomes.

Online and Distance Learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

This Unit provides excellent opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the Core Skill *Information and Communication Technology* when using audio production software and demonstrating file management skills.

Candidates will have opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* when they create, edit and compile their soundtracks.

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

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Audio Post Production: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to give you an introduction to audio post production. It will give you the opportunity to learn about many of the techniques used in audio post production and put those techniques into practice.

The Unit has three Outcomes, each addressing a different stage of the post production process.

Outcome 1 — requires you to analyse a visual sequence, which will be given to you by your tutor, and to produce a sound map.

Outcome 2 — requires you to gather sounds for your visual sequence and to apply them to the sequence.

Outcome 3 — requires you to edit and mix the sounds you have applied to the sequence into a finished video file.

To achieve this Unit successfully you are required to work to a satisfactory level on the assessment material, which will be a project to complete the soundtrack for a given visual sequence.