



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Media: Making a Radio Programme (SCQF level 5)

CODE F587 11

SUMMARY

The purpose of this Unit is to enable candidates to develop the skills and techniques which will allow them to make speech-based radio programmes. Candidates will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the equipment used in professional standard radio productions and they will also have the opportunity to use such equipment to record sound, edit and mix recordings. The emphasis of this Unit is on the technical aspects of the production process rather than programme content.

The Unit is suitable for candidates with no prior knowledge or experience of making radio programmes.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the way in which equipment is used to produce speech-based radio programmes.
- 2 Record speech for a radio programme in accordance with a given brief.
- 3 Edit recorded speech for a radio programme in accordance with a given brief.
- 4 Mix edited recordings of speech with other sounds to create a final recording in accordance with a given brief.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates doing this Unit do not need any prior knowledge of audio production. However, some experience of using IT would be an advantage.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KA

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (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

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

There are opportunities for Core Skill development; these 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

Describe the way in which equipment is used to produce speech-based radio programmes.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify location recording equipment suitable for recording speech-based radio programmes, and describe the way in which these are used.
- (b) Describe equipment suitable for editing and mixing speech-based radio programmes and the way in which the equipment is used.

OUTCOME 2

Record speech for a radio programme in accordance with a given brief.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Select appropriate equipment in accordance with the given brief.
- (b) Effectively record sources.
- (c) Save the recorded speech.
- (d) Satisfy health and safety requirements.

OUTCOME 3

Edit recorded speech for a radio programme in accordance with a given brief.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Effectively edit the duration of each audio recording to fit with the specified programme duration.
- (b) Effectively adjust the sound levels of each audio recording.
- (c) Remove any unwanted audio.
- (d) Select the order of the recordings within the programme to ensure programme flow and structure.
- (e) Save audio recordings appropriately.
- (f) Satisfy health and safety requirements.
- (g) Create an edited version of the programme which meets the requirements of the brief.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 4

Mix edited recordings of speech with other sounds to create a final recording in accordance with a given brief.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Select appropriate sounds to support edited recording.
- (b) Use equipment to add in sounds at appropriate points.
- (c) Produce a final mixed recording.
- (d) Save final mixed recording.
- (e) Produce a transmission information sheet.
- (f) Satisfy health and safety requirements.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidates have achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Evidence should be gathered at appropriate points throughout the Unit.

Outcome 1 — Written and/or Oral Evidence

Evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidates have achieved Outcome 1 to the standard specified in the Outcome and Performance Criteria.

This evidence will show that candidates are able to identify the following location recording equipment:

- ◆ microphones
- ◆ digital recording devices
- ◆ meters
- ◆ headphones

And are able to describe digital editing and mixing equipment, and the way each piece of equipment is used.

For Outcomes 2, 3 and 4, candidates are required to work to a brief. This brief will specify that candidates are required to record, edit and mix the content for a speech-based radio programme containing interviews and links. The brief will specify:

- ◆ the subject matter of the programme
- ◆ the required duration of the completed programme
- ◆ the required format of the final mix

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2 — Product and Performance Evidence

For Outcome 2 candidates are required to produce product evidence in the form of at least one single-voice audio recording and one multiple-voice audio recording. This activity will be undertaken using digital recording equipment.

There is no requirement to make studio-based recordings. Location recordings are appropriate. The minimum level of equipment required to create each recording is portable recording equipment.

Each recording must be of an appropriate signal level and quality in terms of distortion and noise to signal ratio. Recordings will be distorted if recording levels are set too high. If recording levels are set too low the background noise will be too loud. Other noise factors that must be considered are; background noise, wind noise, popping, sibilance, breathing, paper rustling and microphone handling noise.

Each recording must be saved to a suitable medium for recall purposes.

Performance evidence for Outcome 2 must show:

- ◆ appropriate equipment selected
- ◆ satisfy health and safety

Outcome 3 — Product and Performance Evidence

Product evidence is required for Outcome 3 to show that candidates are able to carry out the following tasks for each of the audio recordings made in Outcome 2:

- ◆ effectively edit to fit with the overall programme duration
- ◆ effectively adjust sound levels in the editing application to create an acceptable level throughout the programme
- ◆ remove any unwanted audio from each recording

This activity will be undertaken using digital editing equipment. The minimum level of equipment required is a computer capable of running a sound editing application.

Performance evidence, supported by an assessor observation checklist is required to show that candidates can:

- ◆ select the order in which the recordings will appear in the programme to ensure programme flow and structure
- ◆ create an edited recording of the programme (ie multi-track session file containing a minimum of one single voice and one multiple-voice audio recordings) which is appropriately titled and saved and meets the requirements of the brief
- ◆ satisfy health and safety requirements

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4 — Product and Performance Evidence

Product evidence is required for Outcome 4 in the form of a final mixed recording (ie multi-track session file containing a minimum of one single-voice and one multiple-voice audio recording) which show that candidates can:

- ◆ select a minimum of two appropriate sounds to support the edited recordings. These sounds could include music and/or sound effects. These can either be original music/sound effects created by the candidate or they can be imported from other sources.
- ◆ produce a final mixed recording that is well balanced and of acceptable technical quality.

This activity will be undertaken using digital mixing equipment. The minimum level of equipment required is a computer capable of running a sound mixing application.

Candidates are also required to produce product evidence in the form of a transmission information sheet which must record:

- ◆ programme title
- ◆ duration
- ◆ producer's name
- ◆ in and out words
- ◆ any required copyright information

Performance evidence, supported by an observation checklist is required to show that candidates can:

- ◆ use equipment to add in sounds at appropriate points
- ◆ save the final mixed recording to a suitable medium for recall purposes, with component audio files placed on specified tracks
- ◆ satisfy health and safety requirements

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Media: Making a Radio Programme (SCQF level 5)

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 an optional Unit within the National Certificate Group Award in Media (SCQF level 6), but can be taken as a free-standing Unit.

In line with current industry practice it is expected that the production activity is undertaken using digital recording, editing and mixing equipment. Whilst good practice in the preparation of scripts and supporting paperwork should be encouraged the focus of this Unit is upon the practical tasks involved.

Outcome 1 is concerned with the underpinning knowledge required for competent practical radio production activities. These activities include recording, editing and mixing. Candidates should gain basic knowledge of equipment currently used in these activities.

It is unlikely that candidates will have experience of using professional standard recording equipment therefore practice time should be made available before assessment in Outcome 2. The multiple-voice recording may be in the form of an interview. The single-voice recording may be in the form of a link or links.

Editing and mixing can be conducted using a range of computer programs from industry standard applications to freeware applications which offer similar but less sophisticated functionality.

In Outcome 4 candidates must either have access to music and/or sound effects or the time and resources to record them.

Candidates must be aware of the copyright implications of including music or imported sound effects within their mixed audio programme in Outcome 4.

This Unit provides articulation onto the Unit F57X 12 *Media: Making a Radio Programme* (SCQF level 6).

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It is recommended that the Outcomes in this Unit are taught sequentially as one naturally follows-on from the next.

The practical based Outcomes demand some appreciable skill. To achieve the required level of skill practice time will be required. Candidates should have the opportunity to practice using equipment and review recordings with lecturer/teacher guidance before attempting assessment tasks.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates would benefit from listening to professional produced speech radio and should be encouraged to listen to a variety of programming.

Candidates would benefit from an introduction to the basics of digital audio capture and storage including common file formats and sample rates.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates are required to use oral communication skills when conducting interviews. This provides ideal opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Communication*.

Candidates are required to use graphical communication when monitoring sound levels using meters on recording equipment and in editing applications, either by on screen meters or waveform representation. In addition, candidates are required to use numbers in simple calculations relating the length of clips and finished programme. This provides opportunities to develop aspects of the Core Skill of *Numeracy*.

Candidates will be required to carry out complex processes using a sound editing and mixing application in depth. This provides opportunities to develop aspect of the Core Skill of *Information Technology*.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1 Short answer questions
Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 Practical exercise

For Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 candidates will be provided with a clear and unambiguous brief. Where possible, the subject of the brief should be kept simple and require a minimum of research so that the candidate has sufficient time to complete the practical tasks.

The production exercise in Outcome 2 could be integrated with the F583 11 *Media: Scriptwriting* (SCQF level 5) Unit where research and scriptwriting activities are undertaken. These scripts (if considered appropriate by the teacher/lecturer could be used as the basis for recordings within this Unit). Alternatively, it would be reasonable for the teacher/lecturer to supply candidates with scripts.

As an example, the brief could specify the production of a programme of approximately ten minutes duration which includes a minimum of one location interview and links.

Titling and saving files in Outcomes 3 and 4 should be done in accordance with centre policy and/or lecturer/teachers instruction.

Time should be allowed for any necessary re-assessment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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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 communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. 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)*.

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).