MEDIA STUDIES
(Intermediate 2)

First edition – published 2004

National Course Specification

Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

COURSE CODE   C210 11

COURSE STRUCTURE
This Course has three mandatory Units as follows:

DF14 11	*Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)*	*1 credit (40 hours)*
DF15 11	*Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)*	*1 credit (40 hours)*
DF16 11	*Media Production (Intermediate 2)*	*1 credit (40 hours)*

All Courses include 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the Units. This may be used for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment. The Course is suited to those who have an interest in, and wish to pursue an analytical approach to the media. It is suitable both for those who wish to pursue further study and a career in the communications industries as well as those whose interest is more generalised.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY
While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

♦ NQ Media Studies (Intermediate 1)
♦ Standard Grade General/Intermediate 1 English
♦ Standard Grade General/Intermediate 1 Art
♦ Standard Grade General/Intermediate 1 Drama
♦ Communication 2 or equivalent

PROGRESSION
This Course or its Units may provide progression in the following way:

♦ NQ Media Studies (Higher)

National Course Specification: (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

CORE SKILLS

This Course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills for the Course   Problem Solving   Intermediate 2
                                                Working With Others   Intermediate 2

CREDIT VALUE

The Intermediate 2 Media Studies Course is allocated 24 SCQF Credit Points at SCQF level 5*.

*SCQF points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

RATIONALE

The media of mass communication play a significant role in the modern world and, being a major means of disseminating messages nationally and globally, affect society at all levels: economic, political, social, cultural and individual. Knowledge of the media is an important and highly valued aspect of work in an information society and an essential element of active citizenship.

One of the aims of a Course in Media Studies is to enable the candidate to look at and listen to media products, not simply as a consumer of those products, but as a critic, able to question the content and purpose of the messages rather than take them at face value. The development of these independent critical thinking skills means that a candidate of Media Studies is equipped to make reasoned, well balanced judgements about what is being communicated through the media, and able to make decisions based on fuller understanding. This critical approach is the key to making sense of the ever-expanding and complex web of communication, enabling the candidate to move from a stance of passive or unquestioning recipient of media messages, to one of active, thoughtful questioner, and indeed maker, of those messages.

The technology of mass communication is changing rapidly, and the speed of this change, especially in the electronic media, brings with it an immediacy that means that the public can witness events around the world as they happen. International events unfold before us as if we were present as eye witnesses; sports programmes and archaeological digs are played out on our screens before the results are known or before the pottery fragments are identified. This sense of immediacy is taken further in 'reality' shows when viewers are invited to influence a particular outcome by phoning in their preferred option. Candidates of Media Studies will learn that this apparent immediacy is in actual fact a construct; messages are being mediated and a point of view communicated, even where the events seem at their most 'raw' and direct.

Candidates of Media Studies will learn to appreciate the different characteristics of the various media. For example, by the time news is printed in newspapers it is arguably out of date as news agencies have already flashed information around the world instantaneously by broadcast and webcast means. Accordingly, newspapers, being more time-based, fulfil a slightly different function. They become a reference point for detailed information and encourage reflection.

TV programmes and cinema films, although sharing many features, such as sound, and coloured moving images, differ in the environments in which they are consumed; these different environments considerably affect the stories they tell. Likewise radio and TV, although having characteristics in common, differ in the kind of messages they can communicate. Because of the more ubiquitous and portable nature of radio it can be accessed in a much wider range of environments that in turn influences our reactions to what we hear. Instead of providing a single focus it can function as an aural backdrop to our everyday lives.

The NQ Intermediate 2 Media Studies Course is particularly relevant to those who would like eventually, after study in further or higher education, to take up jobs in the communication industries. Involving as it does technical skills, teamwork and the ability to think for themselves, Media Studies is valuable in most walks of life.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

By taking the Course as a whole, rather than as separate Units, and thus combining study of criticism and production, candidates are enabled to become clear and confident communicators themselves. The media that are studied are those of mass, rather than interpersonal, communication. The media texts may be newspapers or magazines, television or radio programmes, cinema films, advertisements, music videos and websites.

In the study of the two Analysis Units, candidates will learn how to take apart the various elements that make up media texts, in order to explain reasons underlying messages communicated by the media industries to their audiences — such as, for example, to attract a target audience for commercial viability. Explaining both fictional and non-fictional texts will enable candidates to recognise all media texts as constructs: that each one is made from the point of view of a producer targeting a particular audience for a purpose. This relationship between fiction and non-fiction is part of the added value component of taking the Course, as opposed to individual Units. Another aspect of added value is that the candidate learns to question spontaneously any media text, not simply ones previously analysed, and will demonstrate this ability in the analysis of an unseen text.

Study for the Production Unit develops planning and production skills using media technology. Candidates will reflect on their production experience and evaluate their own and the groups strengths and weaknesses during the production process. Working on their own production will enable candidates to appreciate some of the constraints and freedoms open to media professionals: to consider the effects of their own products on consumers; to understand the limitations and opportunities of media technology. For example, they will learn how to adapt the script for a TV programme in order to attract a target audience of, for example, teenagers; or to write eye-catching headlines in order to persuade consumers to buy a newspaper. Thus they will learn that analysis and production are inseparable. They will learn that they are not being trained to use audio-visual technology for its own sake; but will come to realise that knowledge and understanding of the production process enables them to analyse media products more effectively — and vice versa. This again is part of the benefit of taking the Course, as opposed to individual Units.

The Intermediate 2 Course builds upon the knowledge and skills acquired at Intermediate 1.

These transferable skills of thinking critically and creatively; of solving problems; of planning, researching individually and working together, are applicable to a range of subjects, contexts and activities and also prepare candidates for further study of the media whether in an academic or vocational context.

Differences between Media Studies and other Courses

This Course differs from others in which candidates learn to analyse texts — such as English or Art — in that media texts are always regarded as the products of industrial teamwork; they cannot be divorced from the market place and analysed for their own sake; they are not regarded as the work of an individual writer or artist, but as the product of a team working under legal, budgetary, technological and other such constraints. Media Studies also differs from Courses in audio-visual technology because the products made in Media Studies are not polished works finished for their own sake, but products made so that candidates can experience the production process and apply this understanding to professionally produced texts studied in the Analysis Unit.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Demand for the National Qualifications in Media Studies

As is the case in both England and Wales there is clearly a growing demand for Media Studies qualifications. Increasingly candidates in both schools and colleges recognise the relevance of the subject matter, as they are bombarded on a daily basis with the innumerable messages of the media of mass communication. In Scotland media is one of the fastest growing industries.

The Course in NQ Media Studies Intermediate 2 builds on the Units and Course studied at Intermediate 1 Media Studies. It is also undertaken by a number of candidates who may have studied English, or another social subject, at a lower level. The achievement of an Intermediate 2 Course award in Media Studies is recognised as a general entry qualification to further education. More specifically, it is referred to as a preferred entry qualification to NQ Higher Media Studies and, after successful achievement at Higher, to a number of HN Courses with a Media and Communication Studies focus and to the growing number of degrees in Communication Studies, Film Studies and Media Studies.

AIMS

The aims of this Course are to enable candidates to:

Analysis
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of Media Studies, the main critical tools in the explanation of media texts, so that these may be applied to both seen and unseen media texts, fiction and non-fiction
- recognise that producers make media texts for a purpose, such as profit, and describe ways in which texts are shaped towards this purpose
- relate textual categories to institutional and audience contexts
- explain textual codes in terms of denotation and connotation
- explain how meaning is anchored
- explain narrative conventions
- relate representation to the cultural assumptions of the target audience
- recognise that the meanings of texts can be understood in different ways by different audiences
- recognise that the meanings of texts are affected by contextual factors, such as legal, budgetary and technological constraints, and describe ways in which the texts have been shaped by these factors
- question media texts so as to understand reasons underlying the meanings communicated

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Production
   ♦ develop planning and organisational skills in response to a production brief
   ♦ co-operate in making a media product and thus experience for themselves some of the constraints and opportunities experienced by professional communicators and the effect such constraints and opportunities may have on the message communicated
   ♦ develop practical and creative skills in planning and making a production using media technology
   ♦ solve problems in the use of production technology to create meaning
   ♦ work with others, as well as individually, in both critical and production work
   ♦ develop a knowledge and understanding of critical and technical terms related to the chosen medium
   ♦ develop technical and non-technical skills appropriate to the chosen production medium
   ♦ develop the ability to express constructive self-criticism in evaluating the production process
   ♦ develop aesthetic appreciation in both analytical and production work

Integration
   ♦ develop an understanding that practice informs theory and vice versa
   ♦ begin to develop understanding that the key aspects inform and depend on each other

Levels are hierarchical and the articulation between Courses enables candidates to change level with ease.

Levels for assessment

At Higher candidates are expected to analyse. This is taken to mean: to apply concepts and knowledge to demonstrate insight into, and give reasons for, the way in which media texts are constructed and understood.

At Intermediate 2 candidates are expected to explain. This is taken to mean: to describe how the elements of a text work together and give reasons for the way in which the text has been constructed.

At Intermediate 1 candidates are expected to describe. This is taken to mean: to identify individual elements, name these and indicate how they work together in a text.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

COURSE CONTENT

The Course has been designed to be as flexible as possible so that both the texts studied and the kind of production work undertaken may be selected by centres in the light of their resources. Though in both analysis and production work, candidates will study texts that are unfamiliar and make products that involve them in supported research. Selected media could include print, radio, television, film, popular music or the internet.

There are three Units:
The two Analysis Units, *Fiction* and *Non-fiction*, require candidates to develop an awareness of the media text as a construct and understand that media texts are made from the point of view of a producer who needs to attract an audience for a purpose.

The *Production* Unit requires candidates to produce an item in one of the same media they study in analysis. This enables them to see how theory informs practice and vice versa.

Although the three mandatory Units may be taught separately, sequentially or concurrently, an integrated approach is recommended, since the component Units are closely related and there are opportunities to build skills across them.

The component Units may be taken on a stand-alone basis but there is added value in taking the Course as a whole in that candidates will demonstrate:

   ♦   critical ability in the spontaneous analysis of an unseen text
   ♦   understanding of the relationship between fiction and non-fiction
   ♦   understanding of the relationship between production and analysis in a particular medium

The seven key aspects of Media Studies — Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation, Audience, Institutions, Technology — are integral to all Units. The candidate will be advised which of the key aspects are most appropriate to the particular text being analysed or produced.

Internal assessment
Analysis
   ♦   one hour holistic assessment Fiction
   ♦   one hour holistic assessment Non-fiction
Production
   ♦   observation checklist
   ♦   one hour evaluation
External assessment
   ♦   one hour Unseen Analysis
   ♦   one and a half hour Question Paper

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2) and *Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)*

In these Units candidates will develop skills in deconstructing a range of media texts, fiction and non-fiction, and in explaining their relationship to social, institutional, technological and audience contexts. When both of the Units are taken as components of the Intermediate 2 Media Studies Course, candidates should also be encouraged to make comparisons between fiction and non-fiction.

At Intermediate 2, the media texts selected for study should initially be relatively familiar and straightforward in structure. The choice of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, is at the discretion of the centre but consideration of the candidates' interests, abilities and needs should be given to the selection.

Depending on the Unit, the range of media texts includes:
♦ fiction (eg soap opera, magazine/comic strip story, cinema film, lyrics)
♦ non-fiction (eg documentary, newspaper or news bulletin, website)

The deconstruction of any media text, whether fiction or non-fiction, should include the following aspects:
♦ categories
♦ language
♦ narrative
♦ representation
♦ audience
♦ institution
♦ technology

For assessment purposes candidates should explain a minimum of two of those aspects related to text (Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation) which apply to the particular media text under analysis, whether fiction or non-fiction. They should also explain a minimum of one of the key aspects related to context (Audience or Institution) in relation to the text. It should be noted at this level that the candidate should be advised the most appropriate key aspects to apply.

A minimum of two different media texts must be explained throughout the Course; these should be selected on the basis of fiction and non-fiction.

The assessment of all key aspects should be undertaken across both Units (See Approaches to Learning and Teaching).

For the purposes of these Units, 'text' is taken to mean a single entity which is sufficient in itself to express meaning, for example, one episode of a broadcast series/serial; one documentary; one cinema film; one newspaper; one advertisement. Candidates may make reference in their responses to the title as a whole, for example, *Coronation Street*; or to a genre, for example, westerns; or to the work of a director, for example, Ridley Scott; but these references should be for comparative purposes only. The response should concentrate on, for example, one episode, one film, one commercial rather than make generalisations about the whole title, genre or output. 'Text' here is not taken to mean a fraction of that entity, for example, a scene from a broadcast episode; a front page of a newspaper; a title sequence.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Whilst it is ultimately difficult to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction because all texts are a construct, for the purposes of this Unit, fiction is taken to be a text constructed and using actors or performers featuring invented characters, eg *Braveheart* would be considered fiction as although William Wallace was a real person, the character played by Mel Gibson included/involved events and other characters that were imagined. Non-fiction is taken to be a text constructed using the actual people in the real events, if scripts are used they are based on fact, eg a documentary with some reconstruction using actors would be considered non-fiction but candidates should identify and analyse the fiction element. A reality TV programme would equally be a non-fiction text involving as it does the actual people in the real events, but candidates should identify how editing, etc can create preferred reading.

Level for assessment

In deconstructing media texts, candidates at Intermediate 2 are expected to explain the features of these texts. 'Explain' is taken to mean: to describe how the individual elements of a text work together and give reasons for the way in which the text has been constructed.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Integration of key aspects should be achieved where possible

Related to each chosen key aspect, candidates should cover the following:

Categories

Depending on the Unit, media texts may be categorised in terms of:
- medium (eg press, television, film, radio)
- purpose (eg to inform, entertain, persuade, educate, make a profit)
- form (eg series, serial, light entertainment, newspaper, outside broadcast)
- genre (eg soap opera, action movie, tabloid)
- tone (eg comic, serious)
- others (eg stars, director)

Language

In any text, fiction or non-fiction, candidates should study how the language of the medium is used. This may involve:
- sign: the smallest Unit of communication which conveys meaning, eg word, image, sound
- denotation: the description of a sign
- connotation: the meanings associated with a sign
- codes; systems of signs which can be analysed in terms of denotation and connotation; such codes may be technically and/or culturally constructed
- motivation: the reason for the use of a specific code, such as to aid meaning, to progress the story
- polysemy: the idea that a text may have several meanings at once
- anchorage: the narrowing down of the polysemy of the text by its combination with other signs (eg caption under photograph)
- conventions: established ways of treating genre, narrative or representations

In textual analysis of both fiction and non-fiction, candidates should question and explain the purpose of using particular textual elements. This will benefit them when they come to plan and implement their own productions. They should be encouraged to use both critical and technical vocabulary.

Narrative

In both fiction and non-fiction, candidates should study two main areas of narrative: structure and conventions.
- narrative structure: eg the normality-disruption-normality structure found in Hollywood films; conflict; resolution (or non-resolution); single or multiple storylines; series/serial
- narrative conventions: established ways of handling narrative, often related to genre, eg cliffhangers, happy endings, enigmas

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Representation

Candidates should study how and why the media select particular representations of people, places and events. In both fiction and non-fiction, candidates should be able to identify and explain stereotypes (of, for example, nation, region, age, gender, race) as well as non-stereotypical representations. In both fiction and non-fiction, the representations should be related to what the producers perceive as the cultural assumptions of the target audience.

Audience

Two aspects of audience should be studied: the target audience and the actual audience. Target audience can be inferred from textual features such as language, genre, content, style, tone. The actual audience is varied in its individual, social and cultural backgrounds, and so reactions to the same text will differ, At Intermediate 2, candidates should be able to infer a range of audience reactions and explain them in terms of a range of backgrounds (eg individual character, experience, taste, textual knowledge, education, gender, ethnicity, age, national/local identity). They should have some awareness of mode of address (eg direct/indirect, individual/collective).

Candidates should become aware that their own media tastes are a product of their individual and socio-cultural backgrounds. They should be encouraged to explain and justify their own tastes in such terms and learn from others with alternative opinions on text. They should appreciate that the development of critical understanding, enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation of texts often requires them to see beyond their own backgrounds and tastes.

Institution

Candidates should study contextual factors such as:
 ♦ ownership (eg public service, commercial, global, independent)
 ♦ controls (eg legal, self-regulatory, market)

Candidates should gain an understanding of the operation of mainstream media companies, necessarily mainly those based in the UK. The dual nature of this operation should be examined: media audiences buy access to media products and advertisers buy access to the media audiences who use the products.

Technology
Technological issues should not be dealt with as separate from other key aspects but should be addressed when appropriate (see bold below).

The effects of media technology on media texts should be examined. For example:

 ♦ special effects/animation technology which facilitates the telling of certain kinds of story, fictional or non-fictional (eg fantasy films) **Integrates with Categories, Language and Narrative**
 ♦ the effects of the technology of reception available to audiences (eg video as opposed to cinema) **Integrates with audience**
 ♦ the effects of the technology of distribution (eg electronic distribution of news) **Integrates with Institution**

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Media Production (Intermediate 2)

When this Unit is taken as a component of the Intermediate 2 Media Studies Course, the production medium chosen will be one which has been studied in at least one of the critical Units, and so candidates will integrate and consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired there. It may be fiction or non-fiction.

Candidates should be informed that in this Unit, their performance in group activities will be assessed in:
- ♦ their contribution to analysing the brief and expressing useful ideas
- ♦ their co-operation with others in production tasks

They should also be informed that in their evaluation they will have to look back at what they did and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the production process and their own performance in individual and group tasks. They will therefore need to keep production notes (eg a logbook) in which to record the planning and implementation of the production and the reasons for decisions/actions.

The main focus of the Unit will be on contributing to a structured group production which involves the design of a media product with a specific audience in mind. Candidates should be given personal and practical experience of some of the issues that face media professionals (eg the laws of Copyright, and Health and Safety); they should be made aware of this relationship with professional practice.

The brief chosen should be on a topic which requires some supported research.

The size of the group is at the discretion of the assessor but should allow each member to play a full part in the planning and implementation. The length of the production will be dependent on the brief and the size of the group. Typical lengths might be:

- ♦ newspaper or magazine: six pages of A4 including photographs and graphics
- ♦ dramatic piece on video or audio: five – seven minutes
- ♦ broadcast commercial: 30 seconds

However, in a large class the end product could be longer, eg each group could be in charge of an item or scene. In the case of a magazine, one group might be in charge of the front page, while other groups produce individual items or adverts. The total number of pages might exceed six depending on the class size. The evaluation would consider the magazine as a whole as well as the individual items. Consideration of the following should be taken into account:
- ♦ professional practice, eg length of a professional commercial
- ♦ ability of the candidates
- ♦ resources

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

For any group production, candidates will require knowledge and understanding of the main stages of production in their chosen medium. The production process in which candidates engage should reflect these stages and should be informed by professional practice.

At Intermediate 2, the three stages followed in any medium will be:
- ♦ planning including discussion of the brief which is continually assessed (see tutor checklist in
- ♦ NABs)
- ♦ implementation of the production which is continually assessed (see tutor checklist in NABs)
- ♦ review and evaluation, the instrument of assessment is a response which lasts one hour under
- ♦ controlled conditions for which candidates can refer to production notes.

Planning a group production

Candidates will be given a brief which should specify:
- ♦ topic
- ♦ medium
- ♦ purpose
- ♦ form
- ♦ genre
- ♦ target audience
- ♦ length
- ♦ deadline
- ♦ internal and external controls
- ♦ the recommendation of maintaining production notes (eg a logbook)

At Intermediate 2, planning will be detailed and will require the following:
- ♦ group analysis of the brief leading to agreement of proposal/treatment
- ♦ identification of research required (eg sources of information on topic, information on production methods, research into conventions of genre, audience research, product research, location reconnaissance)
- ♦ identification of constraints (eg internal constraints such as budget, deadlines, available hard/software, editorial policy, house style; external constraints such as target audience, legal and self-regulatory controls)
- ♦ plan of format, content, style
- ♦ identification of resource requirements and availability
- ♦ stages in production and component tasks
- ♦ agreement of production schedule with deadlines for planning and implementation
- ♦ allocation of tasks

Planning should take into account self-regulatory and legal controls, and should involve candidates in consulting appropriate sources, both primary and secondary. Plans might be written up in individual production notes/logbooks which should form more than a simple chronological record. They should provide evidence of tasks undertaken and record the reasons the decisions were taken and should provide a very important source of information on which the evaluation report can be based.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Implementing a group production
For any group production, candidates will require knowledge and understanding of the main steps of production in their chosen medium. The production process in which the candidates engage should reflect these steps and, as far as possible, each candidate should take responsibility for one production role, thus simulating professional practice.

Review and evaluation
Candidates should be aware of the criteria used to evaluate a production, eg meeting the brief and the deadlines, impact of the product, technical quality, individual performance, team performance and so on. At Intermediate 2, the process of evaluation should be supported by checklists of such criteria and candidates should select and comment individually on the production by referring to their own production notes (eg logbook) as well as group plans and products.
Candidates should be aware that the review should address the following:
♦ strengths and weaknesses of the production in relation to the brief
♦ strengths and weaknesses of own performance in individual and co-operative planning and implementation
♦ suggestions for improved strategies
♦ what has been learned about media production technologies, practices and contexts

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

ASSESSMENT

To gain the award of the Course, the candidate must pass the Units of the Course as well as the Course assessment. The candidate's grade is based on the Course assessment.

The Course assessment for Media Studies at Intermediate 2 will consist of two components:

♦ Unseen Analysis folio   internally selected, externally assessed
♦ Question paper   externally assessed

UNIT ASSESSMENT

Intermediate 2

The assessment arrangements described below are mandatory.

In Media Studies, the three Units are *Media Analysis: Fiction, Media Analysis: Non-fiction* and *Media Production.*

Media Analysis: Fiction
The Unit assessment is an explanation of one professionally produced fiction media text which has been previously studied. The assessment is closed-book and will last no more than one hour.

Media Analysis: Non-fiction
The Unit assessment is an explanation of one professionally produced non-fiction text which has been previously studied. The assessment is closed-book and will last no more than one hour.

Across the above two assessments all key aspects must be addressed.

Media Production
The Unit assessment consists of an evaluation report. The evaluation should refer to the decision-making process and constraints in planning, production and post-production.
The evaluation should be completed within one hour under controlled conditions. Candidates can refer to their production notes. Throughout the Unit individual candidate performance should be recorded using a tutor observation checklist.

Further details about Unit assessment for this Course can be found in the NAB materials and in the Unit Specification.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Unseen Analysis folio

The purpose of the Unseen Analysis is to enable candidates to demonstrate the extent to which they have assimilated critical explanation of the text-based key aspects. The ability to explain an unseen text is part of the added value of the Course as a whole.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Candidates will be required to demonstrate the analytical skills underpinned in Performance Criterion (a) of either of the Analysis Units:

♦ The explanation must focus on Categories and Language, however, reference could be made to Narrative and Representations. At Intermediate 2, candidates will be advised of the most appropriate key aspects to cover through the rubric of the questions.

Candidates will apply these skills to a media text or extract in a medium and genre which has been studied in one of the Units; this unseen text, which may be fiction or non-fiction, will not be drawn from the same title as that previously studied. Candidates should apply the text-based key aspects to a text they have not seen or heard before. This differs from the question paper which explains previously studied texts.

Centres will conduct the assessment to specifications provided by the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the completed folio will be submitted for external assessment/marking. The assessment will be of one hour duration and will be conducted under exam conditions. The total marks available are 20. The text should be brief enough for candidates to make a close textual analysis of it: in a time-based medium, it should last no longer than four minutes and preferably be shorter; in a page-based medium, one page is sufficient. Examples of texts are: a film trailer, opening sequence, a broadcast commercial, a front page of a newspaper, a magazine cover, a print ad, a DVD cover.

See Unseen Analysis support notes for guidance.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Question Paper
The question paper will be of a duration of one hour 30 minutes. It will be set and marked by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The paper will be divided into two sections, with a choice of questions in both sections. The total marks available are 80.

Section 1 — Media Analysis
Candidates will answer one question from a choice which will refer to both fiction and non-fiction and any of the key aspects of Media Studies, but which are otherwise general enough to cover a range of media. Questions will test the ability to explain the key aspects, focusing on Narrative, Representation, Audience and Institution. Candidates are expected to demonstrate the critical skills underpinned in the Performance Criteria of the Analysis Units as well as integration of these. They will be expected to refer to media text(s) which have been previously studied. The total marks available are 40.

Section 2 — Media Production
Candidates will answer one question from a choice of questions which are general enough to cover a range of media. Questions will test knowledge and understanding of production processes drawn from their own experience of the Production Unit and will include reflective, creative and knowledge-based questions. The total marks available are 40.

Further details about the Course assessment can be found in the Course Assessment Specification and in the Specimen Question Paper.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The candidate's grade will be based on the total score from both components.

For an award at Grade C, candidates should be able to
♦ explain media texts by applying critical concepts, explaining links between texts and their institutional, audience and technological contexts, and applying some technical knowledge and understanding
♦ apply knowledge and understanding of production processes in a chosen medium and use critical skills in explanation of these processes

For an award at Grade A, candidates should be able to
♦ explain media texts by applying a range of critical concepts, explaining a variety of links between texts and their institutional, audience and technological contexts, and applying technical knowledge and understanding
♦ apply knowledge and understanding of production processes in a chosen medium, use critical skills in explanation of these processes and displays creative appreciation of the finished product

Added value in doing the Course

One of the aims of a Course in Media Studies is to enable the candidate to look at and listen to media products, not simply as a consumer of those products, but as a critic, able to question the content and purpose of the messages rather than take them at face value. The development of these independent critical thinking skills means that a candidate of Media Studies is equipped to make reasoned, well-balanced judgments about what is being communicated through the media, and able to make decisions based on fuller understanding. This critical approach is the key to making sense of the ever-expanding and complex web of communication, enabling the candidate to move from a stance of passive or unquestioning recipient of media messages, to one of active, thoughtful questioner, and indeed maker, of those messages.

By taking the Course as a whole, rather than as separate Units, and thus combining study of analysis and production, candidates are given the opportunity to make a start on becoming clear and confident communicators themselves. The media that are studied are those of mass, rather than interpersonal, communication.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE　　　　　　Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

ESTIMATES AND APPEALS

Estimates
In preparing estimates, evidence of performance should be considered across the breadth of coverage of the content of the Course and must take account of performance in the Course components, the question paper and Unseen Analysis folio. Further advice on the preparation of estimates is given in the Course Assessment Specification.

Appeals
Evidence used to support appeals for the question paper component must come from an integrated test (eg a prelim) adequately reflecting the Course content and Grade Descriptions.

Although a 'prelim' examination is not mandatory, it can give a good indication of how a candidate will perform with the addition of time pressure and the need to apply knowledge and skills in new contexts in the external examination. Any prelim should replicate the style, level of demand and mark allocation of the Specimen SQA Examination.

The Unseen Analysis Folio which has been set and carried out in centres and submitted to SQA by the due date is expected to represent a candidate's best work in this area.

While it is acceptable for centres to use past SQA question papers in preparing their own tests, these must not be used in their entirety. Selected or adapted questions chosen from different past papers would be acceptable evidence in support of an appeal. Centres must be certain that test materials have not been previously seen by candidates and that controlled conditions apply. Assessment evidence should be appropriate to the level and should be assessed accurately and consistently using agreed marking instructions.

Evidence in support of an appeal should cover the range of skills and knowledge assessed in the examination and the Course. NABs with headroom will frequently successfully support an appeal at grade C, but for an appeal for B or A, prelim exams or tasks which require retention of knowledge and integration of skills and knowledge in an extended answer would be more persuasive.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

All National Courses are subject to external marking and/or moderation. External markers, visiting examiners and moderators are trained by SQA to apply national standards. SQA is currently seeking to assist centres by preparing exemplification of standards materials in a number of subject areas. This will be rolled out to all subjects in due course.

The Units of all Courses are subject to internal moderation and may also be chosen for external moderation. This is to ensure that national standards are being applied across all subjects.

Courses may be assessed by a variety of methods. Where marking is undertaken by a trained marker in their own time, markers meetings are held to ensure that a consistent standard is applied. The work of all markers is subject to scrutiny by the Principal Assessor and a PA report is published for all subjects.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING

General advice
Although, when taken as part of the Course, the Units may be taught sequentially or concurrently, an integrated approach is recommended. The Units are closely related and there are opportunities to link the outcomes and build skills across the Units, eg comparing fictional and non-fictional texts, or examining the relationship between analysis and production in the same medium. Theory should inform practice and vice versa.

Methodology

Candidates should learn through a problem solving approach supported by discussion: a purely theoretical approach should be avoided. In analysis, discussion should initially be firmly located in a specific text, eg when teaching separate key aspects they should if possible be applied to a text. When covering Categories a selection of media could be analysed, eg, posters, adverts (product, public service), newspaper articles (broadsheet, tabloid) etc. Language could be taught through the study of film posters progressing to trailers etc and where possible involve practical exercises, eg making their own film posters.

Expository teaching should be limited, but may be necessary to introduce analytical concepts or demonstrate production skills. For example, the description of the workings of a video camera before candidates use it. Explanation could be linked to the specific practical activity e.g. the use of camera angle could be taught while candidates are actually creating that camera angle.

Teaching should constantly involve cross-referencing between key aspects and between analysis and production, eg in practical activities during production candidates should discuss similar examples in professionally made products.

Both individual and group work should be used. Candidates should have the opportunity for sustained discussion in groups which may vary from small group to whole class.

It will be important to allow candidates to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. At this level there should be opportunities for candidates to feel some ownership of the Course by being invited to suggest or provide examples of media texts which they would be interested in analysing, and by giving their preferences for the types and subject of media products they would be interested in making. However, the choice of texts is ultimately dictated by the resources of the individual centre, and in any case candidates should be challenged to go beyond media texts which are familiar and to engage in a group media production topic which is unfamiliar.

Further details of suggested approaches are given in the individual Unit support notes.

National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

Preparation for assessment

Formative assessment should operate as an integral part of the learning and teaching in all Units. It will include assessment of the candidate's work by the candidate, by the assessor and, where appropriate, by other members of a candidate group. This can be achieved largely through discussion, individual tutorials and observation of the candidate's work supported by checklists.

It is important that candidates are introduced to the key aspects as early in the Unit as possible.

Preparation for assessment could include:
- notes made on individual key aspects
- candidates indicating on these notes where the key aspect relates to others
- constant cross reference during teaching to reinforce that key aspects are, in practice, inseparable

This procedure should prepare candidates to integrate answers fully in assessments.

The recommended instruments of assessment for analysis are two responses which last one hour, are carried out under controlled conditions, and cover, holistically, the Performance Criteria for the Unit; and which are a deconstruction of one professionally produced fiction and one non-fiction media text which have been studied in class. Across the two assessments all key aspects must have been addressed.

The recommended instrument of assessment for production is an observation checklist and an evaluation which lasts one hour and is carried out under controlled conditions. Candidates can refer to production notes based on the bullet points in the Production Unit for evaluation and the individual media specific evaluation criteria in the support notes. These could be based on information from the production notes or logbook and should be no more than one side of A4 paper.

Time should be allocated for giving extra support to candidates who are very challenged by one or more of the Performance Criteria. All candidates should have the opportunity for improving on any area of weakness through strategies such as extra practice in individual skills and revising, or redrafting of work.

See Understanding Standards on the SQA website.

SUBJECT GUIDES

A Subject Guide to accompany the Arrangements document has been produced by the Higher Still Development Unit (HSDU) in partnership with the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) and Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU). The Guide provides further advice and information about:
- support materials for each Course
- learning and teaching approaches in addition to the information provided in the Arrangements document
- assessment
- ensuring appropriate access for candidates with special educational needs

♦ National Course Specification: Course details (cont)

COURSE   Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

SPECIAL NEEDS
This Course 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 Arrangements* (SQA, September, 2003).

MEDIA STUDIES IN A BROADER CONTEXT
A number of national initiatives and programmes have been designed to promote themes that are important to contemporary society such as citizenship and enterprise. These themes contribute to individual subjects and Courses by making connections beyond the subject boundaries and enrich the learning experience. Similarly, the specialist knowledge and skills developed through study of a particular subject contributes to the understanding of these themes.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER   DF14 11

COURSE   NQ Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop skills in the detailed explanation of professionally produced fiction media texts and their relationship to social, audience, institutional and technological contexts. The media studied are the media of mass communication and could include print, radio, television, film, and popular music. The Unit is suited to those who have an interest in, and wish to pursue an analytical approach to the media. It is suitable both for those who wish to pursue further study and a career in the communications industries as well as those whose interest is more generalised.

OUTCOME

Explain professionally produced fiction media texts.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained the Course or a Unit at Intermediate 1 or equivalent.

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.

Administrative Information

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CORE SKILLS

This Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills for the Unit   None
Core Skill components for the Unit   Critical Thinking   Intermediate 2

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

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

Explain professionally produced fiction media texts.

Performance Criteria

a)   Explain appropriate text-based key aspects to show how the meaning of the text is conveyed.
b)   Explain appropriate context-based key aspects to show how the meaning of the text is conveyed.

See NABs for exemplication.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence of the candidate's ability to explain a professionally produced fiction media text will be required. The evidence may be in written or oral form, will last no more than one hour and will be produced under controlled conditions.

The assessment is an explanation of one professionally produced fiction media text which has been previously studied. The assessment is closed-book.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this Unit, 'text' is taken to mean a single entity which has some form of closure; or which had been produced for purchase/consumption as a single entity: for example, one episode of a broadcast series/serial; one magazine; one cinema film; one music video. 'Text' here is not taken to mean a fraction of that entity — eg a scene from a broadcast episode; a title sequence.

The key aspects of Media Studies form the basis of the explanation. These are: Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation, Audience, Institution, Technology.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

PC (a)
The first four key aspects (Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation) are text-based and are applicable to Performance Criterion (a). From these the candidate explains a minimum of two key aspects.

Related to each chosen text-based key aspect, the following should be covered:
♦ Categories: medium, purpose, form, genre, tone
♦ Language: technical/cultural codes, anchorage
♦ Narrative: narrative structure, narrative codes
♦ Representation: selection, portrayal, ideological discourses

PC (b)
The key aspects (Audience, Institution) are context-based and are applicable to Performance Criterion (b). From these the candidate explains a minimum of one key aspect.

Related to each chosen key aspect, the following should be covered:
♦ Audience: target audience, mode of address, preferred reading, differential decoding
♦ Institution: effects of internal and external controls on text

Technological issues should not be dealt with separately but as integral to the chosen medium and key aspect being analysed.

Detailed exemplification of Performance Criteria (a) and (b) can be found later in the Unit Specification under 'Content'.

'Explain' is taken to mean: to describe how the individual elements of a text work and give reasons for the way in which the text has been constructed**.**

The complexity of content at this level is indicated in the Content Tables given at the end of the Unit Specification. It should be noted, however, that the details of content should be applied only where appropriate.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

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 focuses on the explanation of professionally produced fiction media texts and their relationship to social, audience, institutional and technological contexts. The media studied are the media of mass communication and could include print, radio, television, film and popular music.

For the purposes of this Unit 'Fiction' is taken to mean a text that is constructed using performance and imagination, for example actors taking the part of real people or performers singing about real events**.**

The key aspects of Media Studies form the basis of the explanation. These are: Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation, Audience, Institution, Technology.

The first four of these (Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation) are relevant to Performance Criterion (a) and will be used in explanation of text. Whilst candidates must be taught all four key aspects they should explain those most relevant to the text, and to achieve a pass must explain in detail a minimum of two of these key aspects.

The next two key aspects (Audience, Institution) are relevant to Performance Criterion (b) and will be used in explanation of context. Whilst they must be taught both key aspects they need only explain one in detail to achieve a pass.

At Intermediate 2, the candidate will be advised, through the wording of the questions, which are the most appropriate key aspects to apply to a particular text.

Related to each chosen key aspect, candidates should cover the following:
- ♦ Categories: medium, purpose, form, genre, tone, related to institution and audience
- ♦ Language: technical and cultural codes and anchorage
- ♦ Narrative: narrative structure and conventions
- ♦ Representation: selection, portrayal, perceived cultural assumptions of target audience
- ♦ Audience: target audience, mode of address, differential decoding
- ♦ Institution: effects of ownership and external controls on text
- ♦ Technology: effects of technology on text (technological issues should not be dealt with as separate but analysed when appropriate)

Further details of the key aspects in relation to different media are given in the Content Tables at the end of the Unit. It should be noted that not every detail related to a particular medium will be relevant to the chosen text.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The methods of learning and teaching should be challenging and reflect both the candidate's interests and preferred learning styles. Where possible, the assessor may negotiate the texts studied and the tasks undertaken. A purely theoretical approach should not be used; technical and analytical terms involved should not be taught separately from the activity itself but should be introduced as an integral part of that activity.

See Approaches to Learning and Teaching in the National Course Specification.

At this level candidates will need access to books and magazines which explain major concepts in an accessible way. They will need access to newspaper archives, magazines, broadcast programmes and the Internet for research into media issues.

Candidates should be aware that information contained in textbooks and teaching packs is likely to date very quickly and should be checked against information provided by more ephemeral sources such as newspapers and industry magazines. Examples and illustrations given in these Arrangements will also become outdated and should be cross-checked. For this reason, teachers/lecturers must ensure information is constantly updated.

Understanding of analytical methods should derive from direct experience of both analysis and related practical activities. An integrated approach should be used in the study of texts so that the Performance Criteria in the Unit are clearly linked.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The recommended instrument of assessment for this Unit is a response which lasts no longer than one hour, is carried out under controlled conditions, and covers, holistically, the Performance Criteria for the Unit; and which is a deconstruction of a previously studied professionally produced fiction media text.

It is important that candidates be introduced to the key aspects as early as possible in the Unit. Preparation for assessment could include:
   ♦   notes made on individual key aspects
   ♦   candidates indicating on these notes where the key aspect relates to others
   ♦   constant cross reference during teaching to reinforce that key aspects are, in practice, inseparable

Whilst it is ultimately difficult to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction because all texts are a construct, for the purposes of this Unit fiction is taken to be a text constructed and using actors or performers featuring invented characters. For example, the film *Braveheart* would be considered fiction as although William Wallace was a real person, the character played by the actor Mel Gibson included/involved events and other characters that were imagined.

The text chosen for assessment should allow candidates to be questioned on key aspects which are not assessed in the Media Analysis: Non-fiction Unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

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 special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September, 2003).

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR PRINT

Categories
♦ purpose: entertainment, education, profit
♦ form: magazine, comic, popular literature
♦ genre: teen/women's/men's/special interest magazines
♦ tone: serious, humorous

Language
Conventions of print, such as:
♦ text elements: (eg copy, caption)
♦ character formatting: font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style (plain, italic, bold, underline), colour; paper and print quality
♦ graphic elements: photographs, colour denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why
♦ viewpoint: first person, third person; single/multiple viewpoints
♦ structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality
♦ plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Fictional representation of social issues and social groups.

Audience
Identification of target audiences for products through genre, content and tone.
Different reactions to print texts (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures of print media (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to characters).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, personal experience.

Institution
Ownership (eg commercial, transnational corporation, independent).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of traditional and electronic published products.
New developments.
Effects on text.

UNIT Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR RADIO

Categories
♦ purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦ form: light entertainment, drama, series, serials
♦ genre: soap opera, single play, sitcom
♦ tone: formal, informal, serious, humorous

Language
Conventions of radio genres such as:
♦ verbal language: formal, informal
♦ voice: accent, speed, volume
♦ music: links, mood music
♦ sound: sound effects, silence
♦ transitions
Denotation and connotation of technical/cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦ viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦ structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality
♦ plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region.
Non-stereotypical representation.
Fictional representation of social issues and social groups.

Audience
Identification of target audiences for products through station, genre, content and tone.
Different reactions to radio (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures of radio (station loyalty, curiosity, escapism, identification with characters, individual listening).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institutions
Ownership (eg public service, commercial, independent local radio).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
General effects on product.
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of radio programmes.
New developments.
Effects on text.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR TELEVISION

Categories
♦   purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦   form: drama, light entertainment, series, serials
♦   genre: soap, sitcom, crime/medical drama
♦   tone: formal, informal, serious, humorous

Language
Examination of the conventions of television such as:
♦   mise-en-scene: set, props, costume, make-up, performance, composition
♦   lighting: high-key, low-key
♦   framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦   angle: straight, high, low, canted
♦   editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, wipe, shot/reverse shot, shot length, continuity
♦   camera movement: pan, tilt, track, handheld
♦   sound: speech, music, sound effects
♦   titles: opening titles, end titles, font, colour
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦   viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦   structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality; conflict, development, resolution (or non-resolution); single or multiple storylines; serial/series narratives; television programme formulae
♦   plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Personalities.
Fictional representation of social issues and social groups.

Audience
Identification of target audiences through channel, genre, content and style, slot, advertising.
Different reactions to programmes/films (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to stars/personalities/characters, fandom, social gossip, family viewing).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institution
Ownership (eg public service, commercial).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Effects on product.
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of television/film products.
New developments.
Effects on text.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR FILM

Categories
♦ purpose: entertainment, profit
♦ form: feature film, animation
♦ genre: feature film genres (eg horror, science fiction, western)
♦ tone: serious, comic, spectacular
♦ other categories: star, director

Language
Examination of the conventions of cinema such as:
♦ mise-en-scene: set, props, costume, make-up, performance, composition
♦ lighting: high-key, low-key
♦ framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦ angle: straight, high, low, canted
♦ editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, wipe, shot/reverse shot, shot length, continuity
♦ camera movement: pan, tilt, track, handheld
♦ sound: speech, music, sound effects
♦ titles: opening titles, end titles, font, colour
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦ viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦ structure: normality, disruption, return to normality; enigma, conflict, development, resolution; single or multiple storylines
♦ plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region.
Effect of character contrast.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Stars.
Fictional representation of social issues and social groups.

Audience
Identification of target audiences through genre, content and style.
Different reactions to films (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to stars/characters, fandom, social gossip, home video viewing, night out at cinema).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institution
Ownership (global, national, independent/arthouse).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of television/film products.
New developments.
Effects on text.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Media Analysis: Fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR POPULAR MUSIC

Categories
- purpose: entertainment, persuasion, profit
- form: live, recorded, music video
- genre: past and current pop music genres
- tone: happy, sad, celebratory, outrageous

Language
Examination of conventions in terms of:
- lyrics
- vocal style; performance style
- instrumentation
- rhythm
- melody

Narrative
Understanding lyric of song in terms of who, where, what, when, why.
Narrative elements in music video.

Representation
Representations of age, gender and race in pop music.
Image of pop music stars used in marketing, press coverage, etc.

Audience
Identification of target audiences for pop music by genre, pop video, advertising.
Pleasures of identification with/attraction to stars, expression of emotions ideals/dreams, fandom, individual listening.
Popular music and related social activities of teenage audience, eg fashion, dance, concerts, subcultures.
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, subculture, musical taste).

Institution
Ownership (eg major, independents).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
General effects on product.
Roles and choices of main personnel.
Links with other media (radio play-lists, music press, live performance, video).

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of popular music.
New developments.
Effects on text.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER DF15 11

COURSE NQ Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop skills in the detailed explanation of professionally produced non-fiction media texts and their relationship to social, audience, institutional and technological contexts. The media studied are the media of mass communication and could include print, radio, television, film, advertising, and the internet. The Unit is suited to those who have an interest in, and wish to pursue an analytical approach to the media. It is suitable both for those who wish to pursue further study and a career in the communications industries as well as those whose interest is more generalised.

OUTCOME

Explain professionally produced non-fiction media texts.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained the Course or a Unit at Intermediate 1 or equivalent.

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.

Administrative Information

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CORE SKILLS

This Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills for the Unit	None	
Core Skill components for the Unit	Critical Thinking	Intermediate 2

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

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

Explain professionally produced non-fiction media texts.

Performance Criteria

a)   Explain appropriate text-based key aspects to show how the meaning of the text is conveyed.
b)   Explain appropriate context-based key aspects to show how the meaning of the text is conveyed.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence of the candidate's ability to explain a professionally produced non-fiction media text will be required. The evidence may be in written or oral form, will last no more than one hour and will be produced under controlled conditions.

The assessment is an explanation of one professionally produced non-fiction media text which has been previously studied. The assessment is closed-book.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this Unit, 'text' is taken to mean a single entity which has some form of closure; or which had been produced for purchase/consumption as a single entity: for example, one episode of a broadcast documentary series; one newspaper; one advertisement/commercial ; one website. 'Text' here is not taken to mean a fraction of that entity — eg a scene from a broadcast episode; news item from a bulletin; a title sequence.

The key aspects of Media Studies form the basis of the explanation. These are: Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation, Audience, Institution, Technology.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

PC (a)
The first four key aspects (Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation) are text-based and are applicable to Performance Criterion (a). From these the candidate explains a minimum of two key aspects.

Related to each chosen text-based key aspect, the following should be covered:
♦ Categories: medium, purpose, form, genre, tone
♦ Language: technical/cultural codes, anchorage
♦ Narrative: narrative structure, narrative codes
♦ Representation: selection, portrayal, ideological discourses

PC (b)
The key aspects (Audience, Institution) are context-based and are applicable to
Performance Criterion (b). From these the candidate explains a minimum of one key aspect.

Related to each chosen key aspect, the following should be covered:
♦ Audience: target audience, mode of address, preferred reading, differential decoding
♦ Institution: effects of internal and external controls on text

Technological issues should not be dealt with separately but as integral to the chosen medium and key aspect being analysed.

Detailed exemplification of Performance Criteria (a) and (b) can be found later in the Unit Specification under 'Content'.

'Explain' is taken to mean: to describe how the individual elements of a text work and give reasons for the way in which the text has been constructed.

The complexity of content at this level is indicated in the Content Tables given at the end of the Unit specification. It should be noted, however, that the details of content should be applied only where appropriate.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

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 focuses on the explanation of professionally produced non-fiction media texts and their relationship to social, audience, institutional and technological contexts. The media studied are the media of mass communication and could include print, radio, television, film and the internet.

For the purposes of this Unit 'Non-fiction' is taken to mean a text that is constructed using the actual people in the real events.

The key aspects of Media Studies form the basis of the explanation. These are: Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation, Audience, Institution, Technology.

The first four of these (Categories, Language, Narrative, Representation) are relevant to Performance Criterion (a) and will be used in explanation of text. Whilst candidates must be taught all four key aspects they should explain those most relevant to the text, and to achieve a pass must explain in detail a minimum of two of these key aspects.

The next two key aspects (Audience, Institution) are relevant to Performance Criterion (b) and will be used in explanation of context. Whilst candidates must be taught both key aspects they need only explain one in detail to achieve a pass.

At Intermediate 2, the candidate will be advised, through the wording of the questions, which are the most appropriate key aspects to apply to a particular text.

Related to each chosen key aspect, candidates should cover the following:
♦ Categories: medium, purpose, form, genre, tone, related to institution and audience
♦ Language: technical and cultural codes and anchorage
♦ Narrative: narrative structure and conventions
♦ Representation: selection, portrayal, perceived cultural assumptions of target audience
♦ Audience: target audience, mode of address, differential decoding
♦ Institution: effects of ownership and external controls on text
♦ Technology: effects of technology on text (technological issues should not be dealt with as
♦ separate but analysed when appropriate)

Further details of the key aspects in relation to different media are given in the Content Tables at the end of the Unit. It should be noted that not every detail related to a particular medium will be relevant to the chosen text.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The methods of learning and teaching should be challenging and reflect both the candidate's interests and preferred learning styles. Where possible, the assessor may negotiate the texts studied and the tasks undertaken. A purely theoretical approach should not be used; technical and analytical terms involved should not be taught as separate from the activity itself but should be introduced as an integral part of that activity.

See Approaches to Learning and Teaching in the National Course Specification.

At this level candidates will need access to books and magazines which explain major concepts in an accessible way. They will need access to newspaper archives, magazines, broadcast programmes and the internet for research into media issues.

Candidates should be aware that information contained in textbooks and teaching packs is likely to date very quickly and should be checked against information provided by more ephemeral sources such as newspapers and industry magazines. Examples and illustrations given in these Arrangements will also become outdated and should be cross-checked. For this reason, assessors must ensure information is constantly updated.

Understanding of analytical methods should derive from direct experience of both analysis and related practical activities. An integrated approach should be used in the study of texts so that the Performance Criteria in the Unit are clearly linked.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The recommended instrument of assessment for this Unit is a response which lasts no longer than one hour, is carried out under controlled conditions, and covers, holistically, the Performance Criteria for the Unit; and which is a deconstruction of a previously studied professionally produced non-fiction media text.

It is important that candidates are introduced to the key aspects as early as possible in the Unit. Preparation for assessment could include:
♦ notes made on individual key aspects
♦ candidates indicating on these notes where the key aspect relates to others
♦ constant cross reference during teaching to reinforce that key aspects are, in practice, inseparable

Whilst it is difficult to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction because all texts are a construct, for the purposes of this Unit non-fiction is taken to be a text constructed using the actual people in the real events, if scripts are used they are based on fact, eg a documentary with some reconstruction using actors would be considered non-fiction but candidates should identify and analyse the fiction element. A reality TV programme would equally be a non-fiction text involving as it does the actual people in the real events, but candidates should identify how editing, etc create preferred reading.

The text chosen for assessment should allow candidates be questioned on key aspects which are not assessed in the Media Analysis: Fiction Unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

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 special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September, 2003).

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR PRINT

Categories
♦   purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦   form: newspaper, magazine, fanzine, CD-ROM, web pages
♦   genre: tabloid, broadsheet, freesheet newspapers; teen/women's/men's/special interest magazines
♦   tone: serious, humorous, objective, personal, scientific

Language
Conventions of print (eg layout, language, text, graphics) and features such as:
♦   page size (tabloid, broadsheet)
♦   text elements: masthead, headline, subheads, copy, caption
♦   character formatting: font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style (plain, italic, bold, underline), colour
♦   graphic elements: photographs, mug shots, logos, colour
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦   viewpoint: first person, third person; single/multiple viewpoints
♦   structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality
♦   plot: chronological, non-chronological
Story treatment: eg tabloid (news for 'ordinary' people, personalisation, news as entertainment) v broadsheet (news as information).

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region, trade unions, pressure groups.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Mediation: news values and their effects on selection, representation and stereotypes in news.

Audience
Identification of target audiences for products through genre, content and tone.
Different reactions to print texts (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures of print media (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to stars/personalities/characters, fandom, social gossip, individual reading).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge, actual knowledge of an issue).

Institution
Ownership (commercial, global corporation, independent, public service).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Links with other media.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of traditional and electronically published products.
New developments.
Effects on text.

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR RADIO

Categories
♦   purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦   form: news, outside broadcast, series, magazine
♦   genre: news bulletins, quiz shows, phone-ins, documentary, sport
♦   tone: formal, informal, serious, humorous, objective, personal

Language
Conventions of radio (eg format, length, participants, speech, sound, music) and features such as:
♦   verbal language: formal, informal
♦   voice: accent, pace, volume
♦   music: jingles, links, mood music
♦   sounds: sound effects, silence
♦   transitions
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦   viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦   structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality
♦   plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region, trade unions, pressure groups.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Mediation: news values and their effects on selection, representation, eg local radio v national radio.

Audience
Identification of target audiences through station, genre, content and tone.
Different reactions to radio (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures of media texts (station loyalty, curiosity, identification with/attraction to stars/personalities, individual listening).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge, actual knowledge of an issue).

Institutions
Ownership (eg public service, commercial, independent local radio).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Links with other media.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of radio programmes.
Effects on text.
New developments.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR TELEVISION

Categories
♦   purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦   form: news and current affairs, outside broadcast, series
♦   genre: news programme, documentary, game show, talk show, sports programme
♦   tone: formal, informal, serious, humorous, objective, personal

Language
Examination of the conventions of television (length, participants, visuals, sound) and features such as:
♦   mise-en-scene: set, props, costume, make-up, performance, composition
♦   lighting: high-key, low-key
♦   framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦   angle: straight, high, low, canted
♦   editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, wipe, shot/reverse shot, shot length, continuity
♦   camera movement: pan, tilt, track, handheld
♦   sound: speech, music, sound effects
♦   titles: opening titles, end titles, font, colour
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦   viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦   structure: normality, disruption, enigma, return to normality; conflict, development, resolution (or non-resolution); single or multiple storylines; serial and series narratives; television programme formulae
♦   plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation, region, trade unions, pressure groups.
Non-stereotypical representations.
Personalities.
Mediation: news values and their effects on selection, representation and stereotypes in news.

Audience
Pleasures (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to stars/personalities, fandom, family viewing).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institutions
Ownership (eg public service, commercial).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.
Links with other media.
Spin-offs and tie-ins.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of television products.
Effects on text.
New developments.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR FILM

Categories
♦ purpose: information, entertainment, persuasion, education, profit
♦ form: feature
♦ genre: documentary
♦ tone: serious, satiric
♦ other categories: director

Language
Examination of the conventions of film such as:
♦ mise-en-scene: set, props, costume, make-up, performance, composition
♦ lighting: high-key, low-key
♦ framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦ angle: straight, high, low, canted
♦ editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, wipe, shot/reverse shot, shot length, continuity
♦ camera movement: pan, tilt, track, handheld
♦ sound: speech, music, sound effects
♦ titles: opening titles, end titles, font, colour
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.

Narrative
Story: who, where, what, when, why.
♦ viewpoint: first person, third person, omniscient; single/multiple viewpoints
♦ structure: normality, disruption, return to normality; enigma, conflict, development, resolution); single or multiple storylines
♦ plot: chronological, non-chronological

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, social class, nation.
Non-stereotypical representations.

Audience
Identification of target audiences for products through genre, content and style.
Different reactions to films (eg interest, boredom, shock, surprise, anger).
Pleasures (curiosity, escapism, identification with/attraction to characters).
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institutions
Ownership (global, national, independent, arthouse).
Controls (legal, self-regulatory, market).
Roles and choices of main production personnel.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of film.
Effects on text.
New developments.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Media Analysis: Non-fiction (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR ADVERTISING

Categories
- medium: eg television, radio, cinema, press, outdoor, internet
- purpose: persuasion, profit, information, education
- form: public service, product, company, classified, display, above-the-line, below-the-line

Language
Examination of the conventions of advertising, depending on medium.
Still image: technical codes (framing, shot distance, composition, angle, lighting, colour, focus); cultural codes (setting, props, clothing, make-up, appearance, body language expression).
Print — see exemplar content for print.
Radio — see exemplar content for analysing sound.
Moving image — see exemplar content for TV and cinema.
Denotation and connotation of technical and cultural codes; polysemy and anchorage.
Slogans, straplines, copy, image, pack shot.
Display, classified, earpiece, etc.

Narrative
Understanding narrative in terms of who, where, what, when why, role of product.
Still image — understanding narrative in terms of the freeze frame from a larger narrative.
Narrative structure.

Representation
Stereotypes of age, gender, race, nation, region.
Non-stereotypical representations.

Audience
Identification of target audiences by analysis of product, content, style, etc.
Ratings, circulation figures.
Audience research organizations.
Demographics.
Social classification systems.
Identification of reasons for different reactions (eg individual, age, gender, class, ethnic background, nationality, textual knowledge).

Institutions
Commercial operation of advertising industry — identification of costs and sources of finance.
Rate cards.
Above-the-line, below-the-line.
Commission.
Relationship between agency and advertiser.
Structure of advertising agency.
Legal controls.
Codes of Practice.
Effects on product.

Technology
Technology involved in production, distribution and consumption of different media.
Effects on text.
New developments.

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER   DF16 11

COURSE   NQ Media Studies (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to develop the skill of contributing to the planning, producing and evaluating of a group media production from a brief. The centre can select the medium: for example, print, audio, video, animation, multimedia. The Unit is suited to those who have an interest in, and wish to pursue an analytical approach to the media. It is suitable both for those who wish to pursue further study and a career in the communications industries as well as those whose interest is more generalised.

OUTCOMES

1.   Contribute to planning a group production from a brief.
2.   Contribute to implementing a group production from a brief.
3.   Review and evaluate a group production.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally have been expected to have attained the Course or Units in Media Studies at Intermediate 1, or possess equivalent experience.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KA

Publication date: October 2004

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Media Production (Intermediate 2)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credits 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

This Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

| **Complete Core Skills for the Unit** | Problem Solving | Intermediate 2 |
| | Working With Others | Intermediate 2 |

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Media Production (Intermediate 2)

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

Contribute to planning a group production from a brief.

Performance Criteria

The candidate will:
a)   Contribute effectively in terms of explaining the brief, expressing useful ideas and allocating tasks through negotiation
b)   Contribute effectively to planning the product in terms of the brief and the allocated tasks
c)   Carry out effective research on a topic
d)   Use technical terms appropriate to the medium and task correctly.

Evidence Requirements

(See Evidence Requirements for the Unit at the end of the Statement of Standards).

OUTCOME 2

Contribute to implementing a group production from a brief.

Performance Criteria

The candidate will:
a)   Contribute effectively in terms of co-operation and sharing ideas and information including negotiating working methods and rules for managing the group production.
b)   Demonstrate production skills which are effective in terms of the brief and allocated tasks.
c)   Use technical terms appropriate to the medium and task correctly.

Evidence Requirements

(See Evidence Requirements for the Unit at the end of the Statement of Standards).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Media Production (Intermediate 2)

OUTCOME 3

Review and evaluate a group production.

Performance Criteria

The candidate will:
a) Explain the strengths and weaknesses of the production in relation to the brief.
b) Explain the strengths and weaknesses of his/her own performance in relation to individual and co-operative planning and implementation.
c) Suggest appropriate strategies for improvement.
d) Explain clearly what has been learned about media production technologies, practices and contexts.
e) Select appropriate evidence to justify their conclusions.
f) Cover evaluation criteria relevant to the chosen medium.

Evidence Requirements

(See Evidence Requirements for the Unit at the end of the Statement of Standards).

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

Observation checklist which records the effective contribution of the individual candidate to planning and implementation. The observation checklist should ensure that for Outcome 1 PC (a) the candidate negotiates roles and responsibilities with others, taking account of own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of colleagues.

Individual evaluation report to be completed under controlled conditions within one hour. Candidates can refer to production notes.

See NABs for observation checklist.

The checklist and the evaluation report should reflect the given brief.

At Intermediate 2 the production should involve:
♦ a topic which requires supported research
♦ the clear targeting of an audience
The brief should:
♦ be on a sufficiently challenging topic to require some research
♦ specify the medium, purpose, target audience, form, genre, length, deadline, internal and external institutional controls
♦ be medium specific and reflect professional practice, emphasising deadlines, budgetary and time constraints, (eg a maximum of one minute for a broadcast commercial; two minutes for broadcast news bulletin)

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

Research and planning should involve:
♦ identification of sources
♦ topic research
♦ audience and product research
♦ identification of constraints
♦ plan of format
♦ content
♦ style
♦ resources requirements
♦ production stages and schedule
♦ task allocation

The Content Tables at the end of the Unit Specification provide an indication of the complexity of content at Intermediate 2. It should be noted that not every detail in a particular table will be relevant to the chosen product.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

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 main focus of this Unit is on the contribution to a structured group production which involves the design of a media product with a specific audience in mind and on a topic which is relatively unfamiliar. Candidates should be given personal and practical experience of some of the issues which face media professionals. The effectiveness of the candidates contribution is more important than the polish of the finished product.

For further details about the content to be covered in this Unit, please refer to the Content Tables which follow. Candidates are not expected to know all the terminology; however, they should be able to use the correct terminology within the context of their particular tasks.

Productions chosen could be from a variety of media eg advert, cartoon, dramatic production, documentary/news and/or current affairs, music, news paper, magazine or web page.

The brief should be on a sufficiently challenging topic to require supported research; it should specify the medium, purpose, target audience, form, genre, length, deadline, internal and external institutional controls. The guidelines should be medium specific and reflect professional practice, emphasising deadlines, budgetary and time constraints. For example, a maximum of one minute for a broadcast commercial; two minutes for broadcast news bulletin; seven minutes for dramatic video or audio piece; eight page magazine.

Research and planning should involve:
♦   identification of sources
♦   topic research
♦   audience and product research
♦   identification of constraints
♦   plan of format
♦   content; style
♦   resources requirements
♦   production stages and schedule
♦   task allocation

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates should be introduced to the main stages involved in production in the chosen medium. Assessors and candidates should then collaborate in a series of collective production activities of gradually increasing complexity. The technical terms should not be taught as separate from production activities but should be used as an integral part of these activities.

The assessor should assist candidates to develop their planning, production and evaluation skills by offering hints, reminders, feedback and 'tricks of the trade' and by continuing to support candidates in terms of promoting understanding of the production process and encouraging effective teamwork. As candidates gain experience the assessor should give more responsibility for the production process to the candidates and adopt the observer role in order to complete the checklist. At Intermediate 2, the role of the assessor is likely to be consultative and interventionist. In other words, candidates will be expected to consult the assessor for advice or technical help and the assessor will monitor progress and intervene as necessary to ensure completion of the productions.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The recommended instruments of assessment for this Unit are: an observation checklist; an evaluation report.

Throughout the Unit, individual candidate performance should be recorded by the assessor by means of a tutor observation checklist. This should record the effectiveness of the individual to the planning and implementing of the media production.

Candidates should also be encouraged to take notes during the production process (this could be in the format of a logbook), both from their own point of view and that of the group. These details could then be used to form the basis of the evaluation response. At Intermediate 2 the evaluation should refer to decision-making processes and constraints in planning, production and post-production. It should explain the production processes and products by describing how the institutional and audience contexts affected the processes and products. Candidates are required to make recommendations for improvements to the product or process and/or the need for further practical work and/or alternative strategies that could have been followed.

Their production notes should be used as an aide memoire in the assessment and might cover the following in no more than one side of A4:

♦ Review the final product in terms of content, eg would the target audience appreciate the product, did constraints (time, lack of money/resources) restrict the production, etc. Was the brief met?
♦ Review the product in terms of language, eg use technical terms accurately. Were choices made appropriate and successfully executed both individually and as a group? Discuss both technological and non-technological strengths and weaknesses.
♦ As an individual and part of the group explain contribution during both planning and implementation.
♦ Explain what has been learned in terms of institutional contexts (deadlines, resources, copyright, taste, etc) and audience contexts.
♦ Suggest improved strategies.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

Individual media specific evaluation criteria are in the support notes.

The evaluation should be completed within one hour under controlled conditions. Candidates can refer to their production notes.

For checklists see NABs.

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 special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September, 2003).

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR PRINT

Stages
Planning and research, layout design, production of copy and images, selection of copy and images, editing and sub-editing, production, distribution, debriefing, evaluation.

Planning and Research
♦ category: purpose, medium, form, genre, target audience, content, tone
♦ narrative: story and narration (structure, viewpoint)
♦ representations of social groups/issues; news values, balance
♦ competition, readership, advertiser research
♦ identification of resources and constraints:
  i) institutional: editorial policy, house style, purpose, layout, number of pages, deadline, budget, health and safety
  ii) technical: hardware, software, file backup
  iii) external: legal and voluntary controls, audience interest
♦ identification of roles and remits: non-technological (production editor, advertising manager, reporter, researcher, writer, proof-reader), technological (copy editor, photographer, sub-editor, picture editor, layout editor). Roles may be both technological and non-technological, eg a reporter might enter her/his copy and email it
♦ identification of sources (where relevant): reporter, press agencies, press release, other media, reference materials (cuttings, encyclopaedias, archives, internet)
♦ remits and production schedule

Technical Terms
♦ hardware: microcomputer system, printer, digital camera, SLR camera, scanner, photocopier
♦ software: DTP, word processing, drawing, painting, image manipulation, type manipulation, scanning, spreadsheet
♦ page formatting: size, orientation, margins, columns, gutter, grid, dummy
♦ text elements: masthead, headline, subhead, copy, caption, header, footer, byline, photo credit, index, jump line
♦ character formatting: font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style (plain, italic, bold, underline), colour, tracking
♦ paragraph formatting: indentation, leading, alignment, line length
♦ graphic elements: photograph, mug shot, logo, diagram, box, rule, colour, cropping, white space

Use of Codes
Technical and cultural codes and text and graphic content; their connotations; anchorage.
Genre conventions and style.
News language.

Evaluation Criteria
Brief, legibility, spelling and grammar, variety, visual impact, originality, audience interest, use of words and pictures, news values, balance, narrative, representations.

UNIT Media Production (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR AUDIO

Stages
Planning and research, scripting, rehearsing, recording, editing, broadcasting, debriefing, evaluation.

Planning and Research
♦ category: purpose, medium, form, genre, target audience, subject matter, tone
♦ narrative: story and narration (structure, plot, viewpoint)
♦ representations of social groups/issues; news values, balance
♦ competition, listener, advertiser research
♦ identification of resources and constraints:
    iv) internal: editorial policy, house style, purpose, length, deadline, budget, health and safety
    v) technical: studio, location, live, pre-recorded, tape editing, sound effects
    vi) external: legal and voluntary controls, audience interest
♦ identification of roles and remits: non-technological (programme editor, reporter, scriptwriter, interviewer, interviewee, performer, presenter); technological (location recorder, sound engineer, editor). Roles may be both technological and non-technological, eg location interviewing
♦ identification of sources (where relevant): reporter, interview, vox pop, news sources, other media, reference materials (encyclopedias, archives, internet), recordings of sound effects, music and interviews
♦ remits and production schedule

Technical Terms
♦ hardware: cassette recorder, reel-to-reel recorder, microphones (omni-directional, uni-directional, bi-directional), splice editor, microcomputer system, printer
♦ software: word processor, spreadsheet
♦ voice: accent, speed, volume, delivery, tone
♦ music: station/programme jingles, links, mood music
♦ sounds: sound effects, silence, ambient noise
♦ script: voice piece, interview, dialogue, sound effects, transitions (links, intros, outros)
♦ recording: location, live, pre-recorded
♦ edits: paper edits, dub edits, splice edits

Use of Codes
Sound codes; their connotations; anchorage.
Genre conventions and style.
Radio language.

Evaluation Criteria
Brief, recording quality, editing, variety, originality, audience interest, use of words, voice, music, sound effects and transitions, news values, balance, dramatic effect, narrative, representations.

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR VIDEO

Stages
Planning and research, treatment, script, storyboard, rehearsing, shooting, editing, sound dubbing, screening, debriefing, evaluation.

Planning and Research
♦   category: purpose, medium, form, genre, target audience, subject matter, tone
♦   narrative: story and narration (structure, plot, viewpoint)
♦   representations of social groups/issues; news values, balance
♦   identification of resources and constraints:
    i)   internal: editorial policy, house style, purpose, deadline, length, budget, health and safety
    ii)   technical: hardware and software
    iii) external: legal and voluntary controls, representation issues
♦   identification of roles: non-technological (producer, production assistant, front-of-camera performers, scriptwriter, storyboard artist, make-up, continuity, props); technological (director, camera operator, sound recordist, editor)
♦   identification of sources (where relevant): reporter, press agency, press release, other media, reference materials (encyclopaedias, archives, internet), archive recordings
♦   remits and production schedule

Technical Terms
♦   hardware: video cameras, tripod, lighting, omni-directional and uni-directional microphones, video editing suite, microcomputer system, printer
♦   software: word processor, spreadsheet
♦   mise-en-scene: set, props, costume, make-up, performance
♦   lighting: high-key, low-key, three-point lighting
♦   framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦   focus: shallow, deep, pull focus
♦   angle: straight, high, low, canted
♦   editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, wipe, standard wipes, shot/reverse shot, shot length, continuity editing
♦   camera movement: pan, tilt, track, crane, handheld
♦   sound: speech, voice-over, music, sound effects, background sound
♦   titles: opening titles, end titles, font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style, colour

Use of Codes
Codes, text, images, sounds and music; their connotations; polysemy and anchorage.
Genre conventions and style.

Evaluation Criteria
Brief, titling, mise-en-scene, quality of camerawork, sound, editing, variety, originality, audience interest, news values, balance, dramatic effect, narrative, representations.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT   Media Production (Intermediate 2)

CONTENT FOR COMPUTER ANIMATION

Stages
Planning (eg action first or sound first), research, treatment, script, storyboard, creation
of characters, backgrounds and foregrounds, titles, sound dubbing, screening, debriefing, evaluation.
Planning and Research
♦   category: purpose, medium, form, genre, target audience, subject matter, tone
♦   narrative: story and narration (structure, plot, viewpoint)
♦   representations: stereotypes
♦   identification of resources and constraints:
     i)   internal: purpose, deadline, length, budget, health and safety
     ii)   technical: hardware and software, file backup
     iii) external: legal and voluntary controls, audience interest, representation issues
♦   identification of roles: non-technological (producer, director, scriptwriter, storyboard artist);
     technological (animator, artist, sound recordist). Certain roles may combine technological and
     non-technological roles, eg the storywriter might also record the soundtrack
♦   identification of sources, eg clip art, study of real-life movement
♦   remits and production schedule
Technical Terms
♦   hardware: microcomputer systems, printer, microphones
♦   software: painting, animation, sound recording, type manipulation, CD-ROM clip art collections
♦   character: key positions, in-betweens, cycles
♦   settings: background, foreground, perspective
♦   actions: head-turn, walk, special effects, squish, squash, stretch, drag, energisers
♦   framing: shot distance (ELS, LS, MLS, MS, MCU, CU, ECU), establishing shot
♦   editing: cut, dissolve, fade in, fade out, standard wipes
♦   sound: speech, music, sound effects
♦   titles: opening titles, end titles, font (serif, sans serif, script, decorative), size, style, colour,
     animated
Use of Codes
Technical and cultural codes, text, images, words, sounds and music; their connotations; polysemy
and anchorage.
Animation conventions and style.
Genre conventions and style.
Evaluation Criteria
Brief, titling, characters, setting, quality of animation, sound, editing, originality, special
effects, audience interest, narrative, dramatic effect, representations.