

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Media Practical (Access 3)

NUMBER D333 09

CLUSTER Media Studies (Access 3)

SUMMARY

This unit is designed to develop basic knowledge and understanding of the media through individual planning and making of simple products in several media. Practical exercises could be related to media such as print, radio, television, cinema, popular music, advertising and multimedia.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Plan media products from briefs.
- 2 Make media products from briefs.
- 3 Review and evaluate practical media activities.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Access 3.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KA
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National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

NOTE ON RANGE FOR THIS UNIT

Media product plans: at least **two** products should be planned, one in print and one in non-print media.
Media products: at least two products should be made, one in print and one in non-print media.
Specified aspects of the briefs: medium; form; purpose; target audience.

OUTCOME 1

Plan media products from briefs.

Performance criteria

- (a) Selection of content is appropriate to the brief.
- (b) Structuring of content is appropriate to the brief.

OUTCOME 2

Make media products from briefs.

Performance criteria

- (a) Selection of content is appropriate to the brief.
- (b) Structuring of content is appropriate to the brief.

OUTCOME 3

Review and evaluate practical media activities.

Performance criteria

- (a) Strengths and weaknesses of plans and products are identified in relation to the briefs.
- (b) Review is clear in identifying what has been learned about media production processes.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence requirements for the unit

Evidence may be in handwritten, word processed, scribed, diagrammatic and/or oral form. Oral evidence should be on audio or video tape.

Evidence should demonstrate:

- the candidate's ability to create and evaluate at least **two** simple media product plans in print and non-print media from briefs
- the candidate's ability to make and evaluate at least **two** simple media products in print and non-print media from briefs

The plans/products should be simple in that they require a level of planning, organising and practical skills which make realistic demands on candidates at Access 3. The briefs may be discussed in groups prior to planning/making but the plans/products must be individually produced and evaluated.

Evidence must include:

- Outcome 1: a copy of the brief for each plan
- Outcome 1, PC (a) and PC (b): two plans
- Outcome 2: a copy of the brief for each product
- Outcome 2, PC (a) and PC (b): two products
- Outcome 3, PC (a) and PC (b): a set of short answer questions which require the candidate to evaluate each plan and product in terms of the brief and to identify what has been learned about media production processes in each exercise.

Evidence should be retained in individual folios.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The focus of this unit is on the exploration of the key aspects of Media Studies through a series of short practical activities (planning and making) in print and non-print media. The unit allows for both group discussion and individual activities and can be completed with ‘no-tech’ or ‘low-tech’ equipment provision. The planning/making activities should be capable of individual completion by the candidate in around one hour.

For further details about the content to be covered in this unit, please refer to the Content section in the cluster specification.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The teacher/lecturer and candidates should collaborate in a series of practical activities from briefs. Briefs should be ‘open’ in that they allow the candidate some leeway in decisions over selection and structuring of content.

The importance of planning in media production is emphasised by Outcome 1 concentrating on making plans from briefs. These plans may be of two kinds: outline proposals (or treatments) and more detailed plans of format, content and style. Candidates should have experience of creating individual plans of both kinds in a range of media. The importance of target audience should be emphasised in these exercises. Although the planning and making of products must be individual the exercises should be preceded by group discussions of the briefs.

The activities in which each candidate engages should form a progression of learning for that candidate. The sequence of such activities might include:

- captioning given still images
- planning and creating a print advertisement
- photoplay (ie selecting and sequencing given still images)
- storyboarding or scripting exercise
- short audio exercise exploring the effect on meaning of using different words and/or sounds and/or music
- adding music and sound to a short piece of video footage

Candidates should be provided with help in materials they will use in the activities: for example, a series of photographs to be sequenced; a CD-ROM which contains many examples of popular music genres and allows simple ‘composition’; a CD-ROM which contains moving image sequences which can be digitally edited and dubbed; templates for newspaper, magazine or Web pages.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Any technical terms involved should not be taught as separate from planning or making activities but should be used as an integral part of these activities. As the candidates gain experience the teacher/lecturer should gradually give increasing responsibility for practical activities to the candidates.

At the start of each activity the candidates should be introduced to the main stages involved in the planning or making of products in the chosen medium. The teacher/lecturer 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. Some of the exercises should follow the three stages of planning, making and evaluation.

Each exercise should finish with the candidates and teacher/lecturer reviewing and evaluating the plan or product as well as identifying what has been learned about professional media planning and production processes.

The practical exercises should be supported by analytical activities based on the key aspects of Media Studies. For example, purpose, form and genre might be examined by examining a number of products in a particular genre. The technical conventions, narrative conventions and typical representations of the genre could be identified. Target audiences could be investigated through straightforward surveys of media consumption of texts in the genre. The costs and sources of finance of companies producing texts in that genre could be investigated. Candidates could then be required to plan and a make text in that genre.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The recommended instrument of assessment for this unit is individual folio containing briefs, plans, products, reviews/evaluations. A pre-formatted logbook, in either handwritten, word processed or taped form, could be used to support candidates in recording actions and decisions, and in evaluating their products. The recording may be quite brief and the evaluation should be aided with supportive questioning.

Any assessment pro-formas and checklists should be used by the candidates during the unit. These can be used to monitor candidates’ progress as well as to provide feedback. Candidates should then be clear about what is expected to them in unit assessment exercises as well as having a bank of materials to which they can refer.

There are opportunities to integrate assessment in this unit. For example, the assessment for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 could be generated by two assignments, each of which requires the candidate to plan, make and evaluate a simple media product. Two possible integrated assessments are: individual print poster for a comedy film aimed at teenagers (range: print); two minute commercial radio news bulletin aimed at a mass audience (range: non-print).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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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 alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).