

## Higher Media Course Support Notes



This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of these *Course Support Notes* can be downloaded from SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Contents

## **Course Support Notes**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction  | 1         |
| General guidance on the Course                                      | 2         |
| Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment                     | 6         |
| Equality and inclusion  | 14        |
| Appendix 1: Reference documents                                     | 15        |
| Administrative information  | 16        |
| <b>Unit Support Notes — Media: Analysing Media Content (Higher)</b> | <b>17</b> |
| Introduction  | 18        |
| General guidance on the Unit  | 19        |
| Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment                     | 20        |
| Equality and inclusion  | 23        |
| Appendix 1: Reference documents                                     | 24        |
| Administrative information  | 25        |
| <b>Unit Support Notes — Media: Creating Media Content (Higher)</b>  | <b>26</b> |
| Introduction  | 27        |
| General guidance on the Unit  | 28        |
| Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment                     | 29        |
| Equality and inclusion  | 32        |
| Appendix 1: Reference documents                                     | 33        |
| Administrative information  | 34        |

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Higher Media Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specifications* for the Units in the Course.

# General guidance on the Course

## Aims

The main purpose of this Course is to analyse and create media content. The Course enables learners to understand and develop their media literacy skills and appreciate the opportunities and challenges that occur within the media industry. The Course provides learners with opportunities to develop both theoretical knowledge of the media and the ability to create media content.

This Course offers learners opportunities to develop and extend a wide range of skills, including communication, independent learning, critical literacy, personal, interpersonal and team working, and creative thinking. In particular, this Course aims to enable learners to develop:

- ◆ the ability to analyse and create media content, appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of media literacy
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the role of media within society
- ◆ the ability to plan and research when creating media content, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ the ability to evaluate learners' practice

## Progression into this Course

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by the following or by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 Media Course or relevant component Units

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Note: teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification*) for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

This Course enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness, and be creative. The skills, knowledge and understanding required are as follows:

## **Media: Analysing Media Content**

Learners should develop the skills to analyse the roles, contexts and key aspects of media content using appropriate concepts from those given below.

### **Media content**

Content-based key aspects of media literacy:

- ◆ categories — genre, purpose, tone, style
- ◆ language — medium/form-specific technical codes, cultural codes, anchorage
- ◆ narrative — structures, codes, conventions
- ◆ representation — selection and portrayal, stereotypes, non-stereotypes, cultural assumptions, ideologies

### **Media contexts**

Context-based key aspects of media literacy:

- ◆ audience — target audience, preferred reading, differential decoding, mode of address
- ◆ institution — internal factors, external factors

### **Other relevant contexts:**

- ◆ society contexts — time, place (eg facts, ideas, history, circumstances, events, politics, technology or any other factors relevant to the society in which particular examples of media content were made, set or consumed)

### **Role of media in society**

Actual or potential roles of media within society:

- ◆ meeting needs — entertainment, education, information
- ◆ achieving particular purposes — profit, promotion, public service
- ◆ influencing attitudes and behaviour — intentionally, unintentionally

## **Media: Creating Media Content**

Learners should develop the skill to create media content using appropriate processes and approaches from those given below.

### **Planning and research:**

- ◆ identifying areas of content, audience and institution research appropriate to a brief
- ◆ carrying out appropriate research and drawing conclusions from findings
- ◆ using research findings to plan media content appropriate to purpose, audience and context

### **Production processes:**

- ◆ applying knowledge of pre-production, production and post-production processes appropriate to medium/form
- ◆ applying knowledge of roles and responsibilities appropriate to medium/form
- ◆ applying knowledge of media codes and conventions to create finished content appropriate to purpose, audience and context

### **Evaluation:**

- ◆ evaluating strengths and weaknesses of personal performance during production processes (including planning/research)
- ◆ evaluating strengths and weaknesses of finished content in relation to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ identifying strategies for future improvement in relation to production processes and final content

### **Application of key aspects of media literacy:**

- ◆ applying relevant content- and context-based key aspects of media literacy to planning and research, production processes and evaluation

## **Progression from this Course**

This Course or its component Units may provide progression to HNC, HND or degree-level courses in media, communication or journalism, and ultimately, for some, to employment.

## **Hierarchies**

**Hierarchy** is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

The Higher Media Course forms a hierarchy with the National 3, 4 and 5 Media Courses. The Courses at National 3, National 4, National 5 and Higher follow a similar structure in terms of Outcomes and Assessment Standards but differ in the degree of difficulty and complexity from one level to the next. This structure aims to facilitate bi-level teaching and enables learners to gain recognition for their best achievement. Learners may achieve and be certificated for Courses or Units at the level above or below.

The hierarchical relationship between the Courses and Units is shown in the table below:

| <b>National 3</b>              | <b>National 4</b>              | <b>National 5</b>              | <b>Higher</b>                  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Media: Analysing Media Content |
| Media: Creating Media Content  |
|                                | Added value — assignment       | Course assessment              | Course assessment              |

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

In the development of media literacy, theory informs practice and vice-versa. It is therefore recommended that Units be taught concurrently and include similar media, forms and themes.

Effective learning and teaching will draw on a wide variety of approaches to enrich the experience of learners. In particular, practical approaches to learning and teaching which provide opportunities for personalisation and choice will help to motivate and challenge learners.

Learning about Scotland and Scottish culture will enrich the learners' learning experience and help them to develop the skills for learning, life and work they will need to prepare them for taking their place in a diverse, inclusive and participative Scotland and beyond. Where there are opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider this.

The combined theoretical and practical skills-based focus of Media lends itself to a variety of delivery methods. Central to these should be the following key aspects of media literacy:

- ◆ categories
- ◆ language
- ◆ representation
- ◆ narrative
- ◆ audience
- ◆ institutions

These and other appropriate media concepts are interrelated and it is important that learners develop knowledge and understanding of them from the outset of the Course. These key aspects are a starting point for the analysis of any text, and are central to the creation of media content. Other relevant contexts and elements, and consideration of the role of media, should be used to assist in both analysing and creating media content.

Further information about possible approaches to learning and teaching for each Unit can be found in the *Unit Support Notes*.

## **Sequencing and integration of Units within the Course**

Sequencing and integration of the delivery and assessment of the Units is at the discretion of the centre. There is no set way of delivering the Units and their sequence and/or integration may be dependent on available resources, time and staff expertise.

Guidance on approaches to assessment and gathering evidence for the Units within the Course can be found in the *Unit Support Notes*.

Exemplification of assessment is provided in the *Unit Assessment Support*.

# Combining assessment across Units

If the Units are delivered as part of the Course, assessment can be combined.

The pattern of combined assessment can mirror that for integrated delivery, suggested in the 'Approaches to learning and teaching' section.

Using an integrated approach to assessment is recommended because it has the potential to:

- ◆ enrich the assessment process for both learners and teachers/lecturers by bringing together elements of different Units
- ◆ avoid duplication of assessment
- ◆ be cost-effective
- ◆ allow more time for learning
- ◆ allow centres to manage the assessment process more efficiently

When assessment is combined across Units, teachers/lecturers should take particular care to track learners' achievement of the Outcomes and Assessment Standards. Tracking will assist with identifying any necessary re-assessment and will also provide evidence of achievement for those learners who do not achieve the whole Course.

## Combining assessment across the two Units

Assessment across the two Units could be combined through a production brief which includes an instruction at the planning stage to carry out some content-based research in terms of key aspects, contexts and roles of media content.

For example, the broad brief could be to plan, design and create a multi-platform magazine for students of their own age. A learner may then choose from a diverse range of topics according to their preferences. The finished media content should be in the form specified in the brief, but other than this, evidence for assessment can be in any appropriate form such as graphic, pictorial or display material, mood boards, storyboards, written or oral responses to tasks, and so on.

At the planning stage, the learner would generate ideas in response to the brief, identifying initial possibilities and conducting research to develop ideas.

As well as research into such things as institutional constraints and the audience being targeted, this stage could include detailed examination of content similar to that being planned, and in terms of appropriate key aspects, contexts and roles of media. One or more examples of media content could be analysed. Some learners might need very precise direction in terms of analysis tasks if it is intended that they cover all the assessment requirements of the *Media: Analysing Media Content* Unit during this research.

Evidence for assessment generated through this stage could comprise: the brief, evidence of research, detailed description of ideas that meet the requirements of the brief, and development/detailed planning of some of ideas in ways appropriate to research findings.

During the production stage, learners would use sustained production skills to develop at least one of their ideas into finished content. The learner may produce an individual piece/segment or, if a group work approach is being taken, produce

part of a text or undertake work for a particular production role that can be combined with the work of others to create a complete piece/segment.

Evidence for assessment would comprise the finished content which reflects a technical role undertaken, and any other appropriate records of non-technical roles undertaken. The finish would be dependent on the resources available and could take the form of a complete text or an extract, providing it is appropriate to the form and the context.

Finally, learners would carry out an evaluation of the process with a clear focus on the process and content and how effectively these met the needs of the brief.

Evidence for assessment could comprise a written evaluation, with learners using appropriate terminology and key aspects of media literacy in their discussion of the content and the context for which it was produced. Evidence in any other appropriate format would also be suitable, and evaluation could take place at appropriate points throughout the project rather than only at the end.

**Demonstration of Assessment Standards in this approach to combined assessment:**

| <b>Media: Creating Media Content: Evidence</b>  |  | <b>Media: Analysing Media Content: Evidence</b>                             |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1.1 Planning and developing detailed ideas in response to a negotiated brief          | Learners carry out detailed research and planning for the creation of at least one piece of media content.   | 1.1 Analysing media content in detail                                       | As part of the planning research, learners carry out detailed analysis of media content in terms of two content-based key aspects appropriate to the brief. |
| 1.2 Applying sustained production skills appropriate to the media content and context | Learners create at least one complete piece or extract of media content by sustaining two production skills. | 1.2 Analysing media contexts in detail                                      | As part of the planning research, learners carry out detailed analysis media content in terms of two contexts appropriate to the brief.                     |
| 1.3 Evaluating the production process in detail                                       | Learners evaluate the process of creating the content and the success of this in meeting the brief.          | 1.3 Explaining the relationship between media content and context in detail | As part of the planning research, learners analyse the relationship between context   |

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | and content in media content relevant to the brief.   |
| 1.4 Applying detailed knowledge and understanding of relevant key aspects of media literacy | Learners use the appropriate key aspects during the planning, making and/or evaluation the media content. | 1.4 Analysing the role of media   | As part of the planning research, learners analyse how a relevant role of media is evident in or can be applied to the media content. |
|   |   | 1.4 Applying detailed knowledge and understanding of the relevant key aspects of media literacy | Appropriate key aspects are referenced in the planning stage analysis of content.   |

## Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

Full details of the assessment of added value are included in the *Course Assessment Specification*.

For the Course assessment, the learner will undertake two components: a question paper that assesses the learner's ability to apply knowledge and understanding by analysing media content in context, and an assignment that assesses the learner's ability to apply skills and knowledge acquired throughout the Course in a production task.

### Component 1 — question paper

The purpose of this question paper is to assess the learner's ability to apply knowledge and understanding by analysing media content in context and the role of media.

This question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ analysis of media content in context
- ◆ analysis of the role of media within society
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of media literacy

This question paper will have 50 marks (50% of the total mark).

This question paper has one Section.

Learners will answer questions on familiar media content.

Marks will be awarded for the learner's analysis of media content in context, the role of media, and applying knowledge of the relevant key aspects of media literacy.

### Component 2 — assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to assess the learner's ability to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the Course in a production of media content.

Learners will carry out an assignment set by SQA, using a brief negotiated in their centre.

This assignment will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding of production techniques in an assignment which:

- ◆ involves a degree of personalisation and choice
- ◆ requires consideration of possibilities and problem solving in planning and production processes
- ◆ requires application of knowledge and understanding of the relevant key aspects of media literacy
- ◆ allows the learner to reflect on production experience and challenges

The assignment will have 50 marks (50% of the total mark).

This assignment has two Sections.

Section 1: Planning will have 25 marks. In response to a negotiated brief, learners will research and plan media content, and consider the impact of actual or likely constraints.

Section 2: Development will have 25 marks. Learners make the planned media content and reflect on the effectiveness of their development process and finished content.

Marks will be awarded for the learner's ability to research and generate ideas appropriate to a negotiated brief, develop and justify media content choices, and evaluate the impact of actual or likely constraints on the media content.

### **Preparation**

Learners can prepare for the question paper by analysing a range of media content and gathering evidence to exemplify their understanding of analysis concepts through:

- ◆ analysing the ways in which concepts are evident in, or can be applied to, particular examples of media content
- ◆ analysing cause and effect or relationships between particular elements of content, contexts and roles of media
- ◆ decoding what has been presented in media content
- ◆ demonstrating understanding of how meaning has been created
- ◆ demonstrating understanding of how and why factors may shape the construction of, and reactions to, media content
- ◆ discussing different perspectives on the ways in which content may reflect or result in the following roles of media: meeting needs; influencing behaviour and attitudes; achieving particular purposes

Learners can prepare for the assignment by being given opportunities to:

- ◆ research to generate ideas for creating media content
- ◆ plan the production processes necessary for the creation of media content
- ◆ apply a range of media skills in the creation of media content
- ◆ evaluate the process of creating media content

Learners should be introduced to the requirements of the assignment once they are familiar with the concepts and contexts of analysing and producing media content as outlined in the Units. It is envisaged that learners would undertake the production Unit at the same time or before this assignment. A set amount of class

time could be devoted to the assignment, or a programme of deadlines and tutorials devised to supervise progress

Learners should be given the opportunity to negotiate or set aspects of the brief. For example, the broad brief could be to plan, design and create a moving image advertisement for a charitable cause of their choice. A learner may then choose from a diverse range of topics according to their personal interest. The target audience and purpose could also be negotiated. Care should be taken from the outset to ensure that the negotiated brief is appropriate to the resources available within the centre.

# Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The *Course Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this Course. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course.

## **1 Literacy**

1.1 Reading

1.3 Listening and talking

## **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

4.3 Working with others

4.4 Enterprise

4.6 Citizenship

## **5 Thinking skills**

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

5.5 Creating

During the delivery and assessment of the Course, there may also be opportunities for learners to develop their literacy skills. Literacy skills are particularly important for learners as these skills allow them to access, engage in and understand their learning and to communicate their thoughts, ideas and opinions.

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA’s website at: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)

# Administrative information

---

**Published:** May 2015 (version 2.1)

---

## History of changes to Course Support Notes

| Version | Description of change  | Authorised by                      | Date      |
|---------|--|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.0     | Course assessment information amended to reflect finalised specifications; general advice clarified and expanded throughout. | Qualifications Development Manager | June 2014 |
| 2.1     | 'Media:' prefix added to references to Unit titles throughout document.  | Qualifications Manager             | May 2015  |
|         |  |                                    |           |
|         |  |                                    |           |

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies can be downloaded from SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015

## Unit Support Notes — Media: Analysing Media Content (Higher)



This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of these *Unit Support Notes* can be downloaded from SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Media: Analysing Media Content* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ *the Unit Specification*
- ◆ *the Course Specification*
- ◆ *the Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ *the Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

# General guidance on the Unit

## Aims

The *Media: Analysing Media Content* (Higher) Unit is a mandatory Unit in the Higher Media Course. The Unit is also available as a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The general aim of this Unit is to provide learners with the skills needed to analyse media content in context, and the role of media. This Unit provides learners with the opportunity to develop detailed knowledge and understanding of the roles, contexts and key aspects of media literacy central to the detailed and complex analysis of media content.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Carry out detailed and complex analysis of media content

## Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 Media Course or its component Units

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the *Higher Media Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to further study or training, or employment.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

## Naturally occurring evidence

Assessment approaches should aim to help learners progress through the Unit at their own pace and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways. Teachers and lecturers should explore opportunities in the day-to-day delivery of the Unit to observe learners providing evidence which satisfies the Unit, completely or partially. This is naturally occurring evidence.

## Possible approaches to learning and teaching

An engaging and supportive learning environment should be provided to encourage active learner involvement where a range of media texts and content across medium and genre are studied.

Learners will benefit from studying a broad range of media content which reflects media analysis concepts in varying levels of complexity, and stimulates discussion and critical analysis. Content which can be easily categorised in terms of genre and purpose can be useful, as these structuring elements often lead to the conventional use of media codes, conventions and content which learners are expected to analyse in detail.

Theory, concepts, contexts and terminology can be taught in an expository style but designing learning activities which begin with the consumption of media content and thereafter the teaching and application of relevant concepts may be more effective. Practical and creative activities can also reinforce knowledge and understanding of analysis concepts.

Analysing a mixture of extracts, complete texts and groups of texts which are linked in some way (eg by genre, theme, topic or institution) will enhance learners' understanding of media content in context, and the role of media, and help them to develop skills in applying and integrating the challenging concepts which form the basis of the Unit.

The Unit focuses on the detailed and complex analysis of how and why media content is constructed in particular ways, and on the potential use or effect of media content. Teaching and learning should be informed by the concepts detailed below. Learners should acquire the skills to analyse in detail how these concepts are evident in or can be applied to media content, and how they inform or impact on each other.

Content-based key aspects of media literacy:

- ◆ categories — genre, purpose, tone, style
- ◆ language — medium/form-specific technical codes, cultural codes, anchorage
- ◆ narrative — structures, codes, conventions
- ◆ representation — selection and portrayal, stereotypes, non-stereotypes, ideologies

Context-based key aspects of media literacy:

- ◆ audience — target audience, preferred reading, differential decoding, mode of address
- ◆ institution — internal factors, external factors

Other relevant contexts:

- ◆ society contexts — time, place

Learners should be able to describe straightforward facts or ideas relevant to the society in which the media content was produced, consumed or set, and explain the effect of these on the content.

These facts or ideas could relate to events, technology, politics, history, ideas or anything else relevant to the society.

Role of media in society:

Learners should be able to analyse the role of media, and explain the effect of these on the content, or reactions to it. Different theories, opinions or perspectives could be explored and learners should be encouraged to think critically about the role of media, and develop their own opinions.

The following actual or potential roles of media should be covered.

- ◆ meeting needs — entertainment, education, information, for example:
  - reasons people may have for consuming particular media content
  - how producers use their knowledge of these needs to construct content in particular ways
  - how reactions to content may depend on the extent to which needs are met
- ◆ achieving particular purposes — profit, promotion, public service, for example:
  - profit motives
  - promotion — of products, ideas, individuals or organisations, as appropriate to the content
  - public service — content which does not only have a profit motive, but which benefits/advises/helps individuals or groups, or acts on their behalf
- ◆ Influencing attitudes and behaviour — intentionally, unintentionally, for example:
  - the intended influence of media content on individuals, groups or organisations
  - the unintended, possible or consequential effect of media content

Content, contexts and roles of media are inextricably linked, and approaches to learning, teaching and assessment should reflect this. While particular analytical concepts may be taught discretely, a full understanding can only be gained through an examination of the ways in which they inform one another.

In order to develop analytical skills and an understanding of recurrent patterns in media content and contexts, learners should be given opportunities to analyse

key concepts as they apply to a wide variety of texts before studying particular examples of media content in depth.

Consideration should be given to the *Media: Creating Media Content* (Higher) Unit when selecting media content for analysis and, where possible, learners should be able to choose the texts to be studied.

An example of a possible learning and teaching approach is given below:

### **Example 1**

Learners undertake a content analysis of a magazine of their choice, noting the types of editorial and advertising included. This leads to a discussion of investment, funding and income sources as well as the concept of target audience. Terminology such as socio-economic, demographic and psychographic profiles can be introduced and applied to the audience analysis. The relationship between the content and the contexts of audience and institution can be explored.

If a magazine is chosen as a text for in-depth study, narrative structure can also be analysed, as can representation, ideology, technical and cultural codes. The relationships between these, audiences and industries can be analysed. Examination of representations within advertising can lead to a very full discussion of the role of media in influencing behaviours and attitudes.

### **Example 2**

Learners are asked to create two print adverts focusing on their local area. One should have the purpose of attracting visitors to the area and the other should have the purpose of highlighting pollution. Learners can take photographs themselves or source them from copyright-free images available online. Evaluation and analysis of the final products provides opportunities to introduce and/or discuss the concepts of representation, ideology, codes, clients, purposes, the relationships between society and content, and so on.

Activities such as these can provide opportunities for gathering assessment evidence in a variety of forms, such as:

- ◆ answering restricted response questions
- ◆ writing an extended essay
- ◆ compiling a paper or electronic log of research and analysis
- ◆ producing a piece to camera
- ◆ giving an individual or group presentation using multimedia content

## **Combining assessment within Units**

There are many ways in which the requirements of the Unit can be generated, as detailed in the 'Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment' section below.

Evidence may be gathered using different assessments for each Outcome or it may be gathered for the Unit as a whole through one assessment. Whichever approach is used, it must be clear how the evidence covers each Outcome.

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Course Specifications\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Design Principles for National Courses\*](#)
- ◆ [\*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)\*](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [\*SCQF Handbook: User Guide\*](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [\*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work\*](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html)

# Administrative information

---

**Published:** May 2015 (version 2.1)

---

## History of changes to Unit Support Notes

| Version | Description of change   | Authorised by                      | Date      |
|---------|---|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.0     | Support and advice clarified and expanded throughout.                   | Qualifications Development Manager | June 2014 |
| 2.1     | 'Media:' prefix added to references to Unit titles throughout document. | Qualifications Manager             | May 2015  |
|         |   |                                    |           |
|         |   |                                    |           |

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies can be downloaded from SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015



# Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Media: Creating Media Content* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

# General guidance on the Unit

## Aims

The *Media: Creating Media Content* (Higher) Unit is a mandatory Unit in the Higher Media Course. The Unit is also available as a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The general aim of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to create media content and to evaluate production processes. Learners develop detailed and complex knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of media literacy central to creating media content.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- ◆ Create media content

## Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 5 Media Course or relevant component Units

## Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Higher Media *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

## Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to further study or training, or employment.

# Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

## Naturally occurring evidence

Assessment approaches should aim to help learners progress through the Unit at their own pace and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways. Teachers and lecturers should explore opportunities in the day-to-day delivery of the Unit to observe learners providing evidence which satisfies the Unit, completely or partially. This is naturally occurring evidence.

## Possible approaches to learning and teaching

An engaging and supportive learning environment should be provided to encourage active learner involvement. There are many opportunities for personalisation and choice in this Unit, and many opportunities for learners to develop their creativity in response to negotiated briefs. Learners could benefit from being given a range of creative tasks which enable them to develop planning and production skills prior to assessment, as well as an understanding of the constraints or opportunities that time, technology and any other institutional factors may present for production processes.

The Unit focuses on the skills, knowledge and understanding required to create media content relevant to particular purposes, audiences and contexts. The following stages, processes and tasks can be used to inform teaching and learning approaches.

### Planning and research

- ◆ identifying areas of content, audience and institution research appropriate to a brief
- ◆ carrying out appropriate research and drawing conclusions from findings
- ◆ using research findings to plan media content appropriate to purpose, audience and context

### Production processes

- ◆ applying knowledge of pre-production, production and post-production processes appropriate to medium/form
- ◆ applying knowledge of roles and responsibilities appropriate to medium/form
- ◆ applying knowledge of media codes and conventions to create finished content appropriate to purpose, audience and context

### Evaluation

- ◆ evaluating strengths and weaknesses of personal performance during production processes (including planning/research)
- ◆ evaluating strengths and weaknesses of finished content in relation to purpose, audience and context
- ◆ identifying strategies for future improvement in relation to production processes and final content

## **Application of key aspects of media literacy**

- ◆ applying relevant content- and context-based key aspects of media literacy to planning and research, production processes and evaluation

Examples of possible learning and teaching approaches are given below.

Learners are given a brief to plan and produce a non-fiction, moving image text lasting 4–6 minutes. The brief must be compatible with the available resources and achievable within the technological or other constraints of the centre. The target audience and subject matter can be negotiated with group members and the teacher/lecturer, thereby providing personalisation and choice.

At the planning stage, learners generate and plan content ideas through research which relates to form, audience, purpose, institutions and subject matter. This can be done through surveys, discussion, content analysis, online research, etc, and will provide understanding of relevant content and context issues, as well as the roles and responsibilities of media producers.

Ideas, findings, plans, storyboards and any other material can be recorded or stored in an electronic or paper planning log. Teachers and lecturers may wish to issue a log with instructions, sections, guiding questions or activities that learners can fill in or follow.

At the production stage, learners may adopt technological and/or non-technological roles, depending on their ability and interest. Learners could be encouraged to maintain a production stage log.

Learners should reflect on their planning and process through a written task, a discussion, a presentation or any other appropriate method.

## **Assessment**

Assessment evidence can take any appropriate form. Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Approaches to the assessment of Units when they form part of a Course may differ from approaches to assessing the same Unit when it is not being delivered as part of a Course. Where Units are delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers/lecturers will have more flexibility to develop approaches to delivering and assessing the Units which are not related to Course assessment.

Evidence for this Unit is likely to include a combination of written, graphic, digital, oral and/or recorded evidence. The work can be presented for assessment in a variety of formats depending on the preferences of centres and learners, as long as this covers all essential requirements for the Unit.

The Assessment Standards can be achieved over a number of different occasions, and with reference to a single production brief, or a number of different briefs or tasks. An individual or collaborative approach can be taken; if the latter, each learner in a group setting must have opportunities to generate evidence for Assessment Standards.

In relation to the teaching and learning examples given above, the following are suggested ways to generate evidence for the Unit:

- ◆ a print or electronic production diary containing research findings with plans generated as a result
- ◆ mock-ups with annotations, storyboards, scripts or other forms of evidence appropriate to particular production contexts
- ◆ a presentation of research and/or ideas in a production meeting context
- ◆ the completion of a production log which contains questions/headings provided by the teacher to guide the planning process
- ◆ an evaluation that uses appropriate terminology to demonstrate understanding of key aspects of media literacy in creating media content

# Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

# Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html).
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment](#)
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (reviewed during 2011 to 2012): [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html)

# Administrative information

---

**Published:** May 2015 (version 2.1)

---

## History of changes to Unit Support Notes

| Version | Description of change   | Authorised by                      | Date      |
|---------|---|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.0     | Support and advice clarified and expanded throughout.                   | Qualifications Development Manager | June 2014 |
| 2.1     | 'Media:' prefix added to references to Unit titles throughout document. | Qualifications Manager             | May 2015  |
|         |   |                                    |           |
|         |   |                                    |           |

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies can be downloaded from SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015