

Reference Material: Commentaries

AGCE in Media

6974 – Unit 2: Skills for Media Production

Candidate C

Issued: 2014/15

Unit requirements

Unit 2 is internally assessed and externally moderated.

This unit requires candidates to develop both research and production skills. Candidates are required to employ different research methods and techniques to gather information for the content of a proposed media product. The topic of the *Unit 3 Media Production Brief* can be used as the focus for this research activity.

Candidates must provide evidence of their understanding of the purposes, strengths and limitations of different research methods, techniques and procedures.

Developing an understanding of practical skills and techniques is fundamental to the successful creation of media products. Within this unit, candidates should provide evidence of their understanding of production technology, including the advantages and disadvantages of different versions of that equipment. Candidates must also demonstrate their progress in developing skills in a range of production techniques and skills.

Evidence of attainment can take a variety of forms. For assessment criteria (a) and (b), evidence could include research files, logs, notes, trails, analysis, conclusions or summaries and information gathered from primary and secondary research activity. For assessment criteria (c) and (d), there should be an initial skills audit at the beginning of the course and comprehensive evidence of the learner's skill development through on-going logs or audits, SWOT analyses, annotated drafts of practical work, screen recordings, audio and video diaries, director's commentaries, blogs, portfolios and showreels. The final product in response to the Unit 3 Media Production Brief should also be considered as part of the candidate's skill development.

Learners are assessed on their Quality of Written Communication (QWC) as part of assessment criteria (b).

Principal Moderator's notes on the example work

General Comments:

This unit comprises skill development in both research and practical skills. Evidence for assessment can be drawn from all three AS Units and it is important when assessing the extent of the candidate's skill development to consider the evidence presented in Unit 3.

All of the evidence for assessment is presented in print form. There is evidence of internal moderation and the assessor has made some comments to support the allocation of marks.

Candidate work

Evidence of the candidate's research activity can be found within all three units. The candidate has used topic of youth culture, drawn from the 2014 *Unit 3 Media Production Brief*, as the focus for assessment criteria (b) – research into a media production.

There are two main practical activities within the portfolio, magazine pages for 'Modèle' and 'Your Times, Your Life,' these activities form the basis of the evidence in relation to assessment criteria (c) and (d).

Assessment Criterion a (AO2)

Mark band 1		Mark band 2	Mark band 3
Identifies a limited range of research methods. Has employed a limited range of techniques and procedures.	Identifies a range of different research methods. Has employed an adequate range of techniques and procedures.	Has a clear understanding of a good range of different types of research techniques including an understanding of the differing purposes of these methods. Has employed a range of techniques and procedures.	Has a thorough understanding of a wide range of the different types of research techniques including an understanding of the different purposes, strengths and limitations of each. Has employed a wide range of techniques and procedures.
(0-3)	(4-6)	(7-9)	(10-12)

The candidate has scattered evidence of research skills throughout the portfolio, all of which should be taken into account when assessing the work against assessment criterion (a). The candidate has demonstrated a good understanding of different research methods, techniques and procedures (mark band 2) and has also shown an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of both primary and secondary research methods (mark band 3).

In order to show a thorough understanding of different types of research techniques – what they are and when and why each method might be used – candidates should employ the widest possible range of research methods and techniques.

In this portfolio, there is a wide range of techniques in evidence but many of them are repeated, such as the textual analysis of magazine and emagazine front pages. Further research methods that candidates could employ include interviews, photography, recording or other forms of observation and information about people, places and events.

On balance, the evidence presented has fully met the mark band 2 assessment criteria and although some of the mark band 3 criteria have also been met, a mark at the top of mark band 2 is the most appropriate. To move into mark band 3, the candidate needs to demonstrate a better understanding of research techniques by employing not only a wider range of research methods, techniques and procedures but also a more focused and coherent set of research activities.

Assessment Criterion b (AO2)

Mark band 1		Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>Employs limited research skills to gather some information for the content of a proposed media production. Produces a limited investigation into a media product. Is likely to require support and guidance at all stages.</p> <p>Uses everyday language and the response lacks clarity and organisation. Spelling, punctuation and the rules of grammar are used with limited accuracy.</p>	<p>Employs appropriate research skills to gather some information for the content of a proposed media production. Produces an adequate investigation into a media product. Is likely to require supported guidance at some stages.</p> <p>Uses everyday language but there are occasional uses of specialist vocabulary. The response lacks clarity and organisation although some attempt at focus is evident. Spelling, punctuation and the rules of grammar are used with occasional accuracy.</p>	<p>Employs competent research skills to gather a considerable amount of relevant information for the content of a proposed media production. Produces an effective investigation into a media product. Is likely to require only limited support and guidance.</p> <p>Uses some specialist terms and the response shows some focus and organisation. Spelling, punctuation and the rules of grammar are used with some accuracy.</p>	<p>Employs sophisticated research skills to gather a substantial amount of highly focused information for the content of a proposed media production. Produces a thorough and well presented investigation into a media product. Is likely to work with increasing independence.</p> <p>Uses appropriate specialist terms consistently and the response shows good focus and organisation. Spelling, punctuation and the rules of grammar are used with considerable accuracy.</p>
(0-4)		(5-8)	(9-13)
			(14-18)

Although the candidate has undertaken a wide range of research activity, the evidence of which can be found throughout all three of the AS Units, competent – rather than sophisticated – research skills are most commonly in evidence within the candidate’s work (mark band 2).

In order to be considered sophisticated, the research methods should be undertaken thoughtfully and purposefully in order to generate clearly presented, substantial and highly focused information and data. Within this portfolio, there is evidence of some highly sophisticated textual analysis of magazine and emagazine covers. However, on the whole both the primary and secondary research methods employed produce relevant information for the content of the Unit 3 *Your Times, Your Life* magazine (mark band 2), rather than substantial information and data.

Furthermore, although the research activity is competent and effective (mark band 2), to meet the mark band 3 assessment criteria, the information should be well presented and in this portfolio the research findings are difficult to locate.

In relation to QWC, the candidate uses appropriate specialist terms consistently and spelling, punctuation and the rules of grammar are used accurately (mark band 3), although the response lacks focus and organisation (mark band 2).

On balance, a mark at the top of mark band 2 is the most appropriate.

Assessment Criterion c (AO2)

Mark band 1		Mark band 2	Mark band 3
Shows some understanding in limited areas of production equipment and technology. Is generally able to operate it within the limits of that understanding. Is likely to require support and guidance at all stages.	Shows some understanding in a range of areas of production equipment and technology. Is generally able to operate it within the limits of that understanding. Is likely to require support and guidance at some stages.	Shows a competent understanding of production equipment and technology, including knowledge of different versions of that equipment and technology. Is able to operate it competently. Is likely to require only limited support and guidance.	Shows a thorough understanding of production equipment and technology, including an understanding of advantages and disadvantages of different versions of that equipment and technology. Is able to operate it with confidence and proficiency. Is likely to work with increasing independence.
(0-3)	(4-6)	(7-9)	(10-12)

Through the two magazine productions, the candidate has demonstrated that they are capable of operating relevant print media production technology and equipment with confidence and a degree of proficiency (mark band 3).

There is also evidence of a good understanding of relevant print media technologies, which does extend to different versions of equipment and software (mark band 2) and although there is some recognition of the advantages and disadvantages of different software applications, this does not equate to the thorough understanding of a wide range of the technology of print production required to fully meet the mark band 3 assessment criteria.

On balance, a mark at the bottom of mark band 3 is the most appropriate because there is sufficient evidence in the production logs and evaluations to support the assertion that the candidate can operate the technology with ease, efficiency and increasing independence (mark band 3).

Assessment Criterion d (AO2)

Mark band 1		Mark band 2		Mark band 3	
Has, throughout the period of the course, made limited progress in improving skills levels. Has developed skills in a limited range of techniques.	Has, throughout the period of the course, made adequate progress in improving skills levels. Has developed skills in an appropriate range of techniques.	Has, throughout the period of the course, made recognisable progress in improving skills levels. Has developed skills in a wide range of techniques.	Has, throughout the period of the course, made extensive progress in improving skills levels. Has developed skills in a substantial range of techniques, using them with confidence and creativity.		
(0-4)		(5-8)		(9-13)	
				(14-18)	

The candidate has created two magazine products – ‘Modèle’ and ‘Your Times, Your Life.’ The ‘Modèle’ pages demonstrate a wider range of practical skills and techniques than the pages for the ‘Your Times, Your Life’ magazine. As the ‘Modèle’ pages are at the end of the portfolio it is fair to assume that this is the culmination of the candidate’s skill development in print media.

From the albeit limited evidence in the skills audit, the candidate has made recognisable progress in improving skills levels (mark band 2). There is also clear evidence of progress from the first attempt at creating magazine pages to the ‘Modèle’ pages. In fact the ‘Modèle’ pages are evidence that the candidate has developed a substantial range of skills and techniques and is able to use them with confidence and creativity (mark band 3).

Overall, a mark at the bottom of mark band 3 is the most appropriate. The candidate has included a series of skills audits to record their progress, however, these only contain limited information regarding the candidate’s level of competence across a range of print media technologies. A broader programme of skills development activities may better enable the candidate to demonstrate extensive progress through substantial improvements in standards, all of which should be recorded in logs that comment not only on the skills and techniques used throughout the activity but also on the areas of improvement and the areas for future improvement. This will provide more comprehensive evidence of the candidate’s progress in developing technical skills and production techniques.

Summary:

The evidence presented in relation to the candidate's understanding of research methods and techniques and their ability to carry out research into a media product – assessment criteria (a) and (b) - has fully met the requirements of mark band 2.

Based on the practical work evident within the portfolio, the candidate has met all of the requirements of mark band 2 and some of the requirements of mark band 3 for assessment criteria (c) and (d) - the candidate's understanding of, and ability to operate, relevant technology and their progress in developing a range of practical skills and techniques.

In summary, it is likely that the overall mark for this portfolio would be in the range 45-47.