

Unit 22: Single Camera Techniques

Unit code: **D/502/5698**

QCF Level 3: **BTEC National**

Credit value: **10**

Guided learning hours: **60**

● Aim and purpose

In this unit learners will explore the characteristics of single camera production, and develop the creative, organisational and technical skills required to devise, plan and implement their own productions.

● Unit introduction

With the introduction of more television channels, some specifically dedicated to drama, the single camera drama production has become very popular with audiences. This means that there should be more opportunities for people with skills in single camera techniques to gain employment in this sector. This might be in terms of technical skills in production or creative skills in developing ideas into production.

This unit aims to give learners an opportunity to use production skills, already gained from previous units, and develop them further to create a production using single camera techniques.

The unit gives learners the opportunity to explore existing single camera productions. This will help them to think about, plan and produce their own productions. As part of this exploration learners will investigate the use of camera scripts and storyboards as tools of storytelling.

Learners will develop the organisational skills required for the planning and implementation of a single camera drama production. They will identify key production roles and take on one or more of these roles during their own production. Set design, cinematography, lighting, use of sound and editing techniques will all be part of the skills learners develop through following this unit.

Health and safety issues will also be addressed in both location and studio shoots, with learners producing risk assessments prior to any production work.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the features of single camera production
- 2 Be able to plan a single camera production
- 3 Be able to apply single camera techniques in a production.

Unit content

1 Understand the features of single camera production

Formats: eg series, serial, single drama; genre, eg period, dramatised documentary, crime, soap opera, comedy

Narrative structures: eg linear (or sequential), non-linear (or non-sequential), causality, parallelism, temporal order, temporal duration, temporal frequency, patterns of development, endings, eg open, closed

Technical: camera; lighting; sound; editing; scripting; building a scene; building a story

2 Be able to plan a single camera production

Devising: finding ideas; developing ideas; narrative structures; character; scripts; treatments; storyboards

Resources: talent; properties; costume; locations; video recording and playback equipment; audio recording and playback equipment; lighting equipment; sound and visual effects

Planning: treatments; shooting scripts; records of pre-production meetings; shooting schedules; call sheets; production roles; floor or location plans; prop lists; daily report sheets; production schedules

Health and safety: risk assessments (studio, locations)

3 Be able to apply single camera techniques in a production

Production process: rehearsals; shoot; shooting records; production logs; technical competencies; creative abilities; own work; teamwork

Post-production process: reviewing recorded material; edit preparation; editing vision and sound; reviewing edit; output; storage

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 describe the features of single camera production with some appropriate use of subject terminology	M1 explain the features of single camera production with reference to detailed illustrative examples and with generally correct use of subject terminology	D1 comprehensively explain the features of single camera production with reference to elucidated examples and consistently using subject terminology correctly
P2 generate outline plans for a single camera production working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance [CT]	M2 generate detailed ideas for a single camera production showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance	D2 generate thoroughly thought-through ideas for a single camera production showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations
P3 produce a single camera production working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance. [SM]	M3 produce a single camera production to a good technical standard showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance.	D3 produce a single camera production to a technical quality that reflects near-professional standards showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
------------	------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit can be seen as an opportunity for learners to work individually or in small groups to realise a self-generated single camera programme proposal using research and production skills developed through other units. The tutor's role in this unit is very much that of a facilitator, providing support to individual learners and production teams in developing narratives and seeing through the production.

A diverse range of single camera productions should be screened in class with group discussion aimed at developing an understanding of the way in which this type of production is put together. Learners could, for example, take a sequence from a production and literally deconstruct it. They could look at the individual shots and try to reconstruct a shooting schedule for that sequence, listen to the soundtrack and try to work out how many different layers it consists of, take down a couple of short passages of dialogue and try to reconstruct a script.

Technical structuring should, of course, be related to formats, genres, and the narrative style, so that learners begin to build up an understanding of not just the production process but its possibilities as well. This will then inform their own thinking and help them to generate ideas for their productions.

Learners can work individually or as part of a team for the production project itself. Alternatively, they could do both short individual and group projects. Where the project is a team production the tutor must ensure that all members of the group have an equal role and that each role will enable the learner undertaking it to produce adequate evidence for assessment. Learners working individually can also employ others to work for them, as long as the work produced by others is under the direction of the learner whose project it is. In both cases learners must be able to authenticate their own input into the planning and production process.

The importance of pre-production planning should be emphasised. Production schedules, scripts, storyboards and risk assessments should be completed prior to the allocation of equipment for a shoot.

At all times, both in studio or location shoots, learners should be encouraged to adopt a professional approach, and the importance of following health and safety considerations should be emphasised.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the teaching and assessment of this unit.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities
Introduction to unit and unit assessment.
Classes on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifying features of single camera production• comparisons with multi-camera production.
Screenings of productions in a range of formats.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities

Assignment 1 – Single Camera Production

Working in pairs learners will watch a number of examples of single camera production and take notes on their formats, narrative structures and technical elements. They will then individually prepare and give presentations, illustrated with clips, on single camera production.

Visiting speaker: director or producer of single camera productions.

Pre-production exercise.

Using an existing screenplay, learners individually assemble the pre-production documentation for a production of the script:

- storyboards
- locations
- props
- costume
- production schedule
- cast.

Lecture on narrative illustrated with clips (two sessions).

Lecture on audience illustrated with clips (two sessions).

Workshop:

- devising and finding ideas
- developing ideas, narrative structures, character, motivation
- screenwriting techniques
- scriptwriting exercise.

Workshop:

- location practice
- equipment set up
- skills in roles
- health and safety issues.

Screenings of significant single camera productions followed by discussions.

Workshop:

- allocating resources: producing schedules which work
- talent
- properties
- costume
- locations
- video recording and playback equipment
- audio recording and playback equipment
- lighting equipment;
- sound and visual effects.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities

Workshop:

- production documentation templates
- examples of pre-production documentation from existing productions

Visit to the set of an existing production.

Workshop: post-production process: reviewing recorded material, edit preparation, editing.

Workshop:

- sound and image
- recording and editing techniques.

Workshop: directing techniques.

Assignment 2 – One-minute Drama

Learners will:

- write a script for a one-minute drama-short set in one location
- individually shoot and edit the drama
- maintain a production log throughout production process.

Assignment 3 – Five-minute Drama

Learners will:

- individually write screenplays for a five-minute drama
- vote for which ones to produce in groups
- produce and post-produce chosen screenplays
- maintain a production log throughout production process.

Review of productions and assessment.

Assessment

Evidence for assessment

Evidence for the achievement of learning outcome 1 can be presented in any appropriate format. The conventional written report or blog may be the favoured approach by some learners. However, PowerPoint, audio or video presentations are just as valid.

For this element of the unit, and for some learners, a formal viva voce assessment might be appropriate. When more than one learner in a cohort is assessed in this way care must be taken to ensure that all learners are asked equivalent questions, and that all are given equal opportunities to expand or clarify their answers. Interviewers must also ensure that questions are not phrased in such a way as to provide or suggest an answer. Formal vivas should be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification and at least 50 per cent of such assessments must be internally verified.

For evidence of the achievement of learning outcome 2 learners will need appropriate documentation for their shooting scripts and storyboards. Production logs, audio or audio-video diaries and minutes of production team meetings would provide evidence of individual work within the group. Appropriate documents would include relevant pre-production paperwork such as production schedules, call sheets and risk assessments.

Evidence for achievement of learning outcome 3 will be the production itself and appropriate documentation consisting of production records of the individual learner's role in the production process. Appropriate production and post-production paperwork will be required, such as location footage records and paper edits. Rushes material should be kept as evidence of experimentation and modification. The final product should be labelled and presented in any appropriate format.

Application of grading criteria

When applying the grading criteria, tutors should follow the advice given below. Please note that any examples of evidence given here are indicative only. This advice is not exhaustive and the examples need not specifically be included in a learner's work in order for that learner to achieve the exemplified grade.

Pass

To achieve a pass grade, learners must achieve all the criteria at pass level. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

P1: learners will describe correctly and substantially examples of single camera production in terms of formats, narrative structures, and technical execution. The description will be in terms of the content – that is, the 'story' of these productions will be given and techniques will be noted but this will lack the detailed exemplification required for the higher grades. It will also lack any explanation of how such techniques as master shot, reverse shot, image size and editing actually help to tell the story. Evidence will show a basic understanding of technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it.

P2: learners will produce a shooting script for a production but it will be formulaic and derivative, typically following the standard linear harmony-disruption-harmony narrative structure. They will produce pre-production documentation which will include production and shooting schedules, as well as storyboards and risk assessments. However, these will be basic and will lack the detailed or careful planning needed for an effective production. This might include the miscalculation of time (six weeks for shooting, one week for editing, for example). Risk assessments will lack detail and be incomplete, though the major risks must be identified.

P3: learners will complete or significantly contribute to the completion of a single camera production. In terms of cinematography, they will typically rely on overlong sequences with little shot variation to tell the story. In terms of editing, techniques will be basic and rely on the cut as a method of moving from one shot to another, or wipes and dissolves will be used inappropriately for the narrative. Evidence of experimentation, such as camera movement or camera angles, will be lacking in either the production logs or rushes. Lighting will rely on natural light rather than using artificial methods to generate meaning. Nevertheless, the end result will be a coherent product that shows application of some single camera production techniques.

P2 and P3: in terms of the aesthetic or imaginative qualities of their work, learners will not move beyond the conventional, but the conventions applied will be appropriate to the form or genre within which they are working. When engaged in practical activities, learners will need frequent assistance and support, though they will take note of and make use of this help when it is given. If they are in frequent need of such help but fail to make positive use of it they should not be considered for a pass grade for this unit.

Merit

To achieve a merit grade, learners must achieve all the pass and all the merit grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

M1: learners will explain the formats, narrative structures and technical elements of single camera production. Detailed illustrative examples will be used to illustrate and support what is said, but the learner will not elucidate these examples to show how they illustrate the points they support. Learners will explain the use of cinematic techniques and how they create meaning for the audience. For example a learner might explain how the point of view shot is used to encourage audiences to identify with characters or situations, or produce a degree of realism for the audience. Learners will use technical vocabulary for the most part correctly, but may make mistakes or be unsure about usages at times.

M2: learners will produce a narrative with some imagination and produce competent plans for production. They will produce pre-production plans which are realistic and effective. Scripts and treatments will use appropriate formats. Production schedules will be competently organised with realistic deadlines and some contingency planning. Risk assessments will be realistic and contain some detail. The narrative will show imagination in both, or either, content and form. The standard harmony-disruption-harmony structure might be used, but a story might have a twist that engages the audience, or narrative structures might use non-linear techniques to tell the story. However, aesthetic issues, such as location, ambient sound and lighting will not be fully explored.

M3: learners will produce a single camera product to a good technical standard. They will show confidence and facility in their use of the equipment. The work will have been approached methodically and thoughtfully. The product will show some imagination in its realisation with some evidence of experimentation in both editing and cinematography. For example, the use of high and low angle shots, showing vulnerability and dominance, will be used appropriately within the narrative. A mixture of shot sizes will be used appropriately to generate interest and create meaning. The lap-dissolve might be used as an appropriate alternative to the cut. Attempts to use lighting as a method of generating mood, atmosphere or meaning might be apparent, but may be limited to certain shots, rather than being employed consistently throughout the production.

M2 and M3: learners will still be working within recognisable generic conventions, but there will be some imaginative thought behind the work so that technical skills and codes and conventions will be employed with some inventiveness. When engaged in practical activities, learners will need little assistance, though typically they will still need some support when dealing with more complex technology or trying to apply more sophisticated techniques. Like the pass grade learner, they will respond positively to any help given.

Distinction

To achieve a distinction grade, learners must achieve all the pass, all the merit and all the distinction grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

D1: learners will use a wide range of precisely focused examples to comprehensively explain the formats, narrative structures and technical elements of single camera production. Learners will draw out of examples precisely what is about them that that exemplifies the points they illustrate. Learners at this level will typically discuss mainstream and alternative formats with explicit reference to both narrative structures and cinematic techniques. For example, in terms of narrative, open ended, non-linear and multi-stranded narratives might be explored, whilst, in terms of techniques, shot size, camera angle and camera movement will be considered along with editing techniques such as continuity editing, cross cutting, use of montage and split screen, with elucidated examples to illustrate each technique. Technical vocabulary will be secure and used correctly and confidently at all times.

D2: learners will produce creative scripts and plans that reflect professional practice. Pre-production paperwork will be well organised showing good resource management and anticipation of potential difficulties. Production schedules will be detailed and set realistic deadlines. Scripts and storyboards will be carefully prepared and thoroughly thought out. Contingency plans will be in place to cover unforeseen circumstances. Risk assessments will be detailed taking into account all health and safety issues and addressing them properly. Aesthetic considerations will also be detailed, taking into account the fitness for purpose of all the locations used. Alternative narrative structures might be used with flair to produce interesting or different formats.

D3: learners will produce a finished product the technical quality of which reflects near-professional practice. This does not mean the learner has achieved actual professional standards, but that they are beginning to approach that standard. Cinematography, in terms of image size, camera angle and movement will be creative and fluent. Varied editing techniques, such as cross-cutting and montage, will be thoughtfully used to inform the narrative and in such a way that the intention behind the use is clearly meaningful. Any dissolves and transitions will be employed effectively and for a reason that links to the story. Like cinematography, editing will be fluent with very few, if any, continuity errors. Artificial lighting may be used creatively to generate mood, atmosphere or meaning.

D2 and D3: learners will apply their technical and creative skills not just with imagination but with ingenuity and even elegance, and codes and conventions will be used with occasionally surprising results. In all practical activity distinction grade learners will be capable of working autonomously and effectively. The term 'working independently' means that they are able to work on their own initiative, do not need constant support or supervision, give the work their full commitment, work positively and cooperatively with others, and meet deadlines. In other words, they have the kind of self-management skills that would be expected of them in a professional context. Note also that this criterion should not be taken to mean that learners do not seek advice or that they work without discussing things with their tutor, but rather that they are not dependent upon the support of others and that when they take advice they weigh it carefully for themselves.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Pearson assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 1 – Single Camera Production	Learners prepare a lesson on single camera production for a Level 2 Creative Media Production class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All preparatory and research notes.• Presentation slides, speaker's notes and handouts.• Recording of presentation.
P2, M2, D2 P3, M3, D3	Assignment 2 – One-minute Drama	Produce an individual short drama for the festival circuit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screenplay.• Pre-production file.• Completed production.• Production log.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P2, M2, D2 P3, M3, D3	Assignment 3 – Five-minute Drama	Produce short drama in a group for the festival circuit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screenplay. Pre-production file. Completed production. Production log.

Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC Creative Media Production suite. This unit has particular links with the following units in the BTEC Creative Media Production suite:

Level 2	Level 3
	Advertising Production for Television
	Corporate and Promotional Programme Production
	Digital Video Production for Interactive Media
	Film and Video Editing Techniques
	Music Video Production

Essential resources

This unit requires recording and editing equipment that will provide opportunities for learners to undertake the practical production of a single camera drama. The minimum requirement would be a camera with external microphone socket, unidirectional microphone and boom, tripod, editing facilities and lighting equipment for the studio or location for every three learners.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local production companies and freelancers working in film, video and television. Visiting industry speakers are particularly valuable when they are able to provide professional and offer industry related briefs. Some employers will be able to provide work placement or to 'commission' productions from learners for a real client and audience.

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Creative thinkers	generating ideas and exploring possibilities when devising single camera productions, and using conventions and techniques to create meaning connecting their own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways by studying existing productions to inform their own work adapting ideas as circumstances change whilst working on single camera productions adapting their ideas as circumstances change
Self-managers	organising time and resources and prioritising actions when producing projects seeking out challenges or new responsibilities and showing flexibility when priorities change deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands responding positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	planning and carrying out research into existing single camera productions carrying out research to develop ideas for their single camera productions
Reflective learners	setting goals with success criteria for their production work inviting feedback on their own work and dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism evaluating their experiences and learning to inform future progress
Team workers	if working in a group to produce a single camera drama, taking responsibility for their own role managing discussions to reach agreements and achieve results.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using digital video editing software
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	uploading and logging video clips when editing
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: text and tables <ul style="list-style-type: none">• images• numbers• records	researching single camera formats and their audiences
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	analysing research findings on single camera productions and their audiences
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	presenting plans and proposals for a single camera production
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	contacting members of a production company drawing up schedules and budgets
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	planning the production of a single camera production
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	producing studio floor plans and budgets for a single camera production
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	ensuring that resource allocations will fit with production requirements

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing single camera production formats and audiences in groups presenting plans for a single camera production
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching single production formats and audiences.
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	analysing single camera productions and audiences writing a production proposal.