Unit 4: Creative Media Production Management Project

Unit code: F/600/6703

QCF Level 3: BTEC National

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 60

Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to provide learners with the understanding, knowledge and skills required to manage the production of a media product from the initial idea through to completion.

Unit introduction

Working within the media industry involves a wide variety of people with a wide variety of skills in evolving organisational structures all working towards the production of a particular product. The organisation of any media product will be dictated by the limits of the production and the focus of the product itself, whether it be a promotional video, a radio programme, a website, or a newsletter. It will involve overall control through a manager or management team and imaginative direction through the creative team. In addition, the production will come to life through the skills and knowledge of individuals and specialised teams who will manage and develop their key areas of responsibility.

This unit gives learners the opportunity to enhance their skills through the planning and management of a media production. Learners will apply the skills, knowledge and understanding which they have developed in other units to the management of a media production either by undertaking and managing an individual assignment or through taking a major role in a production team which is broken down into several smaller teams, possibly encompassing several different media.

Learners can expect to gain experience in production management from the initial origination and researching of an idea, through the pitch, to managing a production team or a part of one, taking personal responsibility for the effectiveness of the production process. Learners will develop the ability to play a key part within a production, and will be given opportunities to demonstrate the management qualities, individual focus and appropriate collaborative skills needed for a successful production.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

1   Be able to originate, develop and research an idea for a media product

2   Be able to pitch a proposal for a media product

3   Be able to manage a production process to create a media product.

Unit content

1 Be able to originate, develop and research an idea for a media product

Originate ideas: group and individual brainstorming; analysis of each idea; selection; justification

Develop an idea: eg mood boards, thumbnails, mock-ups, surveys

Constraints: time; costs; personnel; resources; legal and ethical considerations, eg privacy, libel law, defamation, race discrimination law, data protection, freedom of information; codes of practice; copyright (requirement, owner, clearance, cost)

Research an idea: audience research, eg age, gender, socio-economic grouping, lifestyle, location; audience figures, eg RAJAR, BARB, ABC, CAA, ELSPA, ChartTrack, MCV; primary content research, eg interviews, questionnaires, own observations; secondary content research, eg newspapers, magazines, books, audio, audio-visual, electronic, internet, archives, libraries; research into competitors; research into market

2 Be able to pitch a proposal for a media product

Proposal: content outline; target audience; resources; personnel requirements, eg cast and crew, team, specialists; budget; project schedule

Pitch: style; format, eg PowerPoint, video presentation, multiple presentation; technology, eg video screen, projector, audio playback; product information (content outline, target audience, resources, cast and crew requirements, budget, project schedule, market fit); preparation of materials; rehearsal of pitch; delivery of pitch

3 Be able to manage a production process to create a media product

Planning: agreed production roles; job allocation; task definitions and deadlines; agreed content outline within proposal; preliminary and regular team meetings; agendas and minutes; proposed schedules; logistics, eg personnel, equipment, locations, additional facilities, additional resources; contingency, eg resources backup, logistics backup; time frame for project maturity; risk assessments

Production management: pre-production phase; production phase; post-production phase; project management techniques, eg spreadsheet, dedicated software, agile methods, scrums; team and individual performance; contingency plans for staffing and resources; monitoring and reviewing; problem solving; prioritisation; crisis management; quality control; meeting submission dates; modifications after completion

Product: technical and aesthetic qualities; realisation of proposal; fitness for purpose, eg audience, commissioning organisation or agency, client

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 originate, develop and research an idea for a media product working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance [IE, CT]	M1 originate, develop and research an idea for a media product showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance	D1 originate, develop and research an idea for a media product showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations
P2 pitch a proposal for a media product with some appropriate use of subject terminology and with some assistance	M2 pitch a proposal for a media product competently with generally correct use of subject terminology and with only occasional assistance	D2 pitch a proposal for a media product to a near-professional standard consistently using subject terminology correctly and working independently to professional expectations
P3 manage a production process to create a media product working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance. [SM, TW]	M3 manage a production process competently to create a media product to a good technical standard, showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance.	D3 manage a production process to near-professional standards to create a media product, 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	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

In this unit, learners will work in teams and will demonstrate production management skills by taking either the lead role in an individual project or a major management role in a group project. In either case, they should take a role which involves managing others. They should be encouraged to research and develop their own ideas for a production and to choose the medium or mediums that they wish to work in. Tutors should ensure that learners' proposals will enable them to create evidence that will demonstrate their management, organisational and communication skills and their understanding of appropriate codes of practice. All members of a team should develop individually their understanding of the specific roles and responsibilities they are undertaking and formulate a personal strategy for fulfilling them.

Much of the fundamental knowledge for this unit will have been taught in other units such as *Unit 8: Understanding the Television and Film Industries* or *Unit 13: Understanding the Computer Games Industry*, where learners will have explored the operation of various organisational structures, job roles and responsibilities and contracts of engagement. In addition, both tutors' and learners' approaches to this unit will have evolved out of various specialist units where learners will have produced a particular media product through the various pre-production, production and post-production processes involved within that unit.

Learners should research and develop proposals for a production that is achievable within the limits of the resources of the school or college. They should also be encouraged to try to sell their idea to a real organisation or agency if possible as this will afford opportunities for the production to have clearly defined parameters through which the production team can demonstrate their management, organisational and communication skills. Such a scenario, with real prospects for the final product to be used, would provide obvious motivation and a 'professional' context within which learners might demonstrate their talents. That is an ideal situation and it is not always possible to provide situations of this nature but there are often many opportunities for learners to produce media products for other departments within their educational establishment. For example, producing a music video for the music department, a website for the Information Services, a radio show to be broadcast in the college canteen, a newsletter for the Student Union are all ways of providing a genuine work-related context for this unit.

NB: This mandatory unit has been designed so that it can be taught in the context of all the endorsed titles (or pathways) in the BTEC Nationals in Creative Media Production. If centres are unsure about how to cover or interpret any of the content in relation to a particular endorsed title they should contact Edexcel.

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.
Introduction to a range of production management techniques.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities

Small group work on production management techniques.

Learners will:

- identify techniques for planning
- identify techniques for ideas development, target audience research, content research, contingency planning and constraints on production
- present a group report with individual evidence of their contribution to the work.

Assignment 1 – Development of Ideas for a Creative Media Product

Working individually, learners will:

- identify the target audience they would like to address
- identify the range of resources and materials available to them (audit)
- identify the skills they have in relation to their choice of production techniques
- mind map a number of appropriate ideas
- identify the production management requirements for each idea
- decide which idea might be appropriate
- undertake research into appropriate content based on the target audience
- undertake research into appropriate production techniques
- identify potential constraints on production
- identify ways to address constraints.

Assignment 2 – Preparing a Pitch

Learners will:

- finalise ideas for their media product
- prepare a proposal
- prepare a presentation including delegate notes and presenter's notes
- give the presentation in the form of a pitch to the tutor and peers
- refine ideas as a result of the pitch, where appropriate.

Assignment 3 – Production

Learners will:

- determine production roles (if employing a team or working in a group*)
- complete pre-production process
- complete production process
- complete post-production process
- show rough cut or draft product to focus group (and client if there is one)
- make changes to finished product, where necessary.

* where learners work together on a group project they must take on a production role which enables them to produce evidence that fully addresses all the assessment criteria.

Unit learning and assessment review.

Assessment

Evidence for assessment

Evidence for achievement of learning outcome 1 will be provided in documentation such as brainstorms, research data, proposals and treatments, meeting notes, emails, sketches, drafts, thumbnails, mood-boards etc, depending on the nature of the production project envisaged. In the case of a group project all material presented as evidence must be the individual learner's own work. Group produced and photocopied material will not be acceptable.

Evidence for achievement of learning outcome 2 will be the pitch and associated documentation. In the case of a group project each member of the group must present her or his own role and demonstrate what it will contribute to the overall product. The pitch must be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification.

To demonstrate achievement of learning outcome 3, learners should provide, besides the finished product, a range of evidence showing their management skills and a finished product. Learners must ensure that they record carefully all their activities in production management. This can take the form of a production diary, production schedule or production log. Learners should record team meetings, planning meetings, meetings with client and feedback from their tutor. They may also provide appropriate feedback to their team in the form of policy statements, progress reports and various other planning documents relevant to the medium and the industry in which they are operating. Learners should be encouraged to record their own personal development and ability to respond actively to various constraints, contingencies and feedback from other members of the team and the client (if there is one), and to take account of market or target audience considerations. Learners should take every opportunity to review their work using their team and tutor.

For some elements of this 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.

NB: care must be taken when assessing a group project to ensure that each learner is assessed individually.

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 plan, or take a part in planning, a project but these plans will be basic and there will be limited evidence of an understanding of the development process. The skills, resources and personnel required to complete the production and the timescales involved will all be briefly noted. A target audience will be indicated and the learner or group may already have made some contact with a potential purchaser of the final product to investigate the feasibility of the proposal.

P2: in their pitch learners will provide a description of the proposal in which all relevant aspects of the project (or their part in it if it is a group project) will be covered though not completely. For example, notes on target audiences will be provided but will not be informed by extensive research or understanding of the nature and preferences of the target audience referred to. 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. The overall effect of the pitch will be to convey the proposal and create an impression

that it is viable, but not exciting. Ideas for this production will not be developed enough to withstand close questioning.

P3: learners will demonstrate a basic grasp of personal responsibility, procedures and the requirements of the production process in their particular area of responsibility. Documents produced will indicate obvious procedures and solutions but there will nonetheless be a sense of purpose behind all activity. In the case of a group project, their management role may not have substantially improved the production but it will not have adversely affected it. The final product will not have realised the learners' full intentions, but the activity that led to it will have been purposeful and the outcome will have some shape, some sense of design, or the deliberate application of some technique behind it.

P1 and P3: in terms of the 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.

P1, P2 and P3: 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 make careful plans which are appropriate, in the case of a group project, to their particular areas of responsibility. They will communicate their ideas with confidence making valuable contributions to the planning stages. Work will be approached methodically and with adequate preparation, ideas being worked out and presented neatly. Processes will be undertaken with care and, generally speaking, thought will be put into the work. Learners will explain how their research relates to and supports the production. Any treatment produced will describe a media artefact which is relevant, appropriate and achievable.

M2: in their pitch learners will talk about their ideas in such a way as to show how or why they will do what they intend to do. Ideas will have been developed through effective research and learners will be able to discuss in detail the needs and preferences of the target audience. Learners will use technical vocabulary for the most part correctly, but may make mistakes or be unsure about usages at times. Register will be generally appropriate, with perhaps occasional lapses. Questions will be responded to appropriately, but not fully. The audience will be left with the overall impression that this is a feasible project and that there is a good chance that a successful product will result from it.

M3: learners will produce effective evidence of task requirements and will manage their role with a clear sense of procedure. They will demonstrate effective and competent organisational skills and provide focused direction to others within the production team. Processes will be undertaken with care and, generally speaking, thought will be put into the work. This will be clearly evidenced through detailed planning, careful documentation and effective communication. The outcome will be a competent and effective product which shows facility and some confidence in relation to skills and the handling of equipment.

M1 and M3: learners will still be working within recognisable generic conventions, but there will be some imaginative thought behind the work so that relevant codes and conventions will be employed with some inventiveness.

M1, M2 and M3: when engaged in practical activities, learners will need occasional support, particularly when dealing with more complex technology or trying to apply more sophisticated techniques. Like the pass grade learner, they will benefit from it.

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 produce a clear idea for a project with a well-defined target audience. They will have done thorough research and planning which will be aimed at taking into account the needs and interests of the target audience. They will adopt an approach and attitude to this work which would not be out of place in a professional context and contributions to group work will be consistently positive and creative. Distinction grade learners will typically take a lead in group discussions, steering them in the right direction and taking responsibility for making decisions where necessary. Any treatment will be fully informed and will demonstrate clear, appropriate and thoroughly developed ideas for a production.

D2: in their pitch learners will present their project with both clarity and enthusiasm. Ideas will have been thoroughly developed through focused research and learners will relate the proposal fully to the target audience, showing through exemplification how that audience will be addressed. Technical vocabulary will be secure and used correctly and confidently at all times. Register will always be appropriate. Learners will fully justify their proposals by responding appropriately to questions. The audience will be left with the overall impression that this is a project based on a creative idea and solid research, with there being every chance of a highly successful product resulting from it.

D3: learners will show a full grasp of task requirements and a committed approach to their management role within the production. Their planning and achievements will demonstrate a near-professional standard of management which includes the ability to act both independently and highly effectively. They will have had a clear and successful effect upon the production due to their committed and proficient execution of their role. The outcome will be a product which, in technical and creative terms, is beginning to approach a professional standard and bears comparison with it, showing high level technical skills and confidence in the handling of equipment.

D1 and D2: learners will develop ideas and apply their technical skills not just with imagination but with ingenuity and even elegance, and codes and conventions will be used with occasionally surprising results.

D1, D2 and D3: in all practical activity 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 Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 1 – Development of Ideas for a Creative Media Product.	Learners will initiate and complete a production project to create a media product developed from one of their own ideas.	Production log detailing: • the development process • all initial ideas (scripts, sketches, thumbnails, mood-boards etc) • all initial research.
P2, M2, D2	Assignment 2 – Preparing a Pitch	As above.	• Proposal. • Slides, notes and handouts for pitch. • Recording of pitch. • Tutor observation notes.
P3, M3, D3	Assignment 3 – Production	As above.	• All pre-production and production documentation and records. • Production log. • Tutor observation notes.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Creative Media Production suite. This unit links with all production units in the BTEC Creative Media Production suite:

Opportunities to relate the work done for this unit to Skillset National Occupational Standards will depend upon the nature of the individual learner's project.

Essential resources

Learners will need access to a range of information and materials relating to production management techniques.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Learners would benefit from meeting a production manager from a media production company.

Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector, has a substantial section of its website dedicated to careers, including information on production management skills and job descriptions – www.skillset.org/careers/.

Further general information on work-related learning can be found at the following websites:

- www.aimhighersw.ac.uk/wbl.htm – work-based learning guidance
- www.businesslink.gov.uk – local, regional business links
- www.nebpn.org – National Education and Business Partnership Network
- www.vocationallearning.org.uk – Learning and Skills Network
- www.warwick.ac.uk/wie/cei/ – Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick – work experience and workplace learning frameworks.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *BTEC Level 3 National Creative Media Production, Student Book* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846906725

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *BTEC Level 3 National Creative Media Production, Teaching Resource Pack* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846907371

Chandler H – *The Game Production Handbook* (Charles River Media, 2006) ISBN 978-1934015407

DiZazzo R – *Corporate Media Production, 2nd Edition* (Focal Press, 2003) ISBN 978-0240805146

England E and Finney A – *Managing Multimedia: Project Management for Web and Convergent Media, Book 1: People and Processes, 3rd Edition* (Addison Wesley, 2001) ISBN 978-0201728989

England E and Finney A – *Managing Multimedia: Project Management for Web and Convergent Media, Book 2: Technical Issues, 3rd Edition* (Addison Wesley, 2001) ISBN 978-0321436931

Fraser P and Oram B – *Teaching Digital Video Production* (BFI Education, 2005) ISBN 978-0851709772

Hardy P – *Filming on a Microbudget* (Pocket Essentials, 2004) ISBN 978-1842433010

Kindem G and Musburger R – *Introduction to Media Production: From Analog to Digital, 2nd Edition* (Focal Press, 2001) ISBN 978-0240804088

Laycock R – *Audio Techniques for Television Production* (Focal Press, 2006) ISBN 978-0240516462

Maciuba-Koppel D – *The Web Writer's Guide* (Focal Press, 2002) ISBN 978-0240804811

Nisbett A – *The Sound Studio: Audio Techniques for Radio, Television, Film and Recording, 7th Edition* (Focal Press, 2003) ISBN 978-0240519111

Oriebar J – *Digital Television Production: A Handbook* (Hodder Arnold, 2001) ISBN 978-0340763230

Roberts-Breslin J – *Making Media: Foundations of Sound and Image Production* (Focal Press, 2003) ISBN 978-0240805023

Rudin R and Ibbotson T – *An Introduction to Journalism: Essential Techniques and Background Knowledge* (Focal Press, 2003) ISBN 978-0240516349

Websites

www.allpm.com – a project management site with useful resources

www.gamasutra.com – a sister publication to the print magazine *Game Developer*

www.skillset.org/interactive/careers/article_4754_1.asp – Skillset's pages on the role of a project manager

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 …
Independent enquirers	planning and carrying out research into production management techniques
	carrying out research to develop ideas for their own original media product
Creative thinkers	generating ideas and exploring possibilities for original media products
	trying out alternative ways of constructing their media products, following ideas through from original ideas to producing a persuasive pitch and proposal
	adapting their ideas as circumstances change
Team workers	collaborating with others to produce presentations and reports if working in a group
	collaborating with others when managing a team
	if working in a group to produce a presentation, taking responsibility for their own role
	managing discussions to reach agreements and achieve results
Self-managers	organising time and resources and prioritising actions when producing their own proposal and pitch
	seeking out challenges or new responsibilities and showing flexibility when priorities change
	dealing 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 …
Reflective learners	setting goals with success criteria for their production management work
	inviting feedback on their own work and dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
	evaluating their experiences and learning to inform future progress.

Functional Skills – Level 2

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	managing a production meeting reacting to participants in the meeting and taking note of their views
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	investigating production management techniques
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	preparing proposals.