

Unit 7: Understanding the Creative Media Sector

Unit code:	M/600/6681
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to give learners an understanding of the creative media sector. The unit covers the sector's industries and their ownership, and legal and regulatory issues. Learners will also develop an understanding of employment opportunities, working conditions and how to apply for work in the media sector.

● Unit introduction

The creative media industries continue to make a significant contribution to the UK economy and to UK society more broadly. Recruitment to the sector offers a broad range of career opportunities. Developments have also taken place across the sector in response to technological changes, with a notable impact on media production, distribution and patterns of employment. Other wider developments include deregulation and the debate over the status and funding of public service broadcasting. The ongoing developments in digital media technology are creating a highly mixed and competitive environment. All these developments will affect those seeking employment in the media sector.

In this unit learners will develop an understanding of the professional practices essential to working in any of the creative media industries. Learners will understand that creative media industries are diverse and made up of many different organisational structures which operate at a local, national and global level. Learners will gain an essential understanding of employment opportunities and job roles in the sector and will think about how they can become skilled and multi-skilled through training and professional development. They will also develop some knowledge of financial issues and ownership trends.

The unit will enable learners to understand their professional role within a set of legal and ethical constraints. They will learn about the regulatory issues and organisations relevant to media industries, which determine both the scope of and limitations on professional practice.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the structure and ownership of the media sector
- 2 Understand ethical and legal constraints within the media sector
- 3 Understand the regulation of the media sector
- 4 Know about employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector
- 5 Be able to prepare personal career development material.

Unit content

1 Understand the structure and ownership of the media sector

Sector: television; radio; film; animation; interactive media; computer games; publishing; press; photo-imaging; advertising and marketing

Structure and ownership: private ownership; public service media; multinationals; independents; conglomerates; voluntary; cross-media; diversification; vertical and horizontal integration; share of ownership; mergers and takeovers; cross-media regulation; sources of income; product diversity; profitability of product range; performance against financial concerns; organisational objectives; licenses and franchises; competitors; customers; national and global competition and trends

2 Understand ethical and legal constraints within the media sector

Ethical: social issues and sensitivities, eg representation of gender, representation of religious beliefs, linguistic usages, accessibility; professional body codes of practice, eg editorial guidelines, Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility standards

Legal: content, interpretation and application of laws relating to media, eg broadcasting legislation, official secrets legislation, equality legislation, privacy law; copyright and intellectual property law; libel law

3 Understand the regulation of the media sector

Regulatory and professional bodies: eg British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), British Association for Screen Entertainment (BASE), Film Distributors' Association, Video Standards Council (VSC) Rating Board, Office of Communications (Ofcom), Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Code of Ethics, The International Game Developers Association (IGDA), British Film Industry (BFI), Radiocentre, International Association for Visual Culture (IAVC), Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C), British Interactive Media Association (BIMA), Community Media Association (CMA)

Regulatory issues: eg ownership, monopoly, access, consumer choice, freedom of information, censorship, taste and decency

4 Know about employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector

Employment opportunities: full-time; part-time; freelance; shift work; permanent; temporary; multiskilled; voluntary; casual; hourly paid; piecework; recruitment (careers advice, trade fairs, national press, trade press, personal contacts, networking, word of mouth, internet)

Job roles: eg creative, technical, editorial, marketing, managerial, administrative, legal, financial

Professional development: education and training, eg full-time, part-time; work experience; sources of information, eg Sector Skills Councils, trade unions, careers services; record of employment history and skills; career development, eg training on the job, continuing professional development, self-training; professional skills, eg communication, organisation

Professional behaviour: reliability; attendance and punctuality; commitment; efficiency; self-presentation; communication skills; contribution to team projects; time management; personal responsibility

5 Be able to prepare personal career development material

Career development material: examples of work, eg portfolio, showreel, personal website; curriculum vitae (CV); application letters; references

Presentation for employment: interviewing skills; self-presentation (linguistic codes, dress codes, interpersonal skills)

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 structure and ownership of the media sector [IE]	M1 explain the structure and ownership of the media sector with reference to detailed illustrative examples	D1 comprehensively explain the structure and ownership of the media sector with reference to elucidated examples
P2 describe ethical and legal constraints within the media sector [IE]	M2 explain ethical and legal constraints within the media sector with reference to detailed illustrative examples	D2 comprehensively explain ethical and legal constraints within the media sector with reference to elucidated examples
P3 describe the regulation of the media sector [IE]	M3 explain the regulatory issues affecting the media sector with reference to detailed illustrative examples	D3 comprehensively explain the regulatory issues affecting the media sector with reference to elucidated examples
P4 describe employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector [IE]	M4 explain employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector with reference to detailed illustrative examples	D4 comprehensively explain employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector with reference to elucidated examples
P5 prepare personal career development material using basic formal language. [RL]	M5 prepare carefully produced personal career development material using generally correct formal language.	D5 prepare personal career development material to a quality that reflects near-professional standards, consistently using correct formal language.

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 is intended to give learners an overview of the key facts and issues they need to be aware of as professionals working in the media sector. Where possible it would be useful to make contact with media organisations and professionals and to encourage learners to be active in making contacts for themselves.

In addition to tutor-led sessions, lectures, discussions and whole group activities, sessions might adopt a vocational approach by allowing learners to form teams in order to carry out their learning. The focus on the team approach to the unit content would reinforce the professional context and endorse 'professional practice' from the outset in terms of consistent attendance, punctuality and team responsibility. This team approach would also create opportunities for learners to share tasks, hold meetings, set agendas and keep minutes. They could also undertake specific roles within their team and then rotate the roles, reflecting on and recording their experience of leading meetings, and liaising with outside bodies and professionals.

In addressing learning outcome 1 learners could work on local, national and global companies within a chosen or allocated industry. A team approach could involve learners undertaking various forms of research followed by opportunities to build upon their communication and presentation skills. Learners should be encouraged to read the relevant press in order to gain an overview of current developments. These might include coverage of ownership patterns such as mergers and takeovers, media globalisation, debates on digital developments and the future funding and status of the BBC.

The content relating to learning outcomes 2 and 3 lends itself not only to individual and team research but also to role plays, with learners considering certain scenarios and situations in the workplace where they must make professional judgements. Where learners are involved in practical units alongside this unit, they will have opportunities to apply these professional considerations to their production work. It is possible to cover this content by introducing examples from any sector and generating discussion around case studies. Sessions may also work around decisions learners have made in their own production activities. This is a vocationally relevant approach to understanding the legal constraints and how they impact on professional and creative development and practice, whilst at the same time developing an understanding of the ways in which regulatory bodies work in the industry.

Role plays and mock interviews could form the basis for covering the content related to learning outcomes 4 and 5 as well as learner research into employment opportunities and trends within a specific industry. When working on learning outcome 4 learners must be encouraged to read the relevant press to keep up to date with the knowledge and skills required in a range of media industries. This will enable them to understand that they must develop the range of skills which employers are looking for. Where centres are able to make contact with media organisations for the purpose of work experience, learners will have opportunities to provide evidence for achievement of learning outcome 5 and also to update their work-based skills (which can, of course, be added to their CVs).

Learners should be given opportunities to achieve the higher grades by encouraging them to seek information about their industry independently from a range of sources, including visits to (where possible) media organisations. Learners may also make contacts with professional practitioners, again where opportunities permit.

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 the unit and unit assessment.

For assessment of this unit learners will individually produce a careers guide to the media sector. The guide will have five sections:

- structure and ownership of the media sector
- ethical and legal constraints within the media sector
- regulation of the media sector
- employment opportunities and job roles in the media sector
- how to apply for a job.

Assignment 1 – Structure and Ownership of the Media Sector

Introduction to the creative media sector.

Working in groups:

- learners take two industries each and research their structure and ownership
- groups meet, present and compare research of each member
- individually learners can add to research done by other group members
- individually learners gather and prepare their material (charts, illustrations, copy etc)
- individually learners produce guide section on structure and ownership.

Assignment 2 – Ethical and Legal Constraints within the Media Sector

Introduction to ethical and legal constraints within the media sector.

Working in the same groups:

- learners research ethical and legal constraints relevant to their two industries
- groups meet, present and compare research of each member
- individually learners can add to research done by other group members
- individually learners gather and prepare their material (charts, illustrations, copy etc)
- individually learners produce guide section on ethical and legal constraints.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities

Assignment 3 – Regulation of the Media Sector

Introduction to regulation of the media sector.

Working in the same groups:

- learners research controversial media products produced in their two industries considering:
- what was controversial about the products
- who was involved in the controversies
- what the outcomes were
- groups meet, present and compare research of each member
- individually learners can add to research done by other group members
- individually learners gather and prepare their material (charts, illustrations, copy etc)
- individually learners produce guide section on regulation of the media sector.

Assignment 4 – Employment Opportunities and Job Roles in the Media Sector

Introduction to employment opportunities and job roles in the creative media sector.

Working in the same groups:

- learners research employment opportunities and job roles in their two industries
- groups meet, present and compare research of each member
- individually learners can add to research done by other group members
- individually learners gather and prepare their material (charts, illustrations, copy etc)
- individually learners produce guide section on employment opportunities and job roles.

Assignment 5 – How to Apply for a Job

Visiting speaker – manager of a local company.

Individually learners will research jobs within their two chosen industries and prepare:

- advice on applying for a job (self-presentation, interview skills)
- job application materials consisting of:
- examples of work (portfolio, showreel, audio materials as appropriate)
- a curriculum vitae (CV)
- examples of application letters
- references
- learners gather and prepare their material on seeking employment
- learners produce guide section on applying for jobs.

Assessment

Evidence for assessment

A range of assessment methods is recommended for this unit including group and teamwork as well as individual assessment. Where learners are working in pairs, groups or teams it is paramount that assignments are written very carefully to indicate to learners how individual assessments will be achieved with reference to prescribed evidence. Equally, there must be clear evidence of the work produced by individual learners for the purpose of the external verifier's visit. Any presentations done must be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification.

Evidence of achievement of learning outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 may be in various written formats such as reports and reviews. Learners can also present their research findings in the form of blogs, vlogs or articles. This would work effectively as evidence of understanding a range of media industries and their structure and ownership. There is also the opportunity to combine assessment tasks focusing on legal constraints with work on media regulation with learners submitting a series of short articles which highlight both legal and regulatory issues with reference to particular media products such as the release of a new film and its classification. Assessment through non-written evidence is also encouraged. Debates, audio or video diaries, the creation of personal web pages and directed discussion are all suitable methods. Presentations are also useful when providing assessment evidence for any of the areas in this unit. In these instances and where centres are using oral presentations, mock interviews and role plays, the evidence must be recorded for the external verifier.

Evidence of achievement of learning outcome 5 is likely to be prepared CVs, letters of application for specific jobs, portfolios and showreels. Mock interviews can also be used.

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.

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 the structure and ownership of the media sector accurately but in very general terms. However, the impact of ownership on production and distribution will not be considered. Learners will not, for instance, discuss whether this pattern of ownership makes global companies powerful but limits choice and diversity for the consumer. It is also expected that at this level learners will require guidance on seeking out and researching suitable media organisations. They will make some simple connections between the size and structure of the media organisation and the market trends which affect it.

P2: work on legal and ethical considerations will be brief with limited links to examples of media products created by professionals or by the learners themselves. References to ethical and legal issues will be basic.

P3: learners will know the regulatory bodies and what they are responsible for but there will be limited evidence of how regulation and deregulation affect media production, distribution and audience choice. Learners may refer to but will not elaborate on issues such as censorship and choice.

P4: learners will carry out basic research into the range of employment opportunities and job roles. Coverage will be limited with no indication of how job roles often overlap and interconnect, or without an understanding of the increasing need to be multi-skilled across the sector. In dealing with professional development learners will not show an understanding of the ways job roles evolve and develop, or of the need, therefore, to constantly update knowledge and skills. Descriptions of different opportunities for professional development will be basic and it is likely that learners may not go beyond what they have been told by their tutors or the findings presented by other learners.

P5: learners will have prepared basic personal career documents – for example, a brief CV containing information on the skills and education they have achieved, and a showreel of work to date – indicating little appreciation of matching their skills to the needs of the job and only the most elementary preparation of plans for a career in the media sector. Learners will create an application letter for a specific post indicating some matching of their skills to the needs of the job. When expressing themselves formally, learners' skills will be basic, typically with frequent errors of spelling and punctuation and occasional lapses in grammar and syntax.

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 use relevant terminology such as cross-media ownership and diversification appropriately to explain the structure and ownership of media companies. Examples will be carefully chosen to connect the ownership and structure of media organisations to opportunities for production and distribution, linking these to market trends. For example, a case study of television broadcasting in the UK today might focus on how digital, satellite and on-demand streaming services provision creates a competitive market for national broadcasters, including the BBC as a public service broadcaster.

M2: learners will take care to consider relevant constraints when engaged in practical work and will explain how and why particular legislation and ethical considerations need to be taken into consideration, pointing to relevant instances of where they have done so in their work. Where case studies are undertaken, learners will provide detailed illustrative examples to express their ideas and understanding.

M3: learners will explain with sound examples how regulatory bodies and their decisions have affected professional practice and will be able to discuss issues such as censorship and choice through application of appropriate examples, though these examples will not be elaborated or explicitly linked to the point they illustrate. Learners will also relate regulatory issues to decisions they have taken when planning and producing their own products. Evidence will be drawn from a good range of research resources.

M4: there will be evidence of independent research into the different job roles with detailed illustrative examples to communicate this understanding. Work on employment opportunities will also be able to express clearly where particular employment opportunities in the sector lie, again with the ability to select examples well in order to express this. Where learners are focusing on professional development they will express some of the difficulties and obstacles facing professionals when juggling employment demands with the need to update their knowledge and skills. Typically there will be a clear appreciation of the fact that networking and meeting people in the industry often consumes a considerable amount of time and financial resources. Learners will demonstrate a detailed understanding of professional practice through their own professional approach.

M5: career development material will be thorough, clearly presented, and some care, thought and personal reflection will be evident throughout the evidence presented. When expressing themselves formally, learners' skills will be sound with typically few lapses in grammar and syntax, though there might be some errors of spelling and punctuation.

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 present recent and relevant examples of changes in the organisational structures and ownership of the media sector and they will offer lucid and coherent arguments about the implications of these changes, as well as of media ownership generally. Learners will have conducted independent research using a wide range of resources and they will be confident in presenting the findings of their research. A case study of television broadcasting in the UK today might, for example, focus on how digital, satellite and on-demand streaming services have increased competition and the effect this has had on both the viewer and the industry.

D2: learners will give thorough consideration to relevant constraints when engaged in practical work and will give detailed explanations of how and why particular legislation and ethical considerations need to be taken into account, exemplifying these explanations with fully elucidated instances of where they have done so in their work. They will be able to discuss the relevance of legislation and ethical issues through specific examples and be able to assess them by, for example, relating them to emerging social concerns. These examples will be independently researched and closely related to contemporary media issues. For example, a case study might look at the expansion of 'reality television' as popular entertainment, considering the way it continually pushes the boundaries of taste and legality. Examples of how regulators have become involved will be given, and learners will draw out of their examples precisely what is about them that exemplifies the points they illustrate.

D3: learners will have a solid and extensive understanding of regulatory issues and the work of regulatory bodies and will reflect critically on the extent to which regulatory bodies are effective, giving precise illustrative examples to support their opinions. Learners will link regulatory decisions back to their own work, considering the issues (for example, censorship and self-censorship) which might extend or constrain their own creative expression. Learners will bring together ethical, legal and regulatory issues – for instance, how the board of examiners for film classification will need to balance legal requirements, questions of taste and decency, and commercial interests when considering a film before cinematic release.

D4: learners will carry out extensive and independent work when looking into employment opportunities. They will critically assess these opportunities by presenting arguments based on their contact with professionals and also their research from a wide range of resources. For example, when looking into the opportunities of freelance work learners will present justifications and supporting arguments which look at the pros and cons of this kind of work. Similarly, when demonstrating their understanding of professional development, learners will be able to weigh up the need to learn new skills against the difficulties maintaining workflow. Their understanding of how to enter a particular industry will be the result of an extensive range of independent research into qualifications and courses which will be subjected to considered arguments.

D5: learners will produce highly polished career development material to a near-professional standard – that is, they could realistically use the material to apply for a real job. Learners will relate their understanding of job roles to their intended career path, identify their skill gaps, suggest action plans to rectify them, and show how their personal skills can best be used in the industry. When expressing themselves formally, learners' skills will be good with typically quite complex sentence structures, very few grammatical errors and infrequent errors in spelling and punctuation.

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 – Structure and Ownership of the Media Sector	Learners have been commissioned by a publisher to produce a careers guide to the media sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research notes. • Meeting notes. • All raw illustrative material. • Drafts of copy and layouts. • Finished guide.
P2, M2, D2	Assignment 2 – Ethical and Legal Constraints within the Media Sector	As above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research notes. • Meeting notes. • All raw illustrative material. • Drafts of copy and layouts. • Finished guide.
P3, M3, D3	Assignment 3 – Regulation of the Media Sector	As above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research notes. • Meeting notes. • All raw illustrative material. • Drafts of copy and layouts. • Finished guide.
P4, M4, D4	Assignment 4 – Employment Opportunities and Job Roles in the Media Sector	As above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research notes. • Meeting notes. • All raw illustrative material. • Drafts of copy and layouts. • Finished guide.
P5, M5, D5	Assignment 5 – How to Apply for a Job	As above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research notes. • Meeting notes. • All raw illustrative material. • Drafts of copy and layouts. • Finished guide.

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
	Developing a Small Business in the Media Industries
	Working Freelance in the Creative Media Sector

Though there are links between this unit and other units that deal with understanding the media industries (Units 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) learners would not be expected to take any of those units alongside this one in the same Creative Media Production programme.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with freelance workers and local companies that are likely to employ them.

ScreenSkills, the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector, has a substantial section of its website dedicated to careers, including job descriptions.

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	analysing the media industries for research and investigating media ownership researching legal, ethical and regulatory issues in the media industry investigating ownership patterns and funding in the media industry
Reflective learners	evaluating report writing and assessment feedback to inform future progress dealing positively with praise and recommendations for improvement.

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 ...
Creative thinkers	preparing presentations and producing media products for assignment work on the media industry
Team workers	taking responsibility for own role within a presentation to the class as part of a group project
Self-managers	managing time and resources to produce written reports, dealing with and meeting deadlines effectively and seeking advice and support when needed.

● 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	writing reports and using research methods
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	report writing and using research methods for class presentations
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	exploring, extracting and assessing the relevance of information on websites
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	researching media industry information, collating gathered information and presenting findings
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	

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	working with a group for a presentation
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching information for reports or presentations
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing reports and completing classroom based written tasks.