Unit 13: Sports Journalism

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to be sports journalists and learners should be encouraged to integrate their passion and knowledge of specific sports, sports teams and sporting events into their sports articles.

Although developing skills in sports journalism is the focus of the unit, learners will need to understand how to use video and audio recording equipment. Video can be shot on a video camera, digital SLR camera or smartphone and audio can be recorded on a field recorder, laptop or smartphone. Learners should also have access to a tripod when shooting video.

Learners will also be expected to learn how to edit their sports articles together with using video editing, audio editing, word processing or desktop publishing software and, although there is no need for learners to develop advanced editing skills, a solid grasp of how to combine their content will enable learners to produce more engaging sports articles. However, centres do not have to purchase any software for this unit, as free editing software or apps will enable learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

Learners could use online web/app template-based software for sports articles for online media, however, articles for websites, apps, social media and blogs can also be created with word processing or desktop publishing software.

Learners will need to conduct interviews and incorporate quotations within their sports articles and should be encouraged to use school/college and local sporting teams and organisations as sources for interviews, such as players, coaches and fans.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A requires learners to explore a wide range of different types of sports journalism across broadcast, print and online platforms. Exploring different sports articles will give learners an insight into the concept of news values and an understanding of how sports articles are put together for specific audiences, which will inform their own work as sports journalists.

Learners must move beyond a recognition of the legal and ethical responsibilities of sports journalists to understand how and why sports journalists must work within specific laws and the effects of ethical and unethical sports reporting. Inviting a sports journalist who works for a local newspaper, radio station or sports club as a guest speaker is one way for learners to gain insight into how legal and ethical considerations shape the work of sports journalists.

Although learners should be encouraged to find their own examples of sports journalism to study, tutors will want to select some specific examples of sports articles from TV, radio, print and online media platforms to ensure that learners have access to an appropriate range of sports articles. Tutors may want to compile a digital library of TV, radio, print and online sports articles that is accessible to all learners.

Learning aims B and **C** involve learners producing their own sports articles for at least two different media platforms. Learners do not have to produce sports articles for every media platform, they can meet the Distinction assessment criteria by producing two sports articles for

different platforms and, therefore, if a centre doesn't have the resources to enable learners to produce sports articles for TV, radio, print and online media, they can still deliver this unit.

Although learning aim A will have introduced learners to the kind of material found within sports articles, learners will need to practise selecting and presenting information and material from appropriate secondary sources to include within their sports articles.

Learners must have opportunities to develop essential sports journalism skills, including interview techniques and sports writing skills. This is an area where an industry professional could be used to explain the established practices of sports journalists.

One way that learners can develop the practical skills of creating content for their sports articles – taking photographs, shooting video, recording audio and writing copy – and editing the content together is through tutor-led practical workshops where learners have the opportunity to experiment with different practical techniques for broadcast, print and online sports journalism. The resources section at the end of this Delivery Guide includes free online video, audio, desktop publishing and web-building software. It would, however, be beneficial for learners to have technical support available during these practical workshops.

Learners will require support to select suitable methods of recording the production process, i.e. evidence of the planning, secondary research, project management, content creation, editing and ongoing review and refinement of the sports articles.

Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Explore sports journalism	**A1** Sports journalism across media platforms **A2** Conventions of sports journalism **A3** Legal and ethical responsibilities of sports journalists	Written report or presentation comparing examples of sports journalism across different platforms.
B Develop skills in sports journalism	**B1** Using secondary research sources **B2** Sports journalism skills **B3** Recording and editing skills	Portfolio of development work, including evidence of: • planning • secondary research • project management • conducting interviews • creating content • the editing process • reviewing and refining outcomes. Sports articles for TV, radio, print and/or online.
C Produce sports articles for specific platforms	**C1** Planning sports articles **C2** Create content for sports articles **C3** Produce sports articles	

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed. The recommended assessment for this unit includes two assignments. The first assignment focuses on learning aim A and the second on learning aims B and C. Tutors should refer to the assessment guidance in the specification for specific detail, particularly in relation to the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

It is suggested that **learning aim A** is assessed through a written report or presentation. Within the report/presentation, learners must compare how examples of broadcast, print and online sports journalism create audience appeal through their adaptation of established conventions and news values. They will also need to explore the legal and ethical responsibilities of sports journalists. This includes comparing how examples of broadcast, print and online sports journalism comply with legal constraints. Learners should also compare how sports journalists meet the ethical responsibilities of sports journalism and the effect this has on specific sports, sportspeople and wider society.

Learners should carefully consider the examples of sports journalism that they use in their report/presentation. They must use at least one example of broadcast, print and online sports journalism. However, they may choose to draw on specific aspects of a wider range of examples providing that those examples cover broadcast, print and online sports journalism.

Learners should include the sports articles they are referring to in their assignment, either embedded into the report/presentation or in an appendix.

To support learners in their report writing, they should be encouraged to use headings, subheadings and screenshots of the specific aspect of the sports articles they are referring to.

Presentations should include the presentation slides and either a video or audio recording of the learner's presentation or the presenter's script.

In response to learning aims B and C, learners must produce sports articles for different media platforms. Feature stories for print and online should be approximately 800–1000 words, whereas news stories, match/event previews and reports will be shorter (approximately 400–500 words). Sports articles for TV and radio should be between 60 seconds for a news package and two minutes for a feature story. The final articles should be exported into an appropriate file format, e.g. .MP3 for audio, .MP4 for video, .PDF for print and online.

Learners will also need to produce a portfolio of development work, including planning documents, research findings, a bibliography of secondary sources with notes on the validity and reliability of sources, an assets table, evidence of project management, annotated photographs of creating content, e.g. shooting an interview, annotated drafts of written copy, annotated screenshots of the editing process and evidence of reviewing and refining the sports articles.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Introduction
Introduce this unit by showing learners examples of sports journalism from broadcast (TV and radio), print and online media platforms. Focusing on short, selected extracts that cover different sports and different platforms – such as extracts from a TV sporting event preview, radio news story, newspaper match report, online feature article and video documentary – will demonstrate the scope of the unit and highlight that this unit provides learners with the opportunity to be a sports journalist reporting on the sports that they are most passionate about.

Learning aim A: Explore sports journalism

- Learning aim A requires learners to compare examples of sports journalism across broadcast (TV and radio), print and online media. Learners should explore different types of sports journalism drawn from broadcast, print and online media platforms. Encouraging learners to collect their own examples of sports journalism will support independent learning and provide learners with valuable source material to use throughout the unit.

- As an introduction to A1 and A2, learners could draw on their experience as sports fans by creating short profiles of typical fans of specific sports teams and exploring what they watch, listen to and read for general information on that sport and sports league and more detailed information and insight on that sports club. This will help to highlight the different ways that each media platform covers sport and the different purposes and audiences they serve.

- A simulation exercise is a good way to develop learners' understanding of news values. Having established a set of criteria (news values) by which learners will decide if a sports story is newsworthy, learners work for different sports media outlets covering national, local and college media outlets across broadcast, print and online media to decide which five stories (drawn from the same 10 sports stories) they would select for their specific sports outlet and rank them in order of importance.

- Learners will have to break down examples of broadcast, print and online sports journalism to understand the similarities and differences between broadcast, print and online sports journalism. Comparing how the conventions of each platform and news values combine to create audience appeal in different ways in different examples will help to consolidate learners' understanding of what makes an effective sports article.

- For A3, learners will have to research copyright, defamation, libel and privacy laws, why they exist and how sports journalists should act to avoid breaking these laws. The ethical responsibilities of sports journalists should be explored through specific sports articles to help learners understand the effects of ethical and unethical sports reporting on specific sportspeople, specific sports and wider society. Inviting a sports journalist from a local newspaper, TV or radio station or sports club to talk to learners about their approach to the legal and ethical responsibilities that face sports journalists will provide learners with some insight into how specific legal and ethical considerations shape the work of sports journalists.

Learning aim B: Develop skills in sports journalism

- Learning aim B is focused on developing skills in sports journalism.

- For B1, learners will need to learn how to make effective use of secondary sources to gather information and material for their sports articles. Learners will benefit from practising extracting information and statistics from a data set - such as performance data from competing sportspeople or a sports team's performance data over time - and using appropriate software to represent the information and statistics as a graph, chart and/or graphic. Further practical exercises will reinforce learner understanding of how to use secondary research sources, such as using valid and reliable secondary sources to create a relevant data set and extract key information from the data (represented as a graph chart and/or graphic), find appropriate images, archive footage, facts/statistics and quotations for a sports article on the career of a well-known sportsperson.

- Interviewing is an essential aspect of sports journalism. A guest speaker, such as a local sports journalist, could talk to learners about their experience of interviews and interview techniques. The opportunity to interview the coach of a school/college sports team will provide learners with an opportunity to plan, conduct and record a sports interview. Reviewing the outcomes of the interview and selecting quotations for use in a print/online and a broadcast sports article will provide learners with an opportunity to attribute quotations in writing, use basic video or audio editing techniques to extract the selected responses and review their use of interview techniques.

- To develop sports writing skills for broadcast, print and online platforms, learners should initially be provided with appropriate examples of sports journalism to identify how sports articles are structured. Putting 'jumbled up' sports articles into an appropriate order using the inverted pyramid structure, adding a headline and identifying specific features of sports writing will provide learners with the basic understanding they will need to write their own sports articles. Providing learners with different topics for a sports articles, a choice of quotations and a word limit will provide a suitable context for learners to put their research and sports writing skills into practice.

- For B3, learners will need opportunities to create and edit material for sports articles using appropriate software.

  - For print and online sports articles, learners could write 600 to 700 word match reports on a match they have recently watched or played in and then edit each others' match reports to 400 words, making further edits to improve readability and correct obvious spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes. Practical workshops will then enable learners to experiment with taking photographs and using word processing, desktop publishing and/or website template-based software to combine their written match report with a headline, images and captions.

  - For video and audio sports articles, the practical workshops should focus on shooting video and recording audio that is appropriate to sports journalism, such as long shots of sporting action, medium close-ups of a sports reporter talking to camera, close-ups of sport equipment, vox pops of sports fans' opinions and ambient sound of sporting action. The editing workshops should provide learners with an opportunity to experiment with editing techniques including arranging, trimming, cutting and moving clips on a timeline, adding transitions and adding captions and graphics.

Learning aim C: Produce sports articles for specific platforms

- Learning aim C is where learners produce sports articles for more than one platform. In preparation for their summative assessment, learners could be given a mock brief in order to engage in each stage of the production process and gain the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to produce sports articles for specific platforms.

- For C1, learners will need to plan their sports articles in response to the mock brief. The process of generating ideas should be a collaborative one with learners originating, rejecting, combining and refining ideas with input from others until they have two final ideas for sports articles covering different platforms.

- The mock brief can be used as a stimulus for researching information and material, such as data, statistics, facts and quotations. Learners should assess the information based on relevance, accuracy, quality and recent developments in the relevant sport and learn how to compile a bibliography of internet sources. Learners could save material, such as images and archive video and audio footage, with appropriate file names into an appropriate folder structure and create an assets table that includes the name of each saved asset, its location, source and information regarding its use, e.g. copyright, permissions or acknowledgments.

- The mock brief will also allow learners to manage a sports journalism project and creating a Gantt chart, resource list and engaging in an ongoing process of review and refinement will provide evidence of project management skills and enable learners to improve outcomes.

- Planning and drafting the sports articles will inform learners of the content they need to create, i.e. the questions they need to ask interviewees, the photographs they need to take, the video they need to shoot and the audio they need to record of sporting action, sportspeople, sports arenas and sports fans.

- For C3, learners will need to edit their content together into sports articles for their respective platforms. Learners should be encouraged to use the same editing software that they used in the earlier practical workshops to further develop their editing skills and understanding of how to put a sports article together. Learners should gather feedback from members of the target audience, sports club/event representatives and/or their tutor and redraft their sports articles based on the feedback before exporting their final sports articles in an appropriate file format.

- The mock brief will also provide learners with an opportunity to experiment with ways to compile a portfolio of development work, e.g. planning documents, bibliography of research sources, assets table, project management documents, photographs of interviews, annotated drafts of sports articles and annotated screenshots of the editing process.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 3: Research Project in Sport
- Unit 4: Ethics, Behaviours and Values
- Unit 14: Marketing Communications.

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC International L3 Qualifications in Sport. Check the Pearson website at: (http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

Andrews, P – *Sports Journalism: A Practical Introduction (SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013)* ISBN 978-1446253380. Chapter 5 focuses on interviewing, Chapter 8 covers sports features and Chapter 9 covers broadcast media

Bradshaw, T – *Sports Journalism: The State of Play (Routledge, 2019* ISBN 978-1138583528. Chapter 5 covers ethics, regulation and law for sports journalists.

Lambert, C – *Digital Sports Journalism (Routledge, 2018)* ISBN 978-1138296213. Chapter 5 focuses on match reporting and Chapter 8 is devoted to sports journalism and data.

Videos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zbj9U8HLAe4 *Us and Them* is a video documentary on sports rivalries.

Websites

https://www.audacityteam.org *Audacity* is free audio editing software.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport *The BBC Sport Website* includes examples of written, video and audio sports journalism.

https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/uk/products/davinciresolve/ *Da Vinci Resolve* is a free online video editing application.

https://www.canva.com *Canva* is template-based software for creating graphics and custom data visualisations.

https://www.liverpoolfc.com/news/behind-the-badge *Behind the Badge* is a series of online feature articles.

https://www.lucidpress.com/pages/tour/free-desktop-publishing-software *Lucidpress* is free template-based desktop publishing software.

https://www.wix.com *Wix* is a free template-based website builder.

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.