WHAT CENTRES ARE ASKING ABOUT THE CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS IN MEDIA

Level 3 Unit 10 - Media Adaptations

1. The assessment evidence grid looks very busy. Given it must be achieved within 60 GLH can you give me some delivery tips for this unit?

You could frame this unit as a pitch or presentation by your learners to a media company who would like to launch a new film based on an existing media product or a media product that they have made in an earlier unit. They could start by describing how media adaptations have always had great success and use three examples such as the Harry Potter books, the Pirates of the Caribbean theme park rides and the Marvel Avengers comic books adaptations to film. The presentation could then outline their own idea that they have based on an existing creative product and follow this through with a treatment and storyboards. The presentation could be video recorded which would evidence the learners receiving and responding to feedback. After the presentation the learners could then re-edit their treatments and storyboards in light of the feedback they have received. They could also include a brief summary of what changes they have made and why these changes were needed.

2. What learning based activity would you use to introduce the central themes to this unit?

To introduce the themes of this unit you could choose a selection of media products that are adaptations and hold a discussion to see if learners know what their origins are. You could then extend this discussion to investigate why media institutions would want to adapt existing products ie they already own the rights to these products (Disney and Marvel comics for example), there is already widespread public knowledge about the product so large audiences are guaranteed (Sex in the City was a highly successful TV series before it was adapted into a film) and creating an original product is very hard and time consuming so the easier option is to adapt an existing product. Finally you could complete your introduction with a ‘Based on a True Story’ exercise where you choose a newspaper headline and brief article then get your learners to suggest how the story and headline could be adapted into a major motion picture.

3. P1 mentions a range of media adaptations. Can you scope this out a little more please? How many contexts are learners expected to investigate?

Learners will be expected to investigate a minimum of three contexts. These could include how the Pride and Prejudice book was adapted for the screen, how the Borrowers book was adapted for the animated film Arietty and how Indiana Jones films were adapted into the Young Indiana for a TV series.

4. When learners come to develop their one adaptation idea should it differ from learner to learner?

You can use the same source material that the learners could base their adaptations on but you should encourage learners to develop their creativity in as many directions as possible and remind them that there are a wealth of adaptation options that can incorporate storyboards such as films, videogames, animations, stage plays, TV shows and online shows for example.

5. Given the vocational rich nature of this unit how can employers be incorporated into the assessment of this unit?

Employers can be incorporated into this unit by inviting them into your centre to give feedback on the learner pitches and presentations. If it isn’t practical for employers to come in due to distance or work commitments an online Skype meeting could be arranged. To give this unit more of a vocational edge you could contact existing media producers and ask them for a commission to adapt one of their products.

6. When the pitch is carried out is there any credit given to the learner’s presentation skills?

Learners will only receive credit for their presentation skills in the sense that the clarity of their pitches enables them to successfully achieve the required assessment criteria. There is no actual credit given for presentation skills unrelated to the assessment criteria.
7. Given the nature of P5 how can the learner ensure all criteria are adequately covered?

To ensure that the P5 criterion is adequately covered learners should create a presentation aid such as a PowerPoint or Prezi which contains all of the required content as listed in the criteria, then present this to their audience. This could include written, audio and audio-visual elements which the learner feels will enhance their presentation.

8. Do you have any tips to create effective witness statements?

An effective witness statement should provide evidence that fully meets all aspects of the criteria. You should therefore write focussed comments such as ‘the candidate referred to aspects of their treatment such as storyline, character development and pace of editing when discussing their treatment’, rather than generalised statements such as ‘the candidate presented their idea well’.

Witness statements should also cover areas which were witnessed by the tutor, but the Moderator would be unable to see, for instance, learners’ contribution to the group work.

9. You mention in P4 the need to create 24 panels within a storyboard. What is the thinking behind this number? Can learners do more if they wish?

The thinking behind this number is to ensure that the learners have an idea that is substantial enough to be effectively presented to an audience. They can of course extend their storyboard beyond 24 panels.

10. D1 mentions producing panels that are generally of a high technical standard and quality. Can you explain what the moderator will be looking for in the evidence to confirm that this has moved on from M2?

To achieve P4 a moderator would expect competent visualisations, either hand drawn or computer generated. Technical information such as shot type and movement, duration and dialogue should also be included. Overall, the storyboard sequence should be logically ordered and structured.

In order to take this to M2 learners would have to produce a well-structured storyboard which demonstrates proficient pre-production skills, namely that the production crew would be able to follow the storyboard to create the final product.

In order to take this to D1 learners would need to produce panels which are of a high technical standard and quality with the finished panels illustrating the intentions of the adaptation effectively.

11. Learners need feedback from the potential investor. How can you ensure that the investor feedback is informative and appropriate?

To ensure effective feedback each element of the assessment criterion should be targeted and an appropriate commentary that includes positives, negatives and areas for improvement should be given. This could be achieved by producing a document, with relevant headings in order to guide the potential investor to ask pertinent and relevant questions.
12. If you are struggling to involve an employer in the delivery of this unit what contingency plans can be used as an alternative?

As a contingency you as the tutor could take on the role of employer. You could also ask other individuals who have media production experience but are not employers to fulfil this role. You could also go online and see if you could contact people who are part of media production forums that are willing to take on this role.

13. Are there any media adaptation contexts that are best avoided in this unit?

It would be best to avoid adaptations that have gone from other media formats into books or audio performances as these would be extremely difficult to storyboard unless learners are looking to turn the media product into a graphic novel.

14. Are there opportunities for this unit to be used in conjunction with other units in a project based approach?

This unit could be combined with the mandatory unit, which would serve as one of the sources for an adaptation. It could also be combined with the advertising unit, which would be a vehicle to promote the newly created adaptation. It could also be combined with the audio-visual production units and the graphic novel unit.

15. Are there any pitfalls in evidence generation that I need to be aware when advising learners on their approach to this unit?

Learners should be aware that their adaptation is fully feasible (especially to achieve M2). They should also thoroughly research whether the adaptation has already been made as if this is the case it would invalidate evidence for most of the unit.

Learners would need to ensure that their adaptation is sufficiently distinguishable from other media adaptations, particularly in instances where the chosen adaptation has already been made.

16. Are there any additional resources you would recommend for this unit?

I would recommend looking at resources that focus on what elements an adaptation would need to be successful such as successful storytelling.

www.thewritepractice.com/show-more/
www.skotos.net/articles/ELEMENTS.shtml and
www.movieoutline.com/articles/how-filmmakers-connect-with-audiences.html would all be helpful resources to enable learners to create adaptations that appeal to the audience.
CONTACT US
Staff at the OCR Customer Contact Centre are available to take
your call between 8am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.
We’re always delighted to answer questions and give advice.

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