

Cambridge Technicals

Media

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in Media **05387**

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma in Media **05389**

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Subsidiary Diploma in Media **05392**

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in Media **05395**

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in Media **05398**

OCR Report to Centres 2013-2014

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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Administration

Introduction

This is the second year of the new Cambridge Technical in Media, the post-16 Level 3 course, which has replaced the OCR Nationals qualification. Once again the qualification has attracted interest from those Centres who have migrated from traditional delivery of the BTEC vocational qualification and Centres who are delivering the Level 2 Cambridge Technical qualification who have seen the natural progression to the Level 3. Take up by new and existing Centres seems to be due, in part, to the simple and clear unit layout design, which Centres have found easy to follow, the engagement of transferable skills and the opportunity to combine units to deliver projects which embrace the vocational nature of the qualification.

A crucial element in the successful delivery of the qualification has been the role of the Visiting Moderator who has continued to work to support Centres through the visiting moderation model. The Subject Expert Visits delivered by the Chief Coordinator and designated Visiting Moderators, which were undertaken throughout the year were embraced by Centres eager to take up the qualification and the strong skills base that it offers their students. In addition Centres running the course have taken the opportunity to access the Advisory Visits offered by OCR this year. The caller ID system has been a valuable additional resource for Centres who received direct responses to their enquiries.

As the qualification continues into its second year, Centres are extending their delivery of units selecting from the range of forty-two available skills-based units. The Introductory Diploma and the Diploma continue to be popular with Centres, with more Centres also offering the Extended Diploma as a chosen pathway. Unit 1, which is the only mandatory unit, tends to be chosen by Centres as the natural starting point for learners.

Centres are encouraged to take the opportunity to link units within an overall project and it is good to see that this is a practice adopted by Centres delivering the qualification. It is also good to see that Centres have embraced the opportunity to invite practitioners in to deliver elements of the course and have used opportunities to place the units into 'live' scenarios where possible.

Resources

Experience would suggest that Centres on the whole, are well resourced and their equipment is relevant and current thereby providing learners with ample opportunities to fully develop their skills and understanding of media practice. Some Centres have based the delivery of specialist pathways on their available resources, teaching experience combined with the interests of learners.

Again there seems to be strong evidence that Centres are keen to develop relationships with external agencies where possible, such as established businesses, in order to create scenario based client briefs which support the vocational nature of the qualification and extend the range of learning opportunities available to learners.

Centres remain committed to keeping up-to-date with technological advances and continue to encourage learners to present their outcomes through a variety of digital resources, which has led to the presentation of professional looking portfolios of work that fully embrace the developments in technology. However, Centres are also reminded that the emphasis will always be on the evidence which should meet the grading criteria, and so typed portfolios are as acceptable as is more sophisticated online delivery of evidence.

Evidence

Centres continue to favour an approach to deliver two units simultaneously although a three or more unit approach has also been adopted where units are linked into a larger project. Centres have also tended to deliver Unit 1, as a theory based unit, which enables learners to gain a thorough understanding of the relevant terminology. Centres deliver this unit in conjunction with a practical unit, as this enables learners to develop theoretical and practical based skills in preparation for the delivery of further units. Centres have tended to move away from a 'long and thin' approach to the delivery of their units. Although this is an acceptable method of delivery, it does mean that Centres may have to choose a later date for their first Moderation Visit.

Specific unit enquiries have raised the following issues:

Unit 01: Introducing media products and audiences

This unit continues to present challenges and Centres are reminded that learners need to concentrate on one media institution and one media product – demonstrating evidence of one media product being carried through the learning outcomes.

Therefore P2/M1/D1; P3/M2/D2; P4; P5/M3 should be evidenced through one media product, this should be the same media product for all the above mentioned criteria. Centres should note that this media product should be produced by the institution the candidate has investigated in P1. So in practical terms, if in P1 the candidate investigated an institution, such as the BBC focusing on Radio 1 as the vehicle of their investigations, then for P2/M1/D1 the candidate should select a programme produced and broadcast by Radio 1. They could in this instance select any of Radio 1's Programmes.

Whilst Unit 1 is primarily a theory based unit enabling students to understand media institutions, how they work and the products they produce, learners should have the opportunity and are actively encouraged to evidence the grading criteria through a variety of mediums, (i.e. written presentations, verbal presentations, audio content, audio-visual content). In some Centres, Unit 1 has been approached as an active information website, blog or Prezi.

Unit 13: Planning and pitching a print-based media product

Centres requesting further clarification regarding the most appropriate approach are reminded that in LO1 P1 learners are required to select a 'print-based' media product and analyse similar existing products evidencing the criteria listed in the grading grid for P1. Examples of print-based media products could be a tabloid, Berliner, broadsheet, (a website based) e-magazine or magazine etc.

In LO2 P2 learners generate appropriate ideas for an original print-based media product evidencing the criteria listed in the grading grid for P2. Examples of how they could evidence this are mood boards, summary of ideas, spider diagrams.

In LO3 P3 learners select their two most appropriate ideas for original print-based products and create a proposal and produce sample pre-production material for each one of the two selected ideas, ensuring they evidence all the grading criteria as listed in the grading grid P3/M1/D1. The suggested sample material produced for each proposal are draft articles, draft layouts, plans for images needed, sample fonts/graphics/colours, test photography, house style – which could take the form of sample front covers, contents pages, mock ups etc.

At LO3 D1 at least one of the two proposals created for P3/M1/D1 needs to contain further suggested development possibilities for the print-based media product, for example they could plan to develop frequency of the print media product into a daily, weekly or monthly run, if it is a paper-based print media product they may plan to develop it into a web-based e-magazine.

Centres are encouraged where possible to support learners in the production of evidence which best reflects industry practices and formats, for instance in LO5 P5 d) learners are required to produce a budget; this could be set by the Centre based on the materials, wages of the personnel, hire cost of equipment etc. Alternatively they could follow current market prices to inform the budget that they are creating. The budget will involve all the costs related to the production of the final media product.

Unit 34: Web authoring and design.

It is not an expectation within the intentions of the unit that learners create PHP and/or scripting for their final website, although we would not discourage learners from creating PHP and/or scripting for their final website. However, learners should, where possible, apply an industry standard method by which the layout for all pages is standardised and demonstrates their use of style sheet language, theme or template.

Combination of Units – Centres are encouraged to link units together, in a way, which best suits their resources and learning style. An example could be Unit 40 (UK Film Studies) where learners plan and pitch a film production idea with learners then producing the idea in Unit 41 (Production and post-production in film). There is also a link with Unit 50 (Sound for media products), in which the learners can produce the soundtrack for the production planned in Unit 40 and produced in Unit 41. Alternatively Unit 50 (Sound for media products) in which the learners can produce a soundtrack could be linked with Unit 66 (Animation Production).

Where learners have developed pre-production material in one unit it is possible to utilise these pre-production materials across the linked units as long as the learner has contextualised the pre-production materials and met the grading criteria for each of the individual units they are intended for. The Moderator will expect to see the relevant pre-production materials, which meet the grading criteria for each unit in each of the learners' unit portfolios. Risk assessments can be based on a Centre's blank pro forma document. Where a learner has already produced a risk assessment in one unit for a location it is possible to use this risk assessment for another unit as long as the risk assessment is contextualised, meets the grading criteria and identifies the relevant risks for the production the learners are undertaking within this new unit.

Centres may also find it beneficial to take the option of an early Moderation Visit and to utilise the two visits, which are available to them in the Academic Year, particularly where a linked delivery of units is intended, as it is important that moderators are provided with sufficient evidence to support all assessment criteria for each of the units covered. In instances where a 'project approach' is possible and provides an effective way to deliver more than one unit, it should be possible for moderators to easily access evidence for each of the assessment criteria for each unit. One way to achieve this could be the use of clear 'signposting' within the evidence provided, particularly if this is supported by a clear system which identifies where the evidence for each assessment criteria can be located. This should also clearly identify the centre assessor's decisions regarding how the learner has achieved each of the learning outcomes. Signposting is good practice even in instances where the unit has been approached in isolation.

Group Work – As many of the practical units naturally lend themselves to group work, Centres are reminded that evidence of the individual candidate's contribution to the group work must be clearly evidenced through the use of methods such as detailed witness statements, audio-visual and/or audio recordings, particularly if they are working as members of a production group. Centres cannot rely on implicit evidence for an individual learner as this will not be accepted by the Visiting Moderator. Indeed work for moderation must be available for the Visiting Moderator to view, as they cannot consider work, which is not accessible at moderation.

In these instances it is important that completed unit recording sheets must indicate the Centre's assessment decision as to why the candidate has achieved a particular grade. The Centre must indicate where the evidence can be found in the candidates' portfolio. Unit recording sheets can be completed manually. Video evidence would be acceptable as a means of evidence as long as it meets the learning outcome/s and grading criteria/s for the unit in question and is accessible to the Visiting Moderator. Video evidence could be supported by a witness statement if there are areas of the Candidate's work which is not evidenced in the video evidence.

When producing material for an original media product, the material produced by learners must be evidenced in the form of material they have produced, for example in the instance of an audio-visual product the material could include rushes of the footage and/or audio samples/tracks. If the learner is producing audio samples/tracks, these must be evidenced with the intended visuals for the audio samples/tracks); in the instance of a print media product, learners must evidence these with print samples etc. As the material produced provides evidence of the learners contribution to the production process and will therefore depend on the role the learner undertook in the production, particularly if they are working in a group, It is important that learners produce material, which is must be evidenced separately from the final outcome. This predominantly affects units 14, 17, 20, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50, 52, 62, 63, 65 and 66 where learners are required to produce materials for use in a range of media products as specified by the unit.

In general Centres have presented evidence for the Visiting Moderator, which is accessible and signposted, although it continues to be an important aspect of the presentation of work to the Visiting Moderator and Centres are encouraged to look to ways in which this can be improved such as through the use of screenshots to evidence learners working in a practical capacity. Screen shots could also be used to provide evidence of candidates using desktop publishing tools, as learners can use annotations to provide evidence of their contribution to the group work. Production diaries are another effective way for learners to evidence their contribution and to also ensure that they meet the specific learning outcomes, as they can demonstrate their understanding and application of safe working practices. The Witness Statement continues to be an effective way in which the tutor can verify the contribution of the individual learner, although this could be produced as an audio-visual, audio recording rather than paper based evidence if the tutor wished.

Assessment Practice

Centres are continuing to get to grips with the hurdle grid, however some Centres are still following a 'best fit' approach which means that in this instance some Visiting Moderators have had to withdraw units in instances where learners have not demonstrated that all the assessment criteria have been approached and/or presented at moderation, with Centres resubmitting work to be moderated at the next Moderation Visit. Essentially the Hurdle Grid means that the pass grade can only be awarded if all parts of the pass assessment criteria are present. The merit grade can only be awarded if all parts of the pass and merit assessment criteria have been met by learners and a distinction grade awarded to learners only when all parts of the pass, merit and distinction assessment criteria have been met.

It is advisable that Centres make use of clear target and completion dates, as a way in which to ensure that adequate time is available for the completion of all assessment criteria, and assist those learners who are aiming to achieve the merit and distinction criteria.

It is suggested that Centres would benefit from an early Moderation Visit, as in some instances Centres have elected to undertake both Moderation Visits later in the Academic Year and this can leave little or no time in which to ensure that all the assessment criteria are present for the Visiting Moderator.

Internal Standardisation

Centres need to ensure that they continue to strengthen their internal standardisation systems, in order to provide adequate support to Centre assessors. Moderators in particular have commented that in some instances Centres are using more consistent assessment as required by the qualification; however internal standardisation is a process which continues to require an accurate and consistent approach, particularly where there is more than one member of staff in a Centre.

Records

On the whole Centres appear to be maintaining effective records and making good use of Interchange for submission of grades. Centres are reminded that once a visit date has been arranged with the Visiting Moderator, grades should be entered onto Interchange at least two-weeks before the date of the Moderation Visit. It is not possible for Moderators to undertake visits where an entry has not been made on Interchange.

Centres are reminded that grades should be entered onto Interchange at least two-weeks before the planned date for the Moderation Visit, in order to make it possible for the Visiting Moderator to select the sample of work.

Centres are reminded that whilst the Visiting Moderator has requested a sample of learners' work for the Moderation Visit, it is a requirement that the full range of learners' work entered for moderation must be easily accessible in the room where the Moderation Visit is scheduled to take place.

Centres are also reminded of the importance of taking full advantage of their two free moderation visits, available to them each academic year, as these visits allow for useful feedback from the Visiting Moderator.

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