

Cambridge TECHNICALS LEVEL 3

DIGITAL MEDIA

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Unit 25

Research for product development

A/615/1707

Guided learning hours: 120

Version 2 February 2019 - references to NRS changed to PAMCo

LEVEL 3

UNIT 25: Research for product development

A/615/1707

Guided learning hours: 120

Essential resources required for this unit: none

This unit is externally assessed by an OCR set and marked examination.

UNIT AIM

Whether a digital media product is produced by a large media company or an independent organisation, research informs the entire production process. The most successful products, along with those that audiences consume every day have been created using a body of knowledge at the planning, production and testing stages.

The aim of the unit is to allow learners to develop the skills to carry out research to underpin all the production processes involved in the creation of a digital media product and to understand the impact of the research findings on those processes. Learners will investigate media organisations and the digital media products that they produce. Learners will develop an understanding of how to source relevant information in preparation for the production of an audio-visual media product. They will develop skills in primary and secondary research that will allow them to explore the ways in which media production teams source, generate, and evaluate the usefulness and validity of information that will be used for productions. Learners will explore ways in which the pre-production of a digital media product is informed by relevant research.

TEACHING CONTENT

The teaching content in every unit states what has to be taught to ensure that learners are able to access the highest grades. Anything which follows an i.e. details what must be taught as part of that area of content. Anything which follows an e.g. is illustrative.

For externally assessed units, where the content contains i.e. and e.g. under specific areas of content, the following rules will be adhered to when we set questions for an exam:

- a direct question may be asked about unit content which follows an i.e.
- where unit content is shown as an e.g. a direct question will not be asked about that example.

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
<p>1. Be able to conduct research for a digital media production</p>	<p>1.1 Research the types of products made by a specific digital media institution, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • film (e.g. period drama, horror, thriller, action/adventure) • TV (e.g. news, documentary, game show, drama) • games (e.g. FPS, MMORPG, strategy/action) • animation (e.g. action/adventure, storytelling) • print and web (e.g. magazine) • audio (e.g. radio drama, documentary, book) <p>Investigate codes and conventions of different types of products, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technical conventions of audio-visual products (e.g. mise en scène, camera work, editing techniques) 	<p>1.1 When introducing this learning unit, teachers should identify the role of the researcher across the production process and how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disseminate research material • prepare material • organise material <p>Skills required for the research role such as identifying contacts, monitoring media sources and networks, using social media archives and content libraries.</p> <p>Tutors should expand on work completed in Unit 1 to allow learners to understand cross- media opportunities of digital media products. Tutors should discuss genre and form in order to allow learners to understand differences, similarities and</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • house style and layout conventions of digital publishing products • conventions of set design (e.g. costumes, locations, language, props) • style of presentation, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ presenter led (e.g. looking at the choice of presenter, expert opinion, mode of address, factual v. fictional) ○ adaptation (e.g. period drama, novel to TV or film, creation of verisimilitude) ○ dramatic characterisation (e.g. historical context, choice of actors, narrative, genre, representation of socioeconomics) ○ voiceover (e.g. mode of address, diegetic, non-diegetic) <p>1.2 Use quantitative and qualitative data as a primary source of information, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interviews, e.g. structured, semi-structured, vox pops, recording of response 	<p>links between products. Technological and institutional convergence should be taught in relation to investigating company structure and digital distribution.</p> <p>Conventions should be revised for particular genres of digital media products to enable learners to structure their research into the brief.</p> <p>Tutors will guide learners how to research the different types of presentation and how these will best suit the purpose and audience of the production.</p> <p>Mode of address should be covered in terms of exposition and how audiences are engaged (e.g. teacher to pupil, parent to child, peer to peer).</p> <p>Tutors should ensure learners understand the best practice of presentation style according to the form and genre of the product. Use of case studies will support this and different texts such as documentary, period drama, talk show, soap opera and news/current affairs should be discussed.</p> <p>1.2 Tutors will encourage learners to build on work completed in Unit 2. Tutors should recap work on primary sources of information and potentially use mock case studies before the release of the brief to conduct audience research (e.g. news and topical affairs such as the EU referendum).</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus groups, e.g. appropriate sampling, locations, recording of response • questionnaires, e.g. online surveys, email responses, paper-based <p>Consider, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • validity and reliability, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ primary v. secondary definers for documentary and news ○ expert v. public opinion ○ cross-checking accuracy of information • usefulness, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ appropriateness to brief ○ time constraints • confidentiality of information, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ data releases ○ consent forms ○ privacy ○ indemnity <p>1.3 Use secondary sources of information, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audience analysis and measuring success of media products, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TV BARB ○ print PAMCo (formerly NRS) ○ film IMDB ○ radio RAJAR 	<p>Tutors should encourage learners to look at a range of products and think about how primary audience data might be used (e.g. news reports, documentary, soap opera) to inform how the production of real media products are developed by production companies and personnel (e.g. screenplays, magazine articles, book plots, video game narratives, documentaries).</p> <p>1.3 Tutors should build on work from Unit 1 and 2 and encourage learners to look at the ways they can gain information. Tutors should expand on how learners can use information from media research organisations such as those listed in the content to inform their understanding of trends in the industry.</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • databases, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ research by institutions (e.g. BFI) ○ online reviews ○ previous demographic analysis by media institutions • public archives, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Archives ○ libraries ○ local historical archives • press archives, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ news libraries ○ open source materials • content and stock media libraries, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ visual ○ sound libraries in UK ○ PA ○ Reuters ○ Getty ○ BBC motion picture • online social media libraries, prosumer web libraries (e.g. Flickr) • existing media (e.g. newspapers and magazines, books, documentaries, other audio-visual media) • online resources (e.g. social media, web articles, reviews, fan forums) • fan conventions (e.g. public meetings such as Comic Con) 	<p>Tutors should encourage learners to use public library archives (e.g. historical and press archives) to gain information.</p> <p>Tutors should encourage learners to visit important libraries and stock archives in the UK, including PA, Reuters, Getty, BBC, and BFI. Existing media texts should be considered as important ways to gain information that can be used.</p> <p>Online resources that learners will use every day, such as Twitter, Flickr and Instagram, should be re-evaluated as sources of information that can be used to inform the production of media products.</p> <p>Tutors should encourage learners to think about the accuracy of information that they have sourced. They should complete tasks that explore cross referencing of information and this can be done.</p> <p>For example, in terms of secondary information gathered from news media sources, this can be looked from a starting point of news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1967) and the context that the original information was gathered. The style of presentation and bias of the institution will also need assessment.</p>

Learning outcomes The Learner will:	Teaching content Learners must be taught:	Exemplification
	<p>Consider, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • validity and reliability (e.g. expert v. public opinion, media/political bias) • usefulness (e.g. appropriateness to brief, time constraints) • ensuring accuracy, reliability and validity of information (e.g. expert v. public opinion) <p>1.4 Collate, store, analyse, catalogue and reference information and data, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse (e.g. uncover patterns, assess market and audience trends, make correlations) • storing information in an online database (e.g. Capsio, Zoho) • sharing research information for pre-production and production planning with colleagues and stakeholders (e.g. collaborative and online project areas such as BaseCamp, Huddle, make tables, multiple criteria and graphical information) • cataloguing information for use in projects (e.g. ResearchCatalogue.net, National Archives) • referencing information (e.g. Worldcat, National Archives, Refme) 	<p>1.4 Tutors will need to demonstrate to learners how research can be catalogued and referenced correctly so that it can easily be accessed for planning and used in productions.</p> <p>The link between referencing and production credits will be needed.</p> <p>Tutors should show the National Archives.gov link and how different media are organised and the processes involved with accessing information.</p> <p>It is likely that some material will require a log in and password entitlement, potentially via subscription/open source access.</p>

Learning outcomes The Learner will:	Teaching content Learners must be taught:	Exemplification
<p>2 Be able to use research to inform pre-production and planning</p>	<p>2.1 Complete the initial planning activities prior to pre-production, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose of production, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ inform ○ entertain ○ promote ○ educate • target audience (e.g. demographics, ABC1 data, age, occupation, hobbies/interests, distribution) • media representations of ethnicity, gender, age, ability/disability, class, region • deadline for delivery (e.g. due date, schedule of activities, main tasks) • proposal (e.g. ideas for an original production, treatment, timescales and key milestones) • distribution and marketing (e.g. market positioning, competitors in sector) • budgeting and financing (e.g. funding, potential sponsorship opportunities, sourcing equipment, costing of resources, cost of production personnel) • legal, ethical and moral (e.g. media regulation, reces, potential risk assessment release forms, representation, protection). 	<p>2.1 Tutors should ensure learners know how to use their research undertaken to inform initial planning about gaps in the market for a new production, ways in which audiences can be reached and current trends.</p> <p>Target audience should be considered and methods of distribution should be discussed based on research into institutions and other media products.</p> <p>This should inform learners on how to develop a plan for a production based on data analysis. Ways in which finance can be raised to create a media product should be encouraged both as part of the research and planning process.</p> <p>Budgeting and financing should be covered by tutors in depth in terms of how much it costs to finance a media production. All areas should be addressed and methods of funding for commercial products should be investigated based on real case studies.</p>

Learning outcomes The Learner will:	Teaching content Learners must be taught:	Exemplification
	<p>2.2 Identify production processes involved in the creation of digital media products, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • story and narrative development (e.g. against standard structures such as Todorov, Propp, Barthes, postmodern narratives) • pitching of proposal and ideas (e.g. what should be in the proposal, format of pitch, justification of characterisation and narrative) • characters/presenters, locations (e.g. studio, set, outdoor) <p>2.3 Analyse legal, ethical and moral implications for a planned production, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal considerations, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ownership of information (e.g. accreditation, understanding permissions) ○ intellectual property (e.g. copyright, clearance, royalties for images, sound and use of Creative Commons) • media regulation and codes of practice should be considered and ideas justified against guidance, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IPSO ○ BBFC ○ Ofcom ○ ASA 	<p>2.2 Tutors will set learners tasks to understand how the production of digital media products has been informed by researching existing texts. This should be across all styles of fictional and non-fictional. It should take into consideration traditional media and postmodern media (e.g. Deadpool, Black Mirror).</p> <p>Pitching of productions should be backed up by secondary and primary data. As part of this learners should be encouraged to write briefs and proposals for a concept which may include justification of choices, presenter/host, production of a commentary or voiceover, writing transcript of element/pilot of the show.</p> <p>2.3 Teaching of ethics procedures will need to be in place at an institutional level to ensure the protection of vulnerable groups and that confidentially is respected.</p> <p>Tutors should encourage learners to recap on their understanding of copyright law when accessing image archives and stock galleries. Tutors should access learning materials that will allow learners to consider how sources of information are regulated by codes of practice. This will build on work completed across the specification.</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
	Ethical, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protection of vulnerable people (e.g. release forms and anonymity, use of personal social media accounts, data protection) Moral, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of regulation over online material (e.g. duty to protect against desensitisation or normalisation of behaviours) 	
3 Be able to apply research findings to the proposed production processes	3.1 Identify the roles required for the creation of the planned production and the tasks they carry out, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research assistant • Scriptwriter • Commissioning editor • Storyboard assistant • Director • Producer • Production assistant • Location scout • Production team • Multi-disciplinary converging roles 3.2 Use the research findings to support the planned production, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication and dissemination of research findings to appropriate team members • requirements for a specified location • production methods • timescales and scheduling 	3.1 Tutors should ensure that learners know the different types of roles involved in the production process and understand their accountability and skills required to successfully carry out that role in a production. 3.2 Tutors should ensure learners know the processes involved in the production of a media product that they have researched. Learners should understand that the media product they are creating is done in specific methods. They should explore and identify the strengths and weaknesses for the particular product.

Learning outcomes The Learner will:	Teaching content Learners must be taught:	Exemplification
	<p>3.3 Identify the production paperwork for the production development activities, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contracts and fees • model and actor releases • copyright permissions • recces and risk assessments • storyboard, scripts • making transcripts of interviews • producing still images and scanning material at locations <p>3.4 Plan for the wider considerations, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contingencies, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ working around problems and how to solve anticipated occurrences likely on productions (e.g. equipment failure, crew fail to show up, weather problems, breakdown of vehicles) • troubleshooting, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ special effects (e.g. wirework considerations, green screen, lighting, camera rig, spatial considerations, use of sound and recording of sound) ○ equipment testing at location ○ environmental conditions 	<p>3.3 Tutors will guide learners in identifying the correct pre-production documentation required to create a media product. Tutors will encourage learners to build on skills developed in Unit 2 in order to inform planning materials.</p> <p>Tutors will develop understanding of how learners can generate material on location. This will build on research techniques used earlier. Tutors should explore a range of scenarios including productions set in a variety of time periods and locations, as this will have an impact on the documentation required.</p> <p>3.4 Tutors will develop learners' understanding of contingency planning and the research that can be undertaken to investigate issues that occur when filming a production.</p> <p>Documentation should cover all potential problems.</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
<p>4 Be able to use research findings to promote the digital media product</p>	<p>4.1 Use market research findings to support the launch and advertising for the new media product, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advertising (e.g. below the line and above the line methods, individual v. mass marketing methods, audience participation) • marketing mix (e.g. people, product, price, promotion, place, process and physical evidence against for specific product and genre) • social media marketing (e.g. how to target audiences in the digital age, use of social media products as part of teaser, pre-release, launch date) • launch campaign and scheduling (e.g. seasonal events) 	<p>4.1 Tutors will develop learners' understanding of advertising methods. Above the line mass marketing in the digital age to target wider audiences and below the line to target the individual.</p> <p>The marketing mix can be referenced with specific reference to case studies such as Hollywood blockbusters vs. niche markets (e.g. independent films). Each aspect of the marketing mix should be explored in the digital age based on contemporary products.</p> <p>Social media campaigns should be investigated before the launch of the digital media product. BBC and ITV act as good case studies to engage audience in terms of programme launch. This happened with The Voice and The X-Factor, whereby social media was used to publicise the judges and updates. In terms of film, social media was utilised by Lionsgate to offer games that encouraged fans to engage personally with the characters and actors.</p> <p>Seasonal holiday tie-ins should also be investigated in terms of how marketing is tied into annual traditions such as Christmas, Easter and Halloween. For example, Paranormal Activity: Ghost Dimension was released in time for Halloween 2016.</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
<p>5 Know how feedback is used within research techniques</p>	<p>5.1 Source feedback based on the medium and distribution of the digital media product, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted primary research, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ questionnaire (e.g. types of quantitative and qualitative questions, advantages, disadvantages) ○ screen tests (e.g. how to conduct and organise) ○ focus groups (e.g. who to invite and process to organise) ○ online surveys (e.g. styles, sources) ○ social media <p>5.2 Evaluate the ways in which feedback can be used, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to inform changes to the production (e.g. pickups, re-edits, changes to soundtrack, changes to narrative) <p>To inform research on future product developments against, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose (e.g. criteria, commercial, PSB ethos, scheduling) • audience (e.g. demographic consideration and representation) • reception of material (e.g. success and measurement) 	<p>5.1 Structure of feedback needs to be looked at by tutors. The format/source of the feedback should be evaluated by learners and tutors should encourage learners to look at a variety of methods in relation to case studies provided. This can be aided by industry professionals on the formative ways in which they gain audience feedback (initial reception via Twitter, Facebook).</p> <p>5.2 Tutors should use case studies to help learners understand how digital concepts can be redeveloped or re-shaped. Learners could complete tasks to re-write articles or plots for television programmes. Tutors could use a previous production by learners in order to demonstrate how further feedback might alter content.</p> <p>Tutors should revisit work that encourages learners to assess how far products are fit for purpose. This can include investigating an existing product and looking at this in terms of how it fits in with the original ethos of the institution (e.g. PSB and Reithian ideals).</p>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content	Exemplification
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:	
		<p>Tutors should also encourage learners to revisit organisations that analyse media consumption. Learners should be familiar with the methods used by organisations such as BARB, PAMCo and RAJAR that analyse audience patterns of behaviour.</p> <p>Tutors should also allow learners to investigate the way media producers use reviews, fan sites, social media and forums to give commentary on the success and enjoyment of a media product (e.g. Rotten Tomatoes, Metacritic).</p>

LEARNING OUTCOME (LO) WEIGHTINGS

Each learning outcome in this unit has been given a percentage weighting. This reflects the size and demand of the content you need to cover and its contribution to the overall understanding of this unit. See table below:

LO1	15-25%
LO2	12-18%
LO3	12-18%
LO4	12-18%
LO5	12-18%

ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

All LOs are assessed through conducting a research activity, which will be detailed in a pre-release brief, available annually prior to the academic year in which the relating examination series are held. Candidates will answer an externally-set written examination paper, worth a maximum of 80 marks and 2 hours in duration.

Candidates should refer to their notes of research findings (recorded in the pre-release booklet) and these must be submitted with the completed question paper at the end of the examination.

18 GLH of the 120 GLH have been dedicated to supervised write-up time for the controlled notes, detailing the candidates' research finding for use in the examination and submission at the end of the examination, with their completed question paper.

Independent research activity time is not included in the 120 GLH unit time. Independent candidate research time is permitted, and there are no limits applied to the independent research activities that candidates may choose to complete, in line with pre-release brief.

During the external assessment, learners will be expected to demonstrate their understanding through a series of questions that require them to use research findings and justify sources and information (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4), know how feedback is used within research techniques (LO5). Questions within the question paper will require candidates to analyse, assess and evaluate how research findings should be used.

SYNOPTIC ASSESSMENT

Ten per cent of the marks in each examination for this unit will be allocated to synoptic application of knowledge. There will be questions that draw on knowledge and understanding from Unit 1: Media products and audiences and/or Unit 2: Pre-production and planning and/or Unit 6: Social media and globalisation that then has to be applied in the context of this unit.

MEANINGFUL EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT - a requirement for the Foundation Diploma, Diploma and Extended Diploma (Tech Level) qualifications

The 'Diploma' qualifications have been designed to be recognised as Tech Levels in performance tables in England. It is a requirement of these qualifications for centres to secure for every learner employer involvement through delivery and/or assessment of these qualifications.

The minimum amount of employer involvement must relate to at least one or more of the elements of the mandatory content. This unit is mandatory in the Digital Media Practitioner for Product Development pathway.

Eligible activities and suggestions/ideas that may help you in securing meaningful employer involvement for this unit are given in the table below.

Please refer to the *Qualification Handbook* for further information including a list of activities that are not considered to meet this requirement.

Meaningful employer engagement	Suggestion/ideas for centres when delivering this unit
1. Learners undertake structured work-experience or work-placements that develop skills and knowledge relevant to the qualification.	Learners can undertake work experience as a research assistant with a local audio-visual media production company for this unit in order to gain practical experience that may be relevant to the brief. Any opportunities for learners to research into the production of a real media text would contribute to the skillset of all LOs for this unit. Tutors could contact local production companies and ask if there are any projects that would allow for learners to contribute to the research and pre-production processes.
2. Learners undertake project(s), exercises(s) and/or assessments/examination(s) set with input from industry practitioner(s).	
3. Learners take one or more units delivered or co-delivered by an industry practitioner(s). This could take the form of master classes or guest lectures.	This unit could feature input from industry practitioners in the form of a master class in terms of the qualities and skills required for successful research to take place. Learners might also be given a dummy brief by industry practitioners as part of a workshop to introduce the importance of research.
4. Industry practitioners operating as 'expert witnesses' that contribute to the assessment of a learner's work or practice, operating within a specified assessment framework. This may be a specific project(s), exercise(s) or examination(s), or all assessments for a qualification.	

You can find further information on employer involvement in the delivery of qualifications in the following documents:

- [Employer involvement in the delivery and assessment of vocational qualifications](#)
- [DfE work experience guidance](#)

To find out more

ocr.org.uk/digitalmedia

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Alternatively, you can email us on **vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk**



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