CREATIVE iMEDIA

INCLUDED ON THE
KS4 PERFORMANCE TABLES

Specification

Cambridge OCR Level 1/Level 2

Cambridge National in

Creative iMedia

J834

Version 7 (First teaching September 2022)

ocr.org.uk/cambridgenationals

Cambridge Nationals

CAMBRIDGE OCR

About our new name

As of September 2025, our name is Cambridge OCR.

Students who sat an exam **in summer 2025** will receive a Cambridge OCR branded exam certificate (our new brand), which will be the same for all future exam series.

You'll continue to see the OCR or Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations name while we work to update our material to our new name, Cambridge OCR. This will take some time, and you can still access all up-to-date qualification resources and materials via Teach Cambridge.

Important: We'll keep the OCR/Oxford Cambridge and RSA name on existing teaching resources while the content of these remains applicable to the specification being taught. **New and refreshed** resources will be produced using the Cambridge OCR name/logo.

Are you using the latest version of this specification?

The latest version of our specifications will always be on our website and may differ from printed versions. We will inform centres about changes to specifications.

Tell us what you think

Your feedback plays an important role in how we develop, market, support and resource qualifications now and into the future. We want you and your students to enjoy and get the best out of our qualifications and resources, but to do that we need your honest opinions to tell us whether we're on the right track or not.

You can email your thoughts to support@ocr.org.uk or visit our feedback page to learn more about how you can help us improve our qualifications.

Designing and testing in collaboration with teachers and students

Helping young people develop an ethical view of the world

Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) are part of everything we do

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Specification updates

Key changes have been listed below:

Section	Change	Version and date issue
Qualification overview Section 6.1.1: Centre and teacher/ assessor responsibilities Section 6.2: Requirements and guidance for delivering and marking the OCR-set assignments Section 6.3: Feedback Section 6.4.4: Reattempting work before submitting marks to OCR	Updated to clarify information relating to NEA resubmissions.	Version 2 (May 2022)
Section 6.5: Moderating NEA units	Updated information on how to submit moderated units.	
Section 6.6: Resubmitting moderated work to OCR to improve the grade Section 6.7: Recording feedback and decisions	New sections added to clarify information relating to NEA resubmissions.	
Section 7: Administration	Updated information to clarify administrative arrangements.	
Appendix A: Guidance for the production of electronic evidence	Updated information related to 'Submit for Assessment'.	
All	Weblinks updated.	
Section 2.1: Qualification overview	Updated to clarify information relating to Availability and Assessment method/model.	Version 3 (August 2023)
Section 3.2: Language	Updated to clarify this qualification is available in English only and all candidate work must be in English.	
Section 3.3: Availability	New section added to clarify qualification is not available in Wales or Northern Ireland.	
Section 6.1.1 Centre and teacher/ assessor responsibilities	Updated to clarify information relating to the availability of sample assessment material for practice purposes.	
Section 6.1.1 Centre and teacher/ assessor responsibilities Section 6.2 Requirements and guidance for delivering and marking the OCR set assignments. Section 6.2.1 Ways to authenticate work Section 6.2.2 Plagiarism	Updated to include information relating to AI Use in Assessments	
Section 6.2 Requirements and guidance for delivering and marking the OCR set assignments	Updated to clarify information relating to availability of live assignments and making entries.	
Section 7.5.2 Making final unit entries	Updated to clarify information about making unit entries.	
Appendix A	Updated standard file formats table	

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Section	Change	Version and date issue
2.1 Qualification at a glance	Updated information on terminal assessment and exam resits	Version 4 May 2024
4.1.1 Terminal Assessment Rule	New section added to provide information on the terminal assessment rule	
5.1 Overview of the assessment	Updated to clarify the terminal rule	
6.3.7 Presentation of the final piece of work	Updated information on submission of work for moderation	
7.2 Collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system	New section added to provide information on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system	
7.3 Entry rules, including Terminal Assessment	Updated to clarify information relating to entry rules and terminal assessment	
7.6 Making final entries	Updated to clarify use of component codes and digital submission of work for moderation	
All	Updated information to ensure compliance with new JCQ requirements and guidance.	Version 5 (September 2025)
All	References to 'Command words' have been replaced with 'Command and/or descriptor words', to cover both types of assessments. These are now called Descriptor Words for NEA units.	
Section 2	Included the lifespan for each set assignment and that live dates are shown on the front cover.	
Section 6	Improved clarity and guidance on: • use of the set assignment. • providing feedback to students. • resubmitting moderated work. Additional information provided to support the delivering and assessing of NEA units in line with JCQ instructions and guidance.	
Covers and all page footers	Updated to reflect the new Cambridge OCR brand. Inside cover includes statement: 'About our new name'.	
Throughout	Hyperlinks refreshed The following forms are now only available on Teach Cambridge: unit recording sheets (URS) and set assignment feedback form	Version 6 (June 2026)
Section 4.8 Unit R099: Digital games	Updated Task 2 Assessment guidance to clarify the format of the evidence accepted	
Section 5.4 Grading and awarding grades	Updated to clarify on results day a marks calculator will be published for the specific series	
Section 6.1.1 Centre and teacher/ assessor responsibilities	Updated name of online training module and information about centre approval	
Section 6.2.2 Plagiarism (including AI misuse)	Updated to include more information relating to AI misuse in assessments and required teaching for referencing or acknowledging material copied from the internet or other sources	
Section 6.3 Feedback	Add new section: *Informing students of their marks*	

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Section	Change	Version and date issue
Section 6.6 Resubmitting moderated work to us to improve the grade	Updated to clarify information relating to using work from a previous year's assignment	
Section 7.9 Post-results services	Updated access to scripts, which is a free service for exams officers to download copies of students' completed question papers	
Section 6.3.3 Candidate and teacher authentication	Updated title to 'Candidate and teacher authentication' to reflect JCQ's recent merge of centre authentication and candidate authentication statement forms into one form.	Version 7 (October 2026)

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1 Why choose OCR?

Choose OCR and you've got the reassurance that you're working with one of the UK's leading exam boards. We have developed our specifications in consultation with teachers, employers and subject experts to provide students with a qualification that's relevant to them and meets their needs.

We're part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment. We help millions of people worldwide unlock their potential. Our qualifications, assessments, academic publications and original research spread knowledge, spark curiosity and aid understanding around the world.

We work with teachers, employers, and universities to create qualifications that support the needs of all students and help them prepare for their future. We offer A Levels, GCSEs, vocational qualifications, and other academic options to schools, colleges, workplaces, and other organisations.

1.1 Our specifications

We believe in developing specifications that help you bring the subject to life and inspire your students to achieve more**.** We've created teacher-friendly specifications based on extensive research and engagement with the teaching community. They're designed to be straightforward and accessible so that you can tailor the delivery of the course to suit your needs.

1.2 Our support

We have a range of support services to help you at every stage, from preparation to delivery.

- A wide range of high-quality creative resources including resources created by leading organisations within the industry
- Textbooks and teaching and learning resources from leading publishers. For more information about all the published support for the Cambridge Nationals that has been endorsed by OCR please go to the Cambridge Nationals page on our website
- Professional development for teachers to fulfil a range of needs. To join our training (either face-to-face or online) or to search for training materials, please go to the Professional Development page on our website
- Active Results is our free results analysis service to help you review the performance of individual students or whole schools
- ExamBuilder is our free question-building platform that helps you to build your own tests using past OCR exam questions
- OCR subject advisors provide information and support to centres including specification and non examined assessment advice, updates on resources developments and a range of training opportunities. They work with subject communities through a range of networks to share ideas and expertise to support teachers

Further help and support

Whether you are new to OCR or already teaching with us, you can find useful information, help and support on our website. Or get in touch:

support@ocr.org.uk

@ocrexams

01223 553998

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1.3 Aims and learning outcomes

Our Cambridge National in Creative iMedia will encourage students to:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media including factors that influence product design, use of media codes and conventions, pre-production planning techniques, legal issues and creation/publishing/distribution considerations
- develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the media industry and more widely
- design, plan, create and review digital media products which are fit for purpose meeting both client and target audience requirements.

1.4 What are the key features of this specification?

The key features of OCR's Cambridge National in Creative iMedia for you and your students are:

- a simple and intuitive assessment model, consisting of an externally assessed unit that focusses on knowledge and understanding and six skills-based, non examined assessment units (NEA)
- a specification developed with teachers specifically for teachers. The specification lays out the subject content clearly
- a flexible support package formed after listening to teachers' needs. The support package will help teachers to easily understand the requirements of the qualification and how it is assessed by a team of OCR Subject Advisors who support teachers directly and manage the qualification nationally
- a specification has been designed so that students can progress onto Level 2 and Level 3 vocational qualifications including Cambridge Technicals in Digital Media and Information Technology, A Levels, T Levels or apprenticeships.

This qualification will help students to develop:

- an understanding of media codes and conventions which can be appropriately applied when producing digital media products
- skills used to design, plan and create digital media products that are appropriate for defined target audiences and meet client requirements.

All Cambridge Nationals qualifications offered by OCR are regulated by Ofqual, the Regulator for qualifications offered in England. The qualification number for OCR's Cambridge National in Creative iMedia is QN 603/7090/7.

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2 Qualification overview

2.1 OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia at a glance

Qualification number	603/7090/7	**OCR Entry code**	J834
First entry date	01/09/2022	**Approved age range**	14-16
Guided learning hours (GLH)	120	**Performance information**	We've designed this qualification to meet the Department for Education (DfE) requirements for qualifications in the Technical Award category of the 14-16 performance tables
Total qualification time (TQT)	155		
Offered in	England only	**Eligible for funding**	It's designed to meet the funding requirements of a 14-16 study programme.
This qualification is suitable for students	• Aged 14-16 on a full-time study programme wanting to develop applied knowledge and practical skills suitable for use within the media industry. • Who want to progress onto other related study, such as vocational qualifications in digital media and information technology, A Levels, T Levels and apprenticeships. • As it is designed to meet the Department for Education's characteristics for a Technical Award.		
Entry requirements	There is no requirement for students to achieve any specific qualifications before taking this qualification.		
Qualification requirements	Students must complete three units: • one externally assessed unit (exam) - see the Terminal assessment below • two centre-assessed units (NEA)		
Assessment method/ model	Unit R093 is assessed by an exam and marked by us. You will assess the NEA units and we will moderate them. We provide set assignments which must be used to assess the NEA units. Each set assignment will be valid for 1 year. The dates for which they are live are shown on the front cover. You must make sure you use the live assignment for students' assessments and submit in the period in which it is live. You must make sure students have an entry for each series in which you intend to submit or resubmit an NEA unit.		
Assessment series each year	• January • June		
Terminal assessment	The exam must be taken in the final assessment series before qualification certification. If a student retakes their qualification, they will need to resit the exam in order to meet the terminal rule again. The first qualification grade is used for school performance tables even if they have improved their qualification grade.		
Grading	All results are awarded on the following scale: Level 2 – Distinction* (*2), Distinction (D2), Merit (M2), Pass (P2) Level 1 – Distinction (D1), Merit (M1), Pass (P1) and Fail/Unclassified.		
Exam resits	Students can resit the exam. The terminal assessment rule means that the resit result will be used towards the student's final qualification grade and not the best result.		

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Repeat submission of students' NEA work	If students have not performed at their best during the assessment of NEA units, they can improve their work and submit it to you again for assessment. They must have your agreement and you must be sure it is in the student's best interests. We use the term 'resubmission' when referring to student work that has previously been submitted to OCR for moderation. Following OCR moderation a student can attempt to improve their work, for you to assess and provide the final mark to us. There is one resubmission opportunity per NEA assignment. All work submitted (or resubmitted) must be based on the assignment that is live for the series of submission. For information about feedback see section 6. The final piece of work must be completed solely by the student and teachers must not detail specifically what amendments should be made.

2.2 Qualification structure

For this qualification, students must achieve **three** units: one externally assessed and two Non Examined Assessment (NEA) units.

Key to units for this qualification:

M = Mandatory	Students must achieve this unit
O = Optional	Students must achieve one of these units
E = External assessment	We set and mark the exam
N = NEA	You assess this and we moderate it

Unit no.	Unit title	Unit ref. no. (URN)	Guided learning hours (GLH)	How are they assessed?	Mandatory or optional
R093	Creative iMedia in the media industry	K/618/5870	48	E	M
R094	Visual identity and digital graphics	M/618/5871	30	NEA	M
R095	Characters and comics	T/618/5872	42	NEA	O
R096	Animation with audio	A/618/5873	42	NEA	O
R097	Interactive digital media	F/618/5874	42	NEA	O
R098	Visual imaging	J/618/5875	42	NEA	O
R099	Digital games	L/618/5876	42	NEA	O

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OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia

Qualification number: 603/7090/7

Type of qualification: Technical Award

Overview

Who is this qualification for?

The Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia is aimed at students aged 14-16 years and will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the media industry.

You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- developing visual identities for clients
- planning and creating original digital graphics
- planning, creating and reviewing original digital media products.

This will help you to develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the media industry.

The qualification will also help you to develop learning and skills that can be used in other life and work situations, such as:

- thinking about situations and deciding what is required to be successful
- exploring different options and choosing the best way forward to a solve problem
- exploring and generating original ideas to find imaginative solutions to problems
- selecting the best tools and techniques to use to solve a problem
- appropriate use of media to convey meaning
- use of planning techniques to complete tasks in an organised way which meet deadlines.

This qualification will complement other learning that you are completing for GCSEs or vocational qualifications at Key Stage 4 and help to prepare you for further study. More information about this is given below.

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What will you study as part of the qualification?

You will study 2 mandatory units and choose 1 optional unit.

The two mandatory units are:

- Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

  This is assessed by taking an exam.

  In this unit you will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. Topics include:
  - The media industry
  - Factors influencing product design
  - Pre-production planning
  - Distribution considerations

- Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

  In this unit you will learn to how to develop visual identities for clients and use the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics to engage target audiences. Topics include:
  - Develop visual identity
  - Plan digital graphics for products
  - Create visual identity and digital graphics

There are 5 optional units to choose from. Each optional unit has the same structure to your learning, but the conventions and practical skills are tailored to the media product being studied.

The 5 optional units are:

- Unit R095: Characters and comics

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

  In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review comics which contain original characters. Topics include:
  - Plan characters and comics
  - Create characters and comics
  - Review characters and comics

- Unit R096: Animation and audio

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment

  In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review animation with an audio soundtrack. Topics include:
  - Plan animation with audio
  - Create animation with audio
  - Review animation with audio

- Unit R097: Interactive digital media

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

  In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review interactive digital media products. Topics include:
  - Plan interactive digital media
  - Create interactive digital media
  - Review interactive digital media

- Unit R098: Visual imaging

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

  In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review portfolios of visual imagery. Topics include:
  - Plan visual imaging portfolios
  - Create visual imaging portfolios
  - Review visual imaging portfolios

- Unit R099: Digital games

  This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

  In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review digital games. Topics include:
  - Plan digital games
  - Create digital games
  - Review digital games

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What knowledge and skills will you develop as part of this qualification and how might these be of use and value in further studies?

The media industry is vast, covering different sectors and providing work for freelance creatives as well as large teams in design houses and multinational companies. But there are common aspects to all digital media products. This qualification will help you to develop knowledge, and understanding relating to different sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. You will learn how media codes and conventions are applied to create digital media products which engage audiences. You will also learn the purpose of, and reasons for legislation applicable to the media industry and what media producers must do to comply with this legislation. In addition, you will gain an understanding of the properties and formats of media files.

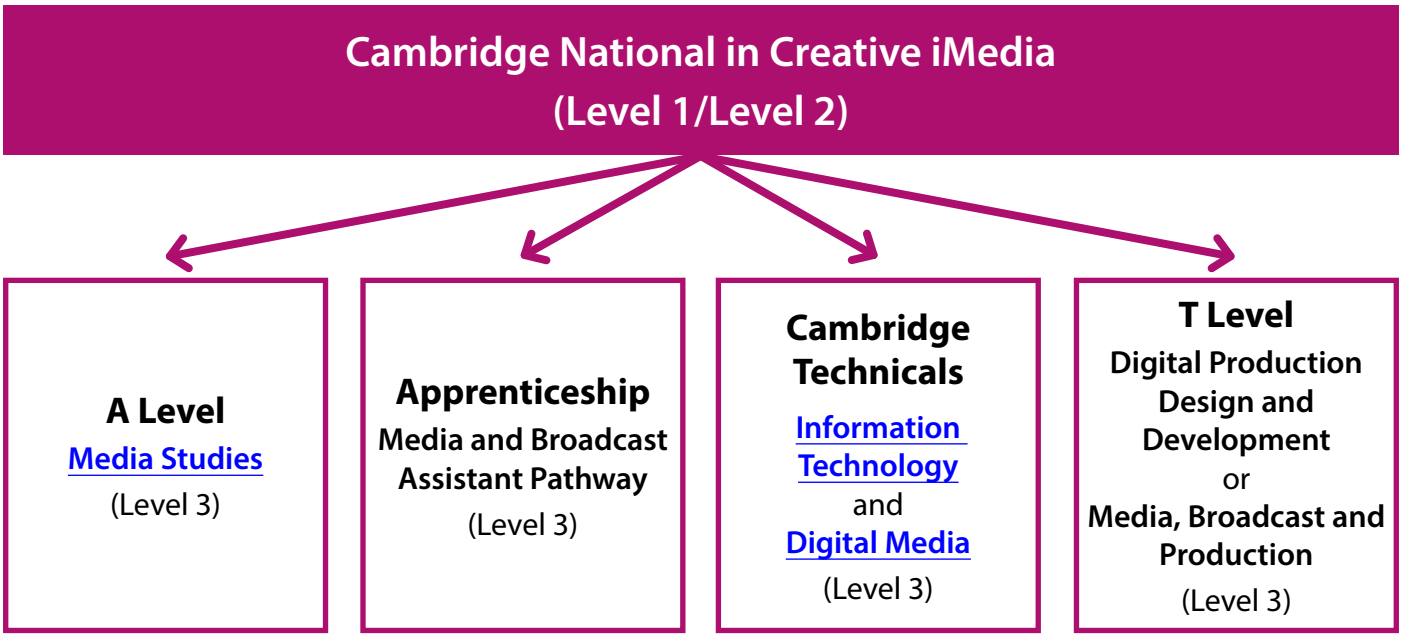
Visual identity is a vital component of any business, product or brand. It makes a brand recognisable and helps sell a product or idea to a target audience. In this qualification you will learn how to develop visual identities for clients and apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics to engage target audiences.

You can choose one unit from a number of optional units. Each of these units will help you develop understanding and skills related to different digital media products from a number of sectors of the media industry including:

- designing and creating comic characters that convey emotion and personality – the skills developed are relevant to illustration, graphic design and character design
- planning animations with audio based on client briefs – gaming technologies, mobile phones, the film industry and multimedia websites all use digital animation to enhance applications, entertain and inform the viewer
- using digital camera equipment to plan and capture photographs and video footage, edit images and produce effective portfolios in response to a client brief – static and moving images are used in the media industry for products as diverse as print publishing, news/journalism, advertisements, movies and interactive media.

The knowledge and skills you develop will help you to progress onto further study in the media industry. This may be other vocational qualifications including the Level 2 or Level 3 OCR Cambridge Technicals in Digital Media and/or Information Technology; the T Level Qualification in Digital Production Design and Development or Media, Broadcast and Production; or the Media and Broadcast Assistant Pathway Apprenticeship. The qualification also helps to develop other transferable skills including creative thinking, digital presentation, planning and problem solving that will be valuable in other life and work situations.

The diagram below shows the possible progression routes for your further study:



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Which subjects will complement this course?

- OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in IT
- OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Enterprise and Marketing
- GCSE Art and Design
- GCSE Computer Science
- GCSE Media Studies
- GCSE Business Studies

Further details

- Specification
- Sample Assessment Material (SAM)
- Guide to our Sample Assessment Material
- Student guide to NEA assignments

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3 About this qualification

3.1 Qualification size (GLH and TQT)

The size of the qualification is described in terms of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT).

GLH indicates the approximate time (in hours) the teacher will spend supervising or directing study and assessment activities. We have worked with people who are experienced in delivering related qualifications to determine the content that needs to be taught and how long it will take to deliver.

TQT includes two parts:

- GLH
- an estimate of the number of hours a student will spend on unsupervised learning or assessment activities (including homework) to successfully achieve their qualification.

OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia is 120 GLH and 155 TQT.

3.2 Language

This qualification is available in English only. All assessment materials are available in English only and all candidate work must be in English.

3.3 Availability

The Cambridge Nationals qualifications are available in England. They are **not** available in Wales or Northern Ireland.

3.4 Performance information

We've designed this qualification to meet the Department for Education (DfE) requirements for qualifications in the Technical Award category of the 14-16 performance tables.

You'll find information on performance tables for England on the Department for Education website.

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4 Units

4.1 Guidance on unit content

This section describes what must be taught so that students can access all available marks.

4.1.1 Terminal Assessment Rule

The terminal assessment rule means that students must take their exam in the final assessment series of their course. You should be mindful of this when entering students for units. See Section 7.3 for more information.

4.1.2 Externally assessed unit (R093)

The externally assessed unit is made up of a number of topic areas. Each topic area has related teaching content that must be taught. A direct question may be asked about any content in the teaching content column.

The breadth and depth column helps to clarify the breadth and depth of teaching needed, and indicates the range of knowledge and understanding that may be assessed in the exam. This column also confirms any aspects that you do **not** need to teach in relation to the content as 'does not include' statements.

Knowledge and understanding

Students will need to **understand** the content unless the breadth and depth column identifies it as knowledge only.

- Any item(s) that should be taught as knowledge only will start with the word 'know' in the breadth and depth column.
- All other content is expected to be taught as understanding.

The table below explains what we mean by knowledge and understanding.

Knowledge	• Be able to identify or recognise a given item, for example on a diagram. • Use direct recall to answer a question, for example the definition of a term.
Understanding	• To assess and evidence the perceived meaning of something in greater depth than straight identification or recall. • Understanding will be expressed and presented using terms such as: how; why; when; reasons for; benefits and drawbacks of; advantages and disadvantages of; purpose of; suitability of; recommendations for improvement; pros and cons; appropriateness of something to/in different contexts.

Students need to be taught the information in both the teaching content and breadth and depth columns.

4.1.3 NEA Units (R094 – R099)

The NEA units are made up of a number of topic areas with associated teaching content which details what must be taught as part of each topic area. The NEA units also have an exemplification column that provides more information about, and examples relating to, the teaching content. This helps to exemplify the teaching expected so that students are equipped to successfully complete their assignments.

4.1.4 Command and descriptor words

Appendix B gives information about the expectations of the command words that will be used in the external assessments and the descriptor words that will be used in the NEA marking criteria.

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4.1.5 Performance Objectives (POs):

Each Cambridge National qualification has related Performance Objectives. There are four Performance Objectives in the OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia.

Performance Objectives	
PO1	Recall knowledge and show understanding
PO2	Apply knowledge and understanding
PO3	Analyse and evaluate knowledge, understanding and performance
PO4	Demonstrate and apply skills and processes relevant to the subject area

PO1 is only relevant to the exam. PO4 is only relevant to the NEA assessments.

The weightings of the Performance Objectives across the units is:

Performance Objective	Externally assessed unit (range)	NEA units	Overall weighting
PO1	17 – 19.5%	n/a	17 – 19.5%
PO2	10 – 12.5%	18%	28 – 30.5%
PO3	10%	12%	22%
PO4	n/a	30%	30%
Overall weighting of assessments	**40%**	**60%**	**100%**

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4.2 Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Aims

The media industry is vast, covering both traditional and new media sectors and providing work for individual freelance creatives as well as large teams in design houses and multinational companies. Job roles frequently overlap multiple sectors, and products often need to be suitable for more than one kind of output. However, there are common aspects to all media products. Pre-production and planning are vital; saving clients time and money and enabling creatives and designers to charge appropriately for their services. Products also make use of similar media codes to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.

In this unit you will learn about the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. You will learn the legal and ethical issues considered and the processes used to plan and create digital media products. You will learn how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. You will learn to choose the most appropriate format and properties for different media products. Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative job roles within the media industry.

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Topic Area 1: The media industry

Teaching content	Breadth and depth
1.1 Media industry sectors and products	
Sectors of the media industry □ Traditional media ▪ film ▪ television ▪ radio ▪ print publishing □ New media ▪ computer games ▪ interactive media ▪ internet ▪ digital publishing Products in the media industry □ Video □ Audio □ Music □ Animation □ Special effects (SFX, VFX) □ Digital imaging and graphics □ Social media platforms/apps □ Digital games □ Comics and graphic novels □ Websites □ Multimedia □ eBooks □ AR/VR	To include: • Know the different sectors that form the media industry and how these are evolving • Know the types of products produced by, and used in, different sectors • Know that the same product can be used by different sectors

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

1.2 Job roles in the media industry

□ Creative ▪ animator ▪ content creator ▪ copy writer ▪ graphic designer ▪ illustrator/graphic artist ▪ photographer ▪ script writer ▪ web designer □ Technical ▪ camera operator ▪ games programmer/developer ▪ sound editor ▪ audio technician ▪ video editor ▪ web developer □ Senior roles ▪ campaign manager ▪ creative director ▪ director ▪ editor ▪ production manager	To include: • How each role contributes to the creation of media products • Know the main responsibilities of each role in the creation of media products • Know that some job roles are specific to pre-production, production or post-production phases • Know that some job roles span multiple production phases • Why the size and scale of projects/productions means that individuals may perform more than one role Does not include: • Specific skills required for job roles

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Topic Area 2: Factors influencing product design

Teaching content	Breadth and depth
2.1 How style, content and layout are linked to the purpose	
□ Purpose ▪ advertise/promote ▪ educate ▪ entertain ▪ inform ▪ influence □ Style, content and layout ▪ colour ▪ conventions of genre ▪ formal/informal language ▪ positioning of elements ▪ style of audio representation ▪ style of visual representation ▪ tone of language	To include: • Know the different purposes of media products • How style, content and layout are adapted to meet each purpose
2.2 Client requirements and how they are defined	
□ Client requirements ▪ type of product ▪ purpose ▪ audience ▪ client ethos ▪ content ▪ genre ▪ style ▪ theme ▪ timescales □ Client brief formats ▪ commission ▪ formal ▪ informal ▪ meeting/discussion ▪ negotiated ▪ written	To include: • How to recognise keywords and information in client briefs • Know the requirements in client briefs that inform planning • Why requirements in client briefs can constrain planning and production • How to interpret requirements in client briefs to generate ideas and plan • Know the different ways that client briefs are communicated
2.3 Audience demographics and segmentation	
Categories of audience segmentation □ Age □ Gender □ Occupation □ Income □ Education □ Location □ Interests □ Lifestyle	To include: • Know the different categories of audience segmentation • Know examples of the way audiences are grouped for each segmentation type • The reasons for, and benefits of, audience segmentation • How audience characteristics influence the design and production of media products

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

2.4 Research methods, sources and types of data

□ Primary research methods ▪ focus groups ▪ interviews ▪ online surveys ▪ questionnaires □ Secondary research sources ▪ books and journals ▪ internet sites/research ▪ magazines and newspapers ▪ television □ Research data ▪ qualitative information ▪ quantitative information	To include: • The reasons for, and benefits of, conducting research • The advantages and disadvantages of primary and secondary research and data • How research is carried out using different methods and/or sources • The advantages and disadvantages of each primary research method and secondary research source • The differences between qualitative and quantitative data/information

2.5 Media codes used to convey meaning, create impact and/or engage audiences

Media codes □ Technical □ Symbolic □ Written Ways that meaning, impact and/or engagement are created using □ Animations □ Audio ▪ dialogue ▪ music genre ▪ silence ▪ sound effects ▪ vocal intonation □ Camera techniques ▪ angles ▪ shots ▪ movement □ Colour □ Graphics □ Interactivity □ Lighting ▪ intensity/levels ▪ position □ Mise-en-scene □ Movement □ Transitions □ Typography ▪ emphasis ▪ font size ▪ font types	To include: • Know the different technical, symbolic and written codes used to convey meaning, create impact and/or engage audiences • How codes are used to convey meaning, create impact and/or engage audiences • How the codes used relate to audience, purpose and context • How the combination of content and codes work together to convey meaning, create impact and engagement

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Topic Area 3: Pre-production planning

Teaching content	Breadth and depth
3.1 Work planning	
□ Components of workplans ▪ phases ○ pre-production ○ production ○ post-production ▪ tasks ▪ activities ▪ workflow ▪ timescales ▪ milestones ▪ contingencies ▪ resources ○ hardware ○ people ○ software	To include: • The purpose of work planning • Know the components of workplans • The role of workplan components in work planning • The advantages of using workplans • How workplans are used to manage time, tasks, activities and resources for individuals and large teams
3.2 Documents used to support ideas generation	
□ Mind map ▪ digital ▪ hand drawn □ Mood board ▪ digital ▪ physical	To include: • Know the purpose of each document • Know the components and conventions of each document • Know the hardware and software used to create each document • Know the users of each document • When each document is appropriate for use • What makes each document effective • How to improve the effectiveness of documents for users in given contexts Does not include • Creating documents from scratch

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

3.3 Documents used to design and plan media products

□ Asset log □ Flow chart □ Script □ Storyboard □ Visualisation diagram □ Wireframe layout	To include: • Know the purpose of each document • Know the components and conventions of each document • Know the hardware and software used to create each document • Know the users of each document • When each document is appropriate for use • What makes each document effective • How to improve the effectiveness of documents for users in given contexts Does not include: • Creating documents from scratch

3.4 The legal issues that affect media

3.4.1 Legal considerations to protect individuals □ Privacy and permissions ▪ rights for recording images/taking photographs in public places ▪ permissions for recording images/taking photographs on private property ▪ permissions for publishing and commercial use of images and photographs taken ▪ harassment and invasion of privacy □ Defamation ▪ libel ▪ slander □ Data protection ▪ rights of data subjects in the collection, use and storage of personal data	To include: • The purpose of, and reasons for, each legal consideration • What is required of media producers to comply with each legal consideration • The impact on individuals and media producers of media producers using and publishing inaccurate personal information Does not include: • Specific Acts of legislation
3.4.2 Intellectual property rights □ Protecting intellectual property (IP) ▪ copyright ▪ ideas ▪ patents ▪ trademarks □ Using copyrighted materials ▪ creative common licence(s) ▪ fair dealing ▪ permissions, fees and licences ▪ watermarks and symbols	To include: • Know what is meant by intellectual property • The purpose of, and reasons for, legislation to protect intellectual property • What is required of media producers to respect intellectual property rights • How and when intellectual property can be protected • The implications for media producers of using copyrighted materials without permission Does not include: • Specific Acts of legislation

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

3.4.3 Regulation, certification, and classification □ Organisations responsible for regulation ▪ ASA (Advertising Standards Authority) ▪ Ofcom (The Office of Communications) □ Classification systems and certifications ▪ BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) certifications ▪ PEGI (Pan European Game Information) certifications	To include: • Know the types of products covered by regulation, certification and classification • The purpose of, and reasons for regulation, certification and classification • Know the roles of regulatory bodies and areas of responsibility • Know examples of the way media products are classified • The impacts of regulation, certification and classification on media production
3.4.4 Health and safety □ Health and safety risks and hazards in all phases of production □ Actions to mitigate health and safety risks and hazards □ Risks assessments □ Location recces	To include: • Know common risks and hazards in media production • What is required of media producers to mitigate health and safety risks and hazards • What risk assessments are and the purpose of risk assessments • What location recces are and the purpose of location recces Does not include: • Specific Acts of legislation • The creation of a risk assessment or recce

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Topic Area 4: Distribution considerations

Teaching content	Breadth and depth
4.1 Distribution platforms and media to reach audiences	
□ Online ▪ apps ▪ multimedia ▪ web □ Physical platforms ▪ computer ▪ interactive tv ▪ kiosks ▪ mobile devices □ Physical media ▪ CD/DVD ▪ memory stick ▪ paper based	To include: • Know the characteristics of the types of platform and media used to deliver products to audiences • The advantages and disadvantages of types of platform and media • How the characteristics of platforms affect the selection of final product file formats in given scenarios
4.2 Properties and formats of media files	
4.2.1 Image Files □ The properties of digital static image files ▪ DPI/PPI resolution ▪ pixel dimension □ Static image file formats ▪ raster/ bitmap ▪ vector ▪ uncompressed ▪ compressed	To include: • Know what is meant by DPI/PPI • How DPI/PPI relates to resolution and image quality • The relationship between pixel dimensions and quality for different image uses • Know examples of raster/bitmap and vector image files • The properties and limitations of uncompressed and compressed (lossy, lossless) file formats • The properties and limitations of raster/bitmap and vector static image file formats • How file format choice relates to use and context
4.2.2 Audio Files □ The properties of digital audio files ▪ bit depth ▪ sample rate □ Audio file formats ▪ uncompressed ▪ compressed	To include: • Know what is meant by sample rate and bit depth • How sample rate and bit depth relate to sound quality • What audio compression is and how it affects quality • Know examples of digital audio files • The properties and limitations of uncompressed and compressed (lossy, lossless) file formats • How file format choice relates to use and context

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Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
4.2.3 Moving Image Files □ The properties of digital moving image files ▪ frame Rate ▪ resolution (SD, HD, UHD, 4K, 8K) □ Moving image files formats ▪ animation ▪ video ▪ uncompressed ▪ compressed	To include: • Know what is meant by frame rate • Know what is meant by SD, HD, UHD, 4K, 8K • How frame rate affects the quality of a product • Know examples of digital video and animation files • The properties and limitations of video and animation file formats • The properties and limitations of uncompressed and compressed (lossy, lossless) file formats • How file format choice relates to use and context
4.2.4 File compression □ Lossy compression □ Lossless compression	To include: • Know what is meant by lossy compression • Know what is meant by lossless compression • Why lossy and lossless compression are used

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Assessment guidance

This unit is assessed by an exam. Due to the Terminal Assessment requirement, the exam must be taken in the students' final assessment series. The exam is 1 hour and 30 minutes. It has two sections – Section A and Section B.

- Section A has 10 marks
- Section B has 60 marks
- The exam has 70 marks in total

This will be conducted under examination conditions. For more details refer to the Administration area.

The Creative iMedia 'Guide to our Sample Assessment Material' gives more information about the layout and expectations of the exam.

A range of question types will be used in the exam, but it will always require students to use the skills of analysis and evaluation.

Section A	• This will have between 7 and 10 closed response, multiple choice and short answer questions which assess the recall of knowledge and understanding. • Questions will sample content from all topic areas, with at least one question relating to each area.
Section B	• This will have context-based questions. Students will be presented with a short scenario which develops through the paper and will apply their knowledge of Creative iMedia concepts to produce relevant responses. • It will include closed response, short answer questions and three extended response questions. • Two of the extended response questions will assess analysis and evaluation, while the third will assess the recall and application of knowledge and understanding. • Content will be sampled from all topic areas, with at least one question relating to each area.

Synoptic assessment

This unit allows students to gain underpinning knowledge and understanding relevant to the qualification and sector. The NEA units draw on and strengthen this learning with students applying their learning in a practical, skills-based way. The synoptic grids at the end of the NEA units show these synoptic links.

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 synoptic assessment.

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4.3 Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

Aims

Identity is a vital component of any business, product or brand. A visual identity communicates values and core principles to the consumer, user or customer. It makes a brand recognisable and helps sell a product or idea to a target audience. Logos, shapes, typography, colour theory and composition are all used to generate visual identities which work across different platforms and media, and user interface and experience are key considerations in the design process.

In this unit you will learn how to develop visual identities for clients. You will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate your visual identity to engage a target audience. Completing this unit will introduce the foundations for further study or a wide range of job roles within the media industry.

Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

Topic Area 1: Develop visual identity

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Purpose, elements and design of visual identity	
Purpose of visual identity □ Recognition/familiarity □ Establish a brand □ Develop brand loyalty □ Visual communication with audiences/consumers Component features of visual identity □ Name □ Logo □ Slogan/strap line Elements of visual identity □ Graphics ▪ shape/symbol □ Typography □ Colour palette and meaning □ Layout/complexity Visual identity design style □ Business type □ Brand values □ Brand positioning ▪ economy ▪ mid-range ▪ high-end	To include: • What is meant by visual identity • That visual identity is used to communicate the nature of brands and business' services or products • The component features of visual identity • The elements of visual identity • How visual identity relates to brand identity • How visual identity elements are influenced by business type, brand values and brand positioning • How visual identity elements are combined to shape perception and create emotional response • That visual identity needs to encapsulate brand values and be appropriate/relevant for the audience and type of market • That if the perception or impression created by visual identity is not in line with the desired brand identity, then it is not fit for purpose • Using appropriate elements to create visual identity suitable for different target audiences/ consumers

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Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

Topic Area 2: Plan digital graphics for products

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Graphic design and conventions	
Concepts of graphic design □ Application of visual identity □ Alignment □ Typography □ Use of colour and colour systems □ Use of white space Layout conventions for different graphic products and purposes □ Additional information □ Headlines and copy □ Image content □ Titles and mastheads	To include: • The importance of graphic designs that incorporate visual identity and house style • Why typography is important to convey clear messages using suitable text fonts and sizes • Colour systems and colour trends e.g. Pantone, NCS • Using colour to convey the intended meaning • Typical layouts for ○ advertisements ○ CD/DVD/Blu-ray covers ○ games ○ leaflets ○ magazine/book covers ○ multimedia products ○ packaging ○ posters ○ web images and graphics Does not include: • Billboards (too high in size/resolution) although may be included in the teaching as a form of advertisement

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Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

2.2 Properties of digital graphics and use of assets

Technical properties of images and graphics □ Bitmap/raster properties ▪ colour depth ▪ colour mode ▪ compression settings ▪ overall quality ▪ transparency □ Vector graphic properties ▪ compatibility ▪ file size ▪ scalability ▪ software support	To include: • Limitations of bitmap/raster file formats in terms how many colours are supported, scalability (enlarging) and whether transparent backgrounds can be included • Benefits of vector file formats, scalability for large print use Does not include: • Exclusive use of vector files to create digital graphics
Licences and permissions to use assets sourced from □ Client images □ Internet □ Logos □ Photographs □ Stock library	To include: • Using search engine filters (image size, type, licence) • Using image stock libraries terms and conditions • Limitations of re-using social media content • Rights and permissions for the use of client owned and third-party assets (logos and images) • Permitting use of own photographs and graphics in a client product • Using asset tables to record licence/copyright information Does not include: • Practical activity of obtaining licences, permissions through contact with owners or payment of fees

2.3 Techniques to plan visual identity and digital graphics

Pre-production and planning documentation used to generate ideas and concepts for visual identity and digital graphics □ Mood board □ Mind map □ Concept sketch □ Visualisation diagram	To include: • Creating mood boards with relevant content using physical materials - pictures, text, colours placed on large sheet/board • Creating digital mood boards using digital images collected from web and other sources, placed on documents/slides in software applications • Using mind maps drawn out on paper or using software applications to expand ideas and identify details • Using concept sketches to develop ideas • Using visualisation diagrams to show design ideas and possible layouts, sketched with annotations or concept art created in software applications Does not include: • Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts

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Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

Topic Area 3: Create visual identity and digital graphics

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Tools and techniques of imaging editing software used to create digital graphics	
Software tools and techniques used to create digital graphics □ Image/canvas size □ Layout tools □ Drawing tools □ Adjustments to brightness/contrast and colour □ Use of selections □ Use of layers and layer styles □ Retouching □ Typography □ Filters and effects	Examples of tools and techniques used to create digital graphics may include: • Setting the canvas size - expanding or modifying • Using layout tools to help the placement of assets e.g. grids, guides and rulers • Using drawing tools e.g. shapes, colour fill, gradients • Using brightness and contrast, levels, colour balance, hue, saturation • Using selections based on shape, colour or edge contrast • Using layers to structure a graphic, create, merge, rename, change opacity • Using layer styles to enhance the visual impact e.g. drop shadows, effects, textures • Using retouching techniques to remove unwanted elements e.g. cloning, healing, blur, colour swatches, colour picker, pencil, brush • Using typography to add information e.g. text, font styles, sizes and effects • Using filters and effects to enhance the visual appeal e.g. stylise, monochrome, colour toning, vignette, sharpen Does not include: • Using masks, customisation of tools
3.2 Technical skills to source, create and prepare assets for use within digital graphics	
Source assets for use in digital graphics □ Images □ Graphics	To include: • Using internet, stock libraries or client library to search for suitable image assets • Downloading/obtaining images and graphics, copying from download folder to working asset folder Does not include: • Obtaining licences and requesting permissions for their use
Create assets for use in digital graphics □ Editing sourced assets to create a derivative asset □ Creating assets using drawing tools	To include: • Creating original or new image assets by editing existing assets or drawing completely new images as bitmap or vector files Does not include: • Practical use and skills development in using a camera, scanner and graphic tablet

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Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics	
Modify images and other assets to make sure the technical compatibility for use within print graphics □ Resize and resample □ Modifying image properties	To include: • Resampling of images and assets for use in a print product - checking pixel dimensions and dpi resolution for the intended size of reproduction • Rasterising vector based graphics for use in bitmap graphics Does not include: • Changing colour profiles of images
Store assets for use □ Storage location □ Changing the file format	To include: • Using different storage locations to clearly differentiate original and edited assets in separate folders • Using file formats to retain image quality (with/ without transparency)
3.3 Techniques to save and export visual identity and digital graphics	
Save and export □ Proprietary format master files □ Repurpose and export in appropriate file formats	To include: • Saving of files for visual identity and digital graphics as high resolution, proprietary format, master files as an archive for further edits • Repurposing and exporting of visual identity and digital graphics in file formats and image properties which meet client requirements

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R094 – Topic Area 1: Develop visual identity **Unit R094 – Topic Area 2: Plan digital graphics for products**		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Design concept for the visual identity is **limited** in its suitability for the client.	Design concept for the visual identity is **adequate** in its suitability for the client.	Design concept for the visual identity is **fully** suitable for the client.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Justification shows **limited** understanding of the extent to which the visual identity is fit for purpose.	Justification shows **sound** understanding of the extent to which the visual identity is fit for purpose.	Justification shows **comprehensive** understanding of the extent to which the visual identity is fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces **basic** planning documentation for the digital graphic product.	Produces **adequate** planning documentation for the digital graphic product.	Produces **detailed** planning documentation for the digital graphic product.

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Unit R094 – Topic Area 2: Plan digital graphics for products Unit R094 – Topic Area 3: Create visual identity and digital graphics		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the visual identity is **limited** in its effectiveness. Properties and format(s) of the visual identity are **limited** in appropriateness.	Use of technical skills to create the visual identity is **adequate** in its effectiveness. Properties and format(s) of the visual identity are **adequate** in appropriateness.	Use of technical skills to create the visual identity is **effective**. Properties and format(s) of the visual identity are **clearly** appropriate.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Few assets are prepared for use in the digital graphic. Use of technical skills to prepare assets is **limited** in its effectiveness.	**Some** assets are prepared for use in the digital graphic. Use of technical skills to prepare assets is **partly** effective.	**All** assets are prepared for use in the digital graphic. Use of technical skills to prepare assets is **effective**.
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of tools and techniques to create the digital graphic products is **limited** in its effectiveness. Design concepts and layout conventions are applied in a **limited** way to the digital graphic products. The final digital graphic products meet the client's requirements in a **limited** way.	Use of tools and techniques to create the digital graphic products is **partly** effective. Design concepts and layout conventions are applied **adequately** to the digital graphic products. The final digital graphic products **adequately** meet the client's requirements.	Use of tools and techniques to create the digital graphic products is **effective**. Design concepts and layout conventions are applied **effectively** to the digital graphic products. Final digital graphic products **fully** meet the client's requirements.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Properties and format(s) of the final digital graphic products are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Properties and format(s) of the final digital graphic products are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Properties and format(s) of the final digital graphic products are **clearly** appropriate.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** A simple logo for the visual identity could be credited in Mark Band (MB)1. To achieve the higher mark bands, a more complex visual identity, incorporating suitable component features would be needed. This should be clearly appropriate for an intended audience/consumer and the nature of the client's product or service. Evidence of students' development of ideas can contribute to the marks, but the final concept must be clearly shown for MB3. **Strand 1b** The assessment is based on students' understanding of the extent to which the visual identity is fit for purpose. Statements that it meets the client's needs may be credited in MB1, whereas justifications of 'how' and 'why' are needed for the upper mark bands. To achieve MB3, the understanding would need to cover both the client and target audience/consumer. Note that this task is analytical/evaluative in nature. When designing the visual identity and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1c** Two main items of evidence contribute to the marking descriptors. These cover both what the intended graphic will look like and the details of any assets to be used. Both of these would be needed to consider achievement in MB3. A simple layout diagram would be appropriate for MB1. For the upper mark bands, this should be clear and detailed for use by the client or graphic designer. To record the details of assets, students may choose the format of the information themselves or use the asset table template on our secure website Teach Cambridge. More comprehensive details including permissions would be needed for the upper mark bands. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When designing their digital graphic product, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work.
Task 2	**Strand 2a** There are two parts to this first strand. The first covers the creation of the visual identity while the second the requirement to save it in a suitable format. Technical skills are evidenced in the resulting quality of their use/application when creating the visual identity. This is a qualitative assessment. Areas to consider would be precision, accuracy, and overall effectiveness in the creation of the visual identity. For the upper mark bands, the image properties and file format of the saved/exported visual identity should be suitable for further use in graphic design products. A combination of unsuitable properties and file format(s) may be credited within MB1 whereas both the image properties and choice of file format(s) for the visual identity would need to be appropriate for MB3.

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Task	Assessment guidance
	Strand 2b The first part of this strand, covering the preparation of assets, is assessed quantitatively. This should be clearly and explicitly evidenced as a preliminary activity before the creation of the actual digital graphic. If the preparation of assets is only implied in the final graphic, then MB1 would be appropriate. For MB3, all of the assets to be used in the digital graphic should be prepared at a suitable resolution. The second part is about the use of technical skills to prepare the assets and the assessment is qualitative in nature. The ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the technical compatibility of the assets is a key determinant for the higher mark bands. Ensuring the dimensions, resolution and file format are suitable would be one way to meet this requirement. This should be supported by explicit evidence for the upper mark bands. If the evidence is only implied, then MB1 is appropriate. **Strand 2c** The first part of this strand assesses students' use of the tools and techniques found within image editing software applications to create the digital graphic. It is the degree to which students are effective in the use of the tools and techniques that is assessed at this stage, rather than the overall quality of the finished graphic. For the upper mark bands, students must evidence their skills in applying tools and techniques identified in the teaching content. Although Microsoft Office based applications are not disallowed, this is likely to constrain the opportunity for achievement to MB1 on the basis that many of the specified tools and techniques are not available. The second descriptor assesses the overall look and feel of the finished graphic. It also assesses the application of design concepts and the layout conventions of graphic design. The placement and inclusion of the visual identity contributes towards this criterion. For the upper mark band this should effectively apply design concepts and layout conventions in order to be visually appealing and engaging for the viewer. The third descriptor assesses how effectively the digital graphic meets the client's requirements. For the upper mark bands, the digital graphic would need to demonstrate a synergy or connection between what was wanted, the style of the visual identity and the content/layout of the finished graphic. When creating their digital graphic product, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create a digital graphic product. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2d** This strand is about saving and exporting the finished digital graphic in the two formats required by the parameters of the scenario. The image properties and file format contribute towards this and would need to be correct in both graphic files for the upper mark band. When exporting their graphic, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties. Best fit assessment should be applied by taking both versions of the digital graphic into account. If one of these was clearly inappropriate, then best fit would place the achievement in MB2 at best.

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Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R094: Visual identity and digital graphics		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Develop visual identity	2	Factors influencing product design
2	Plan digital graphics for products	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Create visual identity and digital graphics	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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4.4 Unit R095: Characters and comics

Aims

Storytelling using images and characters has illustrated, commented on and enriched life from the earliest cave paintings to web comics and memes. Today's comics frequently have a distinctive style and a diverse yet loyal target audience. Central to a comic's appeal is the inclusion of characters which readers can engage or identify with. Whether a storyline is humorous and trivial or dark and philosophical, finding out how characters deal with events is what keeps readers entertained and engaged.

In this unit you will learn to design and create original characters that convey emotion and personality. You will also learn to set your characters within stories of your own making which flow logically and engage the reader. You will also learn to use conventions of comics to tell your characters' stories across multiple pages. Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative job roles within the media industry.

Unit R095: Characters and comics

Topic Area 1: Plan characters and comics

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Character features and conventions	
Types of character □ Cartoon □ Doodle □ Photorealistic □ Geometric shapes □ Minimalist/simplification	To include: • Different types of character and how they are used within comics
Features of characters □ Colour □ Shape □ Proportion	To include: • How different design style options are determined by sector, purpose and audience • Using colour to suit the target audience, and to indicate genre and style • Using shape and proportion to create character 'tropes' Does not include: • Researching/investigating specific characters and their characteristics
Characteristics and conventions □ Digital characters' physical and non-physical characteristics ▪ personality ▪ character trope (hero, villain) ▪ superpower □ Digital characters' facial characteristics and how they are used to convey emotion ▪ distortion ▪ proportion ▪ exaggeration ▪ anthropomorphism ▪ simplification □ Use of visual styles to create distinctive and recognisable characters	To include: • Conventions of types of character linked to their purpose and target audience • Representing non-physical characteristics in character design • Representing emotion and personality though facial characteristics e.g. eye size and proximity, eyebrow placement, mouth position and proportion • The distinguishing features of iconic visual styles created by Marvel, DC Comics, Shultz, Herge and Disney, and in types of comics like Manga Does not include: • History of comics • Character studies

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

1.2 Conventions of comics

Conventions of comic design and layout □ Colour □ Typography □ Text styling for narration and captions □ Text styling for onomatopoeia □ Text styling for communication □ Focal points within panels □ Environment/backgrounds	To include: • Using colour to depict genre or comic theme e.g. horror, sci-fi, romance, thriller/action, comedy, children's comic • The typography and text styles used in comics • Using focal points within each panel to draw the reader's eye to key points and support the story flow • Using environments and backgrounds to set the scene • How assets and components are used to create content within comics
Conventions for story telling within comics □ Comic panel shape/size □ Comic panel layout ▪ splash page ▪ spread ▪ rule of thirds ▪ panel staggering ▪ panel sequencing ○ western style ○ manga style □ Comic panel story flow □ Communication bubbles ▪ shape ▪ sequence ▪ placement □ Narration/captions ▪ style of caption and narration boxes ▪ positioning of boxes ▪ text style used in narration/caption boxes □ Onomatopoeia use	To include: • Using panel layout to convey the story flow/speed of action/content/passage of time • Using communication bubbles to convey expression/emotion and indicate the order communication should be read • Using narration/captions to convey meaning and tell the story • Using onomatopoeia for emphasis/exaggerated reaction
Creativity in characters and comics □ Originality □ Imaginative design □ Derivative design	To include: • How original work differs from adaptations to existing designs • How imaginative work can be derivative • How to balance following conventions with originality/imagination to produce creative products

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

1.3 Resources required to create characters and comics

Resources used to create characters and comics □ Graphics tablet □ Stylus □ Touchscreen □ Mouse/track pad □ Digital camera □ Scanner □ Computer system □ Physical modelling materials	To include: • The purpose and uses of resources to create characters and comics • Why designers use specific resources • The positive and negative impacts resource choice has on final products
Software used to create characters □ Digital graphics software □ Modelling software	To include: • The range of potential software used to create characters and the tools within the software • The positive and negative impacts software and related tool choice has on final products
Software used to create comics □ DTP software □ Specialist comic creation software	To include: • The range of potential software used to create comics and the tools within the software • The positive and negative impacts software and related tool choice has on final products

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

1.4 Pre-production and planning documentation and techniques for characters and comics

Pre-production and planning for characters
□ Character design (aesthetics)
□ Character profiles
	To include:
	• Using a range of techniques for planning effective characters
	  ○ thumb nailing
	  ○ hand drawn drafts
	  ○ using physical models for digital capture
	  ○ digitally created drafts
	• Using character profiles to plan the details of character behaviours/emotions, attributes, backstory, type or role (antagonist/protagonist)
	Does not include:
	• Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts

Pre-production and planning for comics
□ Plot structure
  ▪ beginning – exposition, introduce character, setting, conflict
  ▪ middle – rising action to climax or turning point
  ▪ end – falling action and resolution
□ The story arc
  ▪ key parts of a storyline structure
  ▪ graphical representation of the story arc
□ Story script
□ Storyboard
□ Panel shape/styling and placement to create effective story flow
□ Panel shot types and their meaning
  ▪ close up/extreme close up
  ▪ wide shot
  ▪ over the shoulder
  ▪ establishing shot
  ▪ medium shot
□ Panel content
	To include:
	• Planning comic plot structures
	• Using story arc plans (graph style with time across the x axis and key points plotted and annotated along it)
	• Using scripts to plan the communication within comics
	• Planning panel shape, size and positioning to display different meanings
	• Creating panel layout and story flow plans
	• Using a range of different shot types to convey meaning in each comic panel
	• Using pre-production and planning documentation such as visualisation diagrams and storyboards to draft out panel content
	Does not include:
	• Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

Topic Area 2: Create characters and comics

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Techniques to obtain and create components for use within comics	
Technical skills to create characters for use as components within comics □ Tools within digital character creation (graphics editing/modelling) software ▪ drawing tools ▪ colour tools ▪ arrangement tools	To include: • Using software skills and tools which support effective character design e.g. ○ splines, curves, beziers ○ node editing ○ nurbs, polygons, wireframes ○ shading, shadows, fills, gradient, lighting effects ○ textures, materials ○ colour, shape, texture, size ○ grouping, layering ○ model making • Saving characters in suitable file formats for use as components in comic creation software
Techniques for creating assets for use as components within comics □ Sourcing assets □ Editing assets □ Saving/exporting assets	To include: • Using techniques to source, prepare and create graphical assets with suitable properties and formats for use as components within comic creation software • Using techniques to source and/or create suitable typographical styles, including downloading and saving fonts • Using techniques to edit characters and backgrounds e.g. add filters or effects • Using techniques to prepare assets for use within comics e.g. background removal from hand drawn/photographed assets • Saving assets in file formats supported by comic creation software
2.2 Technical skills to create comics	
Techniques for combining assets into comic panels □ Panel layouts □ Typographical styles □ Graphical assets □ Focal points □ Story flow	To include: • Using generic and specific comic creation software to ○ create suitable panel layouts on single and multiple pages to support story flow ○ create suitable typographical style ○ insert graphical assets into panels ○ establish focal points within panels by cropping, zooming in or out or adding auto-shapes
Techniques and skills to transfer a script, storyline or storyboard into a comic strip □ Integrating the script/story flow using ▪ speech bubbles ▪ thought bubbles ▪ narration and captions	To include: • Using elements of scripts/storylines/storyboards to create comics ○ stage directions become visuals (images) or onomatopoeia ○ thoughts and dialogue become thought or speech bubbles ○ stage directions for change of setting or scene become captions on new panels

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

2.3 Techniques to save and publish characters and comics

Techniques used to save and publish characters in suitable formats □ Native file formats in character creation (graphics editing/modelling) software □ Techniques for exporting	To include: • Using native, software specific formats to maintain editable versions of characters • Exporting characters for use within comics using suitable file formats and properties
Technical skills to save and export/ publish comics □ Comic strip native file formats □ Techniques for exporting ▪ Suitable for print ▪ Suitable for high quality print ▪ Suitable for digital distribution	To include: • Saving comics in native software using propriety formats to maintain editable versions during creation • Using settings/process to prepare comics for use in a range of contexts Does not include • Print set up of PDFs using pre-flight/colour space/ embedded fonts/crop/bleed marks

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

Topic Area 3: Review characters and comics

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Techniques to check and review characters and comics	
Techniques to check the technical properties of characters and comics □ Methods of checking ▪ checklist □ Elements of character and comics to check ▪ character resolution ▪ character characteristics ▪ comic resolution ▪ comic design conventions	To include: • The structure, content and use of checklists • How to record check results • Checking the suitability of the resolution of characters for use within comics • Checking the sizes, shapes, colours, proportions, orientations, physical, non-physical and facial characteristics of characters for use within the comics • Checking file sizes and resolutions used for comics • Checking the suitability of application of design conventions in the comic e.g. comic panel shape, size, layout, story flow, communication bubble and caption use, onomatopoeia use Does not include: • Detailed use of formal test tables to document checks, noise (luminance or colour), peer or client testing/focus group feedback
Techniques to review characters and comics □ Suitability for client requirements □ Suitability for target audience ▪ suitability of content ▪ suitability of story ▪ accessibility □ Review of visual steal quality, aesthetics, appeal and reader engagement	To include: • Strengths and weaknesses of created characters and comics • Comparing created characters and comics against client briefs, client requirement lists or success criteria • Assessing the appropriateness of chosen styles and approaches/conventions for clients and target audiences • Assessing fitness for purpose e.g. adverts should advertise; promotions should promote Does not include: • Client/peer/focus group feedback or review, questionnaires, vox pop

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Unit R095: Characters and comics

3.2 Improvements and further developments

Constraints which limit the effectiveness of characters and comics □ Character and comic constraints ▪ time ▪ resource ▪ hardware ▪ software ▪ skills □ Character improvements ▪ unmet areas of client brief ▪ target audience considerations/engagement that need to be better fulfilled □ Comic improvements ▪ unmet areas of client brief ▪ target audience considerations/engagement that need to be better fulfilled ▪ accessibility improvements	To include: • How the quality of created comics is constrained by time, resource, hardware, software, skills • The feasible improvements to created characters and comics in terms of client requirements and target audience engagement
Further development opportunities for characters and comics □ Further developments ▪ comic sequel/next editions ▪ themed editions ▪ storyline serialisation/cliff-hanger endings ▪ character development/additions ▪ spin off products: books, TV, film, merchandise	To include: • How successful characters and comics can lead to repeat business/further commissions from clients • How different resources, software, budget and skills could help characters and comics to be developed further • How to devise further developments in terms of client requirements and target audiences

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R095 – Topic Area 1: Plan characters and comics		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces a **basic** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **limited**.	Produces an **adequate** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **sound**.	Produces an **effective** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **comprehensive**.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Produces **basic** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **few** elements of the final product.	Produces **adequate** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **some** elements of the final product.	Produces **detailed** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **all** elements of the final product.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Demonstrates **limited** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **sound** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **comprehensive** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.

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Unit R095 – Topic Area 1: Plan characters and comics Unit R095 – Topic Area 2: Create characters and comics		
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity in the components are **limited** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components supports the creation of the final product in a **limited** way.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity in the components are **adequate** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components **partly** supports the creation of the final product.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **effective**. Conventions and creativity in the components are **fully** fit for purpose. The range of components **fully** supports the creation of the final product.
MB1: 1–5 marks	**MB2: 6–10 marks**	**MB3: 11–14 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the final product is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity are applied in the final product in a **limited** way. Final product is **limited** in its fitness for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity are **adequately** applied in the final product. Final product is **adequately** fit for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **effective**. Conventions and creativity are **effectively** applied in the final product. Final product is **fully** fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Formats of the saved/exported components are **limited** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **adequate** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **clearly** appropriate. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **clearly** appropriate.

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Unit R095 – Topic Area 1: Plan characters and comics Unit R095 – Topic Area 3: Review characters and comics		
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–7 marks**	**MB3: 8–10 marks**
Testing/checking is **limited** in its effectiveness in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **limited** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **partly** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **sound** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **fully** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **critical** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Recommendations demonstrate **limited** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations have **limited** explanation.	Recommendations demonstrate **sound** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **partly** explained.	Recommendations demonstrate **comprehensive** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **fully** explained.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** For Mark Band (MB)1, students may have simply stated the chosen audience and restated the client. An explanation of the content or chosen style of the character and comic with reference to the client brief would be more appropriate for MB2 or MB3. An explanation of only one or two ways in which the intended product meets the client brief and appeals to the target audience would be suitable for MB1. MB3 could be achieved by explaining a few ways in great detail (depth) or by explaining many ways concisely (breadth). Diagrammatic representations would illustrate the interpretation, but would not be sufficient on their own to fulfil the requirement to explain for the upper mark bands. When interpreting the brief, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1b** Pre-production documentation for the character and comic could be presented in a number of different formats. Basic planning for MB1 may cover only an outline of the character and an indication of the design of the comic, whereas detailed planning for MB3 would be expected to include depth. Demonstrating in detail the design of the character, comic content and layout would be one way to meet the upper MB criteria. It would be unlikely for any single pre-production document to cover 'all' elements of the final character and comic, and different types of planning document would be expected in order to show features of the character and both the layout and content of the comic to meet the criteria for the higher mark bands. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When planning their character and comic and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1c** This strand requires students to demonstrate understanding of how assets contribute to the effectiveness of the character and comic. A list of assets could be suitable for credit in MB1, but would not demonstrate understanding. A consideration of the technical properties of the assets chosen and reference to how the style or type of assets would appeal to the target audience or match the conventions of the product genre would be more appropriate for the requirements for MB3.
Task 2	**Strand 2a** The component parts in this instance are the visual elements and text-based assets. When creating the components, technical skills might be used to make sure suitable formats and sizes are used. The visual assets may be combined using appropriate software and technical skills in order to meet the criteria for MB3. Credit for digital graphics skills would be relevant for the upper mark bands when creating the visual component parts. Fitness for purpose in terms of conventions and creativity for MB3 could be credited if the content matches the genre and requirements set out in the client brief. Where components are a poor match in terms of genre or type, a mark in the lower band would be suitable. To fully support the creation of the final product for MB3, assets would need to be complete and technically fit for purpose. Few assets or types, or many assets but with limited technical suitability would be appropriately assessed in MB1.

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Task	Assessment guidance
	Strand 2b For MB1, the final product may be simplistic, incomplete or limited in its suitability as a comic that tells a story. Some evidence of the tools used to create the character and comic would support marks for this strand particularly if the product is not finished or exported. Students might present screenshots to show the technical skills and tools of the software in use during the creation process. This is particularly helpful to credit some marks if the editing software is unavailable to assessors and the final product is not exported. An original idea which does not follow the conventions of comic and character design would fit the criteria for MB1 in this strand for the conventions and creativity used. For the upper mark bands both originality and conventions should be evident in the character and comic. The criteria for fitness for purpose can be credited if the final product is suitable for the requirements specified by the client. Typographical errors and omissions would limit fitness for purpose and so the mark for this criterion would not be placed in the upper band. When creating their character and comic, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create an animation with audio. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2c** This strand assesses the appropriateness of the components and the final product (the finished comic). In order to meet the criteria for MB3, the character, assets and the comic should all be saved using appropriate formats and properties and saved suitably for the client to access. Where the comic is not exported from the native software, MB1 would be appropriate. For MB3, the naming of the final comic file to demonstrate relevance to the client would be one way to make sure it is clearly appropriate. When exporting their character and comic, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 3	Students must produce their own review applying what they have learnt and not be led through a process of reviewing their completed character and comic. **Strand 3a** At MB1 this may only outline a few checks, or may be limited by checking only some aspects. If results of the checks and re-checks are considered this would contribute to MB2, whereas to be fully effective for MB3 the technical properties should be considered comprehensively. An outline of how errors were resolved or prioritised for resolution would be appropriate for the upper end of the mark range. The second descriptor assesses understanding of the effectiveness of the character and comic for the client and target audience. If only the client or target audience are considered, a mark in MB1 may be suitable, whereas for MB3 both client and target audience, and the character and comic should be considered. Students may have explained how and why the character and comic would be effective. A list of checks on its own would not evidence understanding of effectiveness, only functionality; so, some form of account or explanation would be expected for MB2 and MB3. **Strand 3b** This strand requires an understanding of areas for improvement and further development, and an explanation of the recommendations. A list of aspects which underperformed when checked would demonstrate limited understanding for MB1. For MB3 students may have prioritised aspects to be addressed. Explaining which are the most important and why might be one way to demonstrate comprehensive understanding. Areas for improvement and further development should be explained with reference to the client requirements and target audience engagement in order to demonstrate comprehensive understanding for MB3, and should include both the character created and the final comic. If the only the character or comic are considered, a mark in MB1 would be suitable. Since there is no requirement for a prescribed number of improvements and developments, a few aspects considered and explained in detail could nevertheless meet the criteria for MB3.

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Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093.

The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R095: Characters and comics		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Plan characters and comics	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
2	Create characters and comics	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Review characters and comics	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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4.5 Unit R096: Animation with audio

Aims

Animation is used in a wide range of applications in the media industry. Gaming technologies, mobile phones, film making, interactive media and websites all use digital animation to enhance applications, entertain and inform the viewer. Music, sound effects and dialogue work alongside animated movement, conveying meaning and creating impact and engagement. This unit enables you to understand the basics of animation and audio for the media industry.

In this unit you will learn to plan animations with soundtracks based on client briefs. You will learn to use a range of tools and techniques to create, edit and combine audio and animated content and export and review completed animation with audio products. Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative and technical job roles within the media industry.

Unit R096: Animation with audio

Topic Area 1: Plan animation with audio

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Features and conventions of animation and audio	
Types and methods of animation and their distinguishing features □ Stop motion/claymation □ Time-lapse □ Motion capture □ Computer generated (CGI) □ Cel animation □ Cut out □ Flipbook animation	To include: • Differences between types of animation and the methods used to create them • When and where different types of animation are used Does not include: • The hardware/server/processing/rendering capacity required to generate HD CGI for the movie industry
The properties and features of audio □ Types of audio ▪ music ▪ narration/voiceover ▪ diegetic and non-diegetic sounds ▪ foley/SFX ▪ dialogue □ The properties of digital audio ▪ bit depth ▪ sample rate ▪ gain (volume) ▪ mono/stereo	To include: • The definitions of, and differences between, audio types • Which types of sounds are used when and for what purpose(s) • How background sounds, sound effects and music are used to enhance the main audio content of sequences • The importance of technical properties in ensuring clarity/audibility and separation between sounds Does not include: • Commercial/chart music production as a sector, song writing

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The purpose and conventions of animations □ Advertising/promotion □ Storytelling/narrative □ Information	To include: • How narratives are structured using the three-part story structure • Application of conventions of advertisements e.g. 'hook', 'sting', slogan • Using information, product branding or brand/product recognition • Using shot types and camera angles to convey meaning e.g. power structures, passage of time, movement, change of focus or emphasis
Conventions used in audio to meet a purpose □ Mood/emotion □ Scene setting □ Structure of audio products □ Timing and synchronisation with visuals	To include: • Using humour, breaking with expectations/the norm or shock tactics to help make an animation's key message memorable and effective • Using foley and sound effects to enhance movement and support visuals • Using dialogue for animated characters and voiceover/narration • Using voice pace/timbre/pitch/accent to convey character types and tropes • Using diegetic and non-diegetic sound • Using tempo, style of music and choice of instrumentation to enhance mood/emotive content • Using stings and jingles to create impact and engagement
Creativity in animation with audio □ Originality □ Imaginative design □ Derivative design	To include: • How original work differs from adaptations to existing designs • How imaginative work can be derivative • How to balance following conventions with originality/imagination to produce creative products

1.2 Resources required to create animation with audio

Resources used in animation □ Hardware and peripherals ▪ cameras ▪ tripods ▪ rigging ▪ sets and materials for stop motion animation ▪ cameras and scanners for digitising animation assets □ Animation software	To include: • The purpose and uses of a range of hardware used to create animation • Why designers use specific hardware • The positive and negative impacts hardware choice has on final products • The range of potential software available for creating 2D/3D animation and tools within the software • The positive and negative impacts software and related tool choice has on final products Does not include: • Investigation and comparison of technical features of different software packages for animation creation

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Unit R096: Animation with audio

Resources used to capture audio □ Hardware and peripherals ▪ microphone ▪ recording devices □ Audio capture software	To include: • The purpose and uses of software, hardware and tools available for capturing and recording mono, stereo and binaural audio • The suitability and key features of different microphone types and software applications, USB 'lag' and delay • Why designers use specific resources • The positive and negative impacts resource choice has on final products Does not include: • A requirement to investigate or test all equipment types
1.3 Pre-production and planning documentation and techniques for animation with audio	
Planning techniques for animation with audio □ Pre-production documentation for content ▪ storyboards ▪ scripts ▪ timelines ▪ graphic scores □ Planning for style ▪ style of animation and audio appropriate for clients and audiences	To include: • Using documentation for planning animations and audio sequences to show how the visuals and audio are integrated and synchronised in animations. Planning could show how movement is to be achieved, as well as which audio elements are dominant (louder than others) at a particular time • Using animation and audio style to maximise engagement for target audiences Does not include • Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts • Original 2D/3D character design

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Unit R096: Animation with audio

Topic Area 2: Create animation with audio

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Techniques to obtain, create and manage assets	
Visual animation assets □ Techniques and tools used to create digital visual animation assets ▪ image editing software tools ▪ animation software tools ▪ exporting, saving and asset management □ Techniques used to create, import/digitise and edit non-digital or physical visual animation assets □ Creating physical sets, objects and characters and lighting them effectively ▪ scanning ▪ photography ▪ video ▪ export, save and asset management	To include: • Using drawing and editing tools to create objects, characters and backgrounds, using image editing and/or animation software and saving them ready for use • Using group elements together or breaking elements apart before creating movement • Naming, saving and organising assets within libraries in animation software and/or in folders outside the animation software • Organising and preparing pre-made assets from libraries within animation software • Creating models or sets ready to animate, using lighting (inbuilt flash or external light sources) to make sure subjects and objects are effectively lit • Setting up fixed camera viewpoints using camera, tripod and marks to ensure continuity • Using techniques for digitising hand drawn/cel drawn and stop-motion footage using scanners, cameras and video cameras, selecting appropriate settings to digitise images at the required resolution and colour depth, which cameras support time-lapse frame capture • Saving digitised visual content in a format which is compatible with animation software
Audio animation assets □ Techniques used to record and source audio assets ▪ recording techniques ▪ libraries ▪ saving and asset management □ Techniques used to import/digitise and edit audio assets ▪ importing, trimming, editing, mixing and enhancing sounds in audio editing software ▪ exporting and asset management	To include: • Using techniques for creating sounds e.g. recording using appropriate equipment • Minimising extraneous/unwanted noise when recording live sound • Locating and using libraries and stock sounds, music and sound effects when identifying and selecting pre-made audio content • Saving audio assets using suitable file formats which are compatible with audio editing software • Editing sounds in audio editing software using fade, gain, filter, noise removal, pitch, equalisation, inversion and effects tools • Exporting audio assets using suitable file formats which are suitable for use within animation software

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	Does not include: • Recording complete music tracks, orchestration, MIDI synthesis of scores • Comparison or investigation of different audio recording equipment e.g. microphone types and recording devices • Setting up or using a sound-proof recording studio/sound booth
2.2 Techniques used to create animation with audio	
Techniques used to create and edit animation □ Tools and techniques of animation creation software to generate and enhance movement ▪ timelines ▪ keyframes ▪ tweening ▪ layering ▪ saving in native file format to help version control and editing	To include: • Using tools and techniques of animation creation software to generate and enhance movement e.g. timelines, time shift, tweening, keyframes, shape and motion tweening, animation by ones or twos, onion skinning, layering, rigging (bones/ armatures), libraries, layers Does not include: • VR or AR animation tools and techniques
Techniques used to combine and edit digital audio to create soundtracks □ Tools and techniques of audio editing software to edit and combine sounds ▪ cut, split, trim and extend soundtracks ▪ use of multiple audio tracks within files ▪ mixing sounds ▪ enhancing sounds using effects ▪ techniques to save and export audio files in formats which are compatible with animation software	To include: • Using features of audio editing software to ○ combine audio using multiple tracks ○ mix audio using time shift, equalisation, audio compression, looping, ducking, generating silence ○ enhance audio by applying effects and altering parameters including fade, balance, gain, compression and equalisation • Saving and exporting audio considering file format, compression, optimisation, codecs and bit rate • Saving and exporting audio for use as components in animation with audio
Techniques used to integrate animation and audio components within animation software □ Tools and techniques of software to combine and synchronise animation with audio ▪ layers ▪ synchronisation ▪ volume control ▪ native file formats	To include: • Inserting audio into animation software as layers • Using key frames, splitting and time shift to synchronise movement/visual action with sounds • Editing volume and balance to make sure sounds are audible at appropriate levels • Saving files in native software for further editing • Synchronising visuals with finished audio 'soundtracks' by splitting and time shifting animated visuals • Synchronising audio with visuals by inserting separate sounds as assets into the animation software to synchronise with completed visual content Does not include: • Live motion capture • Lip sync using apps

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Unit R096: Animation with audio

2.3 Techniques to save and export animation with audio

Techniques used to save and export audio □ Native file formats in audio software □ Techniques for exporting	To include: • Using native, software specific formats to maintain editable versions of audio • Exporting audio for use within animation using suitable file formats and properties

Technical skills to save and export animation with audio
□ Animation native file formats
□ Export formats suitable for digital distribution
	To include:
	• Saving animation in native software using propriety formats to maintain editable versions during creation
	• Using settings/process to export animation for digital distribution including
	  ○ compatibility with smartphones and tablets
	  ○ compatibility with streaming/apps/download sites/platforms such as Vimeo, YouTube

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Unit R096: Animation with audio

Topic Area 3: Review animation with audio

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Techniques to test/check and review animation with audio	
Techniques to test/check the technical properties of animation with audio □ Methods of testing and checking ▪ test plan ▪ checklist ▪ success criteria □ Elements of animation and audio to test/check ▪ length ▪ animated movement ▪ audio ▪ synchronisation of visual and audio elements ▪ format of the product	To include: • The structure, content and use of test plans, checklists and success criteria • How to record test/check results and how and when to retest • How and why to test iteratively during both during production and post-production • Checking the quality of visual elements e.g. frame rate, smoothness, lag • Checking the quality of audio elements e.g. volume, mixing, distortion, clarity • Checking synchronisation of visual and audio elements at key points in animations to make sure sounds match the visual content • Checking the suitability of file formats used for animations with audio product against lists of compatible formats with the intended platforms, devices or distribution channels Does not include: • Peer or client testing/focus group feedback
Techniques to review the fitness for purpose of completed animation with audio □ Suitability for client requirements □ Suitability for target audience ▪ suitability of content ▪ accessibility □ Review of audio-visual quality, aesthetics, appeal and engagement	To include: • Strengths and weaknesses of created animation with audio • Comparing created animation with audio against client briefs, client requirement lists or success criteria • Assessing the appropriateness of chosen styles and approaches/conventions for clients and target audiences • How to assess fitness for purpose e.g. adverts should advertise; promotions should promote Does not include: • Client/peer/focus group feedback or review, questionnaires, vox pop

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Unit R096: Animation with audio

3.2 Improvements and further developments

Constraints which limit the effectiveness of animation with audio □ Animation with audio constraints ▪ time ▪ resources ▪ hardware ▪ software ▪ skills □ Animation with audio improvements ▪ overall style and design ▪ quality ▪ content and concept ▪ animation/visuals ▪ audio	To include: • How the quality of created animation with audio is constrained by time, resources, hardware, software, budget, legislation, skills • The feasible improvements to created animations with audio in terms of client requirements and target audience engagement
Further development opportunities for animation with audio □ Further developments ▪ length ▪ product type and placement ▪ story/narrative content ▪ reusing components ▪ cross platform media	To include: • How successful animations with audio can lead to repeat business/further commissions from a client • How different resources, software, budget and skills could help animation with audio to be developed further • How to devise further developments in terms of client requirements and target audience

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria below. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R096 – Topic Area 1: Plan animation with audio		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces a **basic** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **limited**.	Produces an **adequate** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **sound**.	Produces an **effective** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **comprehensive**.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Produces **basic** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **few** elements of the final product.	Produces **adequate** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **some** elements of the final product.	Produces **detailed** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **all** elements of the final product.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Demonstrates **limited** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **sound** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **comprehensive** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.

Unit R096 – Topic Area 1: Plan animation with audio Unit R096 – Topic Area 2: Create animation with audio		
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity in the components are **limited** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components supports the creation of the final product in a **limited** way.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity in the components are **adequate** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components **partly** supports the creation of the final product.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **effective**. Conventions and creativity in the components are **fully** fit for purpose. The range of components **fully** supports the creation of the final product.

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Unit R096 – Topic Area 1: Plan animation with audio Unit R096 – Topic Area 2: Create animation with audio		
MB1: 1–5 marks	**MB2: 6–10 marks**	**MB3: 11–14 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the final product is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity are applied in the final product in a **limited** way. Final product is **limited** in its fitness for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity are **adequately** applied in the final product. Final product is **adequately** fit for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **effective**. Conventions and creativity are **effectively** applied in the final product. Final product is **fully** fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Formats of the saved/exported components are **limited** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **adequate** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **clearly** appropriate. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **clearly** appropriate.

Unit R096 – Topic Area 1: Plan animation with audio Unit R096 – Topic Area 3: Review animation with audio		
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–7 marks**	**MB3: 8–10 marks**
Testing/checking is **limited** in its effectiveness in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **limited** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **partly** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **sound** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **fully** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **critical** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Recommendations demonstrate **limited** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations have **limited** explanation.	Recommendations demonstrate **sound** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **partly** explained.	Recommendations demonstrate **comprehensive** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **fully** explained.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** For Mark Band (MB)1, students may have simply stated the chosen audience and restated the client. An explanation of the content or chosen style of the animation with audio with reference to the client brief would be more appropriate for MB2 or MB3. An explanation of only one or two ways in which the intended product meets the client brief and appeals to the target audience would be suitable for MB1. MB3 could be achieved by explaining a few ways in great detail (depth) or by explaining many ways concisely (breadth). Diagrammatic representations would illustrate the interpretation but would not be sufficient on their own to fulfil the requirement to explain for the upper mark bands. When interpreting the brief, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1b** Pre-production documentation for the animation with audio could be presented in a number of different formats. Basic planning for MB1 may cover only the sequence of visual elements and an indication of the types of sounds which accompany the animation, whereas detailed planning for MB3 would be expected to include depth in both the animation and audio together with how they are to be combined. It would be unlikely for any single pre-production document to cover 'all' elements of the final animation with audio, and different types of planning document would be expected in order to meet the criteria for the higher mark bands. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When planning their animation with audio and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1c** This strand requires students to demonstrate understanding of how assets contribute to the effectiveness of the animation with audio. A list of assets could be credited in MB1, but would not demonstrate understanding. A consideration of the technical properties of the assets chosen and reference to how the style or type of assets would appeal to the target audience or match the conventions of the product genre could contribute to meeting the requirements for MB3.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 2	**Strand 2a** The component parts in this instance are the visual elements and the audio assets. When creating the visual components, technical skills might be used to make sure the images are suitable formats and sizes. For the audio components, file format, size and clarity of the sounds would need to be suitable for the upper mark bands. The audio assets may be mixed and edited together using a range of technical skills of appropriate software in order to meet the criteria for MB3. Digital graphics and animation skills would contribute to the upper mark bands when creating the visual component parts. Fitness for purpose in terms of conventions and creativity for MB3 could be credited if the visual and audio content matches the genre and product type set out in the client brief. Where either the audio or visual components are a poor match in terms of genre or type a mark in the lower band would be suitable. Components support the creation of the final product by virtue of their range and their properties. To fully support the creation of the final product for MB3, assets would need to be complete and technically fit for purpose. Few assets or types, or many assets but with limited technical suitability would be appropriately assessed in MB1. **Strand 2b** For MB1, the final product may be simplistic, incomplete or limited in its suitability for the client brief. Some evidence of the tools used to create the animation with audio would support marks for this strand particularly if the product is not finished or exported. Students might present screenshots to show the technical skills and tools of the software in use during the creation process. This is particularly helpful to credit some marks if the editing software is unavailable to assessors and the final product is not exported. An original idea which does not follow the conventions of the product type specified in the client brief would fit the criteria for MB1 in this strand for the conventions used and creativity. For credit in the upper mark bands both creativity and conventions should be evident in the final product. Fitness for purpose could be achieved by ensuring the final product is of a suitable length and uses the content specified by the client. Typographical errors and omissions would limit fitness for purpose and so consequently the mark for this descriptor would not be placed in the upper band. When creating their animation with audio, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create an animation with audio. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2c** This strand assesses the appropriateness of the components (the visual and audio assets) and the final product (the finished animation with audio). In order to meet the criteria for MB3, the images and sounds should all be saved using appropriate formats and properties so that they can be combined in the final product. Where the final product does not combine animation and audio or is not exported from the native software, MB1 would be appropriate. For MB3, the naming of the final product file would contribute, to demonstrate relevance to the client and make sure it is clearly appropriate. This criterion could also be supported by evidence that the file properties of the animation with audio are suitable for the output method or platform specified in the client brief. When exporting their animation with audio, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 3	Students must produce their own review. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process of reviewing their completed animation with audio. **Strand 3a** Review of the technical properties of the audio and animation components and the finished product could be presented as a completed test plan. At MB1 this may only outline a few tests, or may be limited by testing only one component (the visuals or the audio). If results and retests are considered this would contribute to MB2. An outline of how errors were resolved or prioritised for resolution might be expected at the upper end of the mark range. The components and product could be checked instead of or as well as testing. Evidence to support checking could include an account of how elements were watched or listened to, compared with the plans and designs and client brief and edited accordingly. To be fully effective for MB3, the technical properties should be considered comprehensively. The second descriptor assesses understanding of the effectiveness of the animation with audio for the client and target audience. If only the client or target audience are considered, a mark in MB1 may be suitable, whereas for MB3 both client and target audience, and the animation and audio as a single final product should be considered. For the upper mark bands, students should have explained how and why the final product would be effective. A test plan on its own would not evidence understanding of effectiveness, only functionality; so, some form of account or explanation would be expected for the upper mark bands. **Strand 3b** This strand requires an understanding of areas for improvement and further development, and an explanation of the recommendations. A list of aspects which failed when testing the components and product would demonstrate limited understanding for MB1. Areas for improvement and further development should be explained with reference to the client requirements and target audience engagement in order to demonstrate comprehensive understanding for MB3, and should include both visual and audio components. If the visuals or audio only are considered, a mark in MB1 would be suitable. For the upper mark bands, students may have considered amendments which would improve the effectiveness in terms of conventions as well as in technical terms. Since there is no requirement for a prescribed number of improvements and developments, a few aspects considered and explained in extensive detail could nevertheless meet the criteria for MB3.

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Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R096: Animation with audio		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Plan animation with audio	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
2	Create animation with audio	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Review animation with audio	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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4.6 Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Aims

Interactive digital media products are found across the media industry, in games, websites and apps, learning and knowledge based systems, simulations and in commerce. At the heart of digital media products is a fusion of media rich content including text, images, sounds, video and animation. This content is combined with UX and UI design to create an immersive and engaging environment which can promote, educate, entertain, inform or influence.

In this unit you will learn to design and create interactive digital media products for chosen platforms. You will learn to select, edit and repurpose multimedia content of different kinds and create the structure and interactive elements necessary for an effective user experience. Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative and technical job roles within the media industry.

Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Topic Area 1: Plan interactive digital media

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Types of interactive digital media, content and associated hardware	
The format types of interactive digital media □ Websites □ Information points □ Mobile apps □ E-learning products □ Digital maps □ Games	To include: • The different formats interactive digital media takes • How format is linked to the purpose of interactive digital media products • How format is linked to the audience of interactive digital media products • How devices used to access interactive digital media products impact on its format
Content used in interactive digital media □ Images □ Audio □ Video □ Animation □ Text □ Tables □ Lists □ Forms □ Navigational buttons □ Maps □ Quiz □ Layers	To include: • How each type of content is used in interactive digital media products • What each content type is used for • How assets are used to create content • How the form and structure of interactive digital media products is affected by digital media content • How the form and structure of interactive digital media products is affected by the audience and purpose
Hardware devices used to access interactive digital media □ Computers □ Games consoles □ Kiosks □ Phones □ Smart TV □ Tablets	To include: • The range of devices used to access interactive digital media • How the devices used to access interactive digital media are linked to purpose and audience of products • How to adapt content to suit different access methods

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	Does not include: • Technical specifications of hardware and software needed to host interactive digital media products
Methods of user interaction within interactive digital media □ Touch screen/stylus □ Voice controls □ Camera input □ Keyboard/buttons □ Mouse/joystick control	To include: • How each method of user interaction can be used to interact with interactive digital media products • Selecting appropriate applications for each method of user interaction
1.2 Features and conventions of interactive digital media	
Features of interactive digital media design □ GUI (graphical user interface) design ▪ consistent use of layout ▪ colour scheme ▪ house style ▪ typography selection ▪ white space □ Interface and interaction styles ▪ click ▪ touch/gesture ▪ voice control ▪ motion/movement ▪ drag/drop ▪ feedback/closure □ Accessibility ▪ alternate text ▪ text readability ▪ captions ▪ contrasting colour ▪ resizable text ▪ flexible input ▪ mobile device accessibility ▪ screen size and orientation adjustments	To include: • What makes an effective GUI • Differences between types of interface and interaction styles including advantages to users • Technical limitations of interface and interaction styles • Selecting appropriate interfaces and interaction styles • Non-linear navigation and its benefits • The importance of accessibility and how each accessibility feature assists users • Selecting appropriate accessibility features
Conventions of interactive digital media □ Non-linear navigation □ User friendly intuitive interfaces □ Suitability for target audiences	To include: • Applying conventions to create effective interface designs
Creativity in interactive digital media □ Originality □ Imaginative design □ Derivative design	To include: • How original work differs from adaptations to existing designs • How imaginative work can be derivative • How to balance following conventions with originality/imagination to produce creative products

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Unit R097: Interactive digital media

1.3 Resources required to create interactive digital media products

Hardware used to create interactive digital media □ Computer □ Mouse/trackpad □ Stylus □ Monitor □ Graphics tablet □ Touch screen □ Microphone □ Digital camera	To include: • How different hardware is used to create interactive digital media products • Why designers use particular hardware devices • The positive and negative impacts hardware choice has on final products
Software used to create interactive digital media products □ Web authoring software □ App creation software □ Authoring tools □ Kiosk interface software	To include: • How different software applications and their tools are used to create interactive digital media • Why designers use particular software applications • The positive and negative impacts software and related tool choice has on final products

1.4 Pre-production and planning documentation and techniques for interactive digital media

Pre-production documentation for interface planning □ Wire frames □ Storyboards Pre-production documentation and planning for content □ Master page/page template design □ Asset table □ Assets to form content ▪ position of assets ▪ purpose of assets □ Properties of assets linked to purpose ▪ age appropriateness ▪ quality ▪ size on screen □ Technical compatibility of assets ▪ file size ▪ file type ▪ resolution	To include: • Creating designs which include all aspects of interactive digital media ○ screen designs ○ colour scheme, text, layout ○ navigation features ○ GUI (menus, buttons, links) ○ interaction with media elements • Planning the content of interactive digital media products • Using conventions of interactive digital media when planning user interface layouts • Planning the properties of assets needed to meet client requirements • Planning assets that are technically suitable for interactive digital media products and client requirements Does not include: • Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts • Visualisation diagrams • Asset sourcing
Pre-production documentation and planning for user interaction □ Navigation and hierarchy diagrams □ Interactive features and controls	To include: • Planning the navigation between pages/scenes and interactive elements • Planning user interaction • Planning responses to interaction (feedback/closure)

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Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Topic Area 2: Create interactive digital media

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Technical skills to create and/or edit and manage assets for use within interactive digital media products	
□ Techniques for sourcing suitable assets ▪ advanced searching ▪ search by feature/property ▪ search by licence ▪ libraries	To include: • Using search tools to source assets which are suitable for use within interactive digital media • Locating and using libraries and stock media, when identifying and selecting pre-made digital media content • Saving and exporting assets as suitable file sizes/ formats for use as components within interactive digital media
Static image assets □ Types ▪ vector ▪ bitmap □ Techniques to repurpose image assets ▪ adjust brightness/contrast and colour ▪ adjust image/canvas size ▪ apply filters ▪ apply transformations ▪ retouching	To include: • Using software tools and techniques to create and repurpose static image assets • Using vector and bitmap images appropriately • Adjusting brightness and contrast, levels, colour balance, hue, saturation • Changing image/canvas size - expanding or modifying • Using filters and effects to enhance visual appeal - stylise, monochrome, colour toning, vignette, sharpen • Applying transformations to correct or distort objects - flip, skew, rotate • Using retouching techniques to remove unwanted elements - using cloning, healing, blur, colour swatches, colour picker, pencil, brush, background removal • Saving and exporting assets as suitable file sizes/ formats for use as components within interactive digital media
Audio assets □ Types ▪ sound effects ▪ narration ▪ music □ Techniques to repurpose audio ▪ cut ▪ split ▪ trim ▪ extend ▪ optimise file size/format ▪ enhancing sounds in audio editing software ▪ volume editing	To include: • Using software tools and techniques to create and repurpose audio assets • Importing sound to create assets • Trimming/cutting/splitting unwanted parts of sound assets • Joining sounds together to extend sound assets • Adjusting volume of sound assets • Saving and exporting assets as suitable file sizes/ formats for use as components within interactive digital media

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Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Moving image assets □ Types ▪ video ▪ animation/animated assets □ Techniques to repurpose moving images ▪ cut ▪ split ▪ trim ▪ extend ▪ speed/pitch tempo ▪ optimise file size/format	To include: • Using software tools and techniques to repurpose video assets • Importing video footage to create assets • Placing and sequencing video assets along timelines • Trimming/cutting unwanted parts of video assets • Adjusting brightness and colour of video assets • Saving and exporting assets as suitable file sizes/ formats for use as components within interactive digital media
Interactive assets □ Types ▪ diagrams ▪ maps ▪ buttons/roll over buttons ▪ banners ▪ navigation bars ▪ forms	To include: • Using software tools and techniques to create interactive elements
2.2 Technical skills to create interactive digital media	
Product folder management □ Structure of the product folder ▪ root, images, media content, styles □ File naming conventions	To include: • Structuring product folders within creation software • Using naming conventions to facilitate file management within product creation software Does not include: • Structuring and naming of files unrelated to the product
Techniques to create □ Master page/template elements ▪ house style ▪ navigation system ▪ fixed/editable content □ Master page/template □ Product content □ Playback controls □ Triggers and behaviours	To include: • Implementing effective house styles within master pages/templates e.g. colour scheme, font styles, layout, fixed content, editable content/regions • Creating structures for navigation systems for interactive digital media e.g. navigation bar, buttons, rollovers, hyperlinks, hotspots • Using master pages/templates within interactive digital media products to ensure consistent styling e.g. singular and multipage templates/master page used to create a set of stylised pages each conforming to the house style • Inserting content into interactive digital media products e.g. text, images, tables, lists, sound, video, audio, maps, forms

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	• Setting up playback controls within interactive digital media products e.g. navigation buttons, rollover buttons • Setting up triggers and behaviours within interactive digital media products e.g. pop-up messages, drag and drop, scoring and reporting, user input, customised screen messages and feedback, closure
2.3 Techniques to save and export/publish interactive digital media	
Saving interactive digital media products during creation □ Interactive digital media products native file formats □ Version control	To include: • Saving interactive digital media products in native software using propriety formats to maintain editable versions during creation • Using version control and naming conventions to help rollback of features during the testing phase
Exporting/publishing finished interactive digital media products □ Techniques for exporting/publishing □ Platform independent file formats	To include: • Using settings/processes to export/publish finished interactive digital media products • Using appropriate file formats for interactive digital media products to be used without requiring installation of specialist software, compatibility of file formats with platforms and devices Does not include: • Publishing finished products to online locations

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Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Topic Area 3: Review interactive digital media

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Techniques to test/check and review interactive digital media	
Techniques to test/check the technical properties of interactive digital media □ Methods of testing and checking ▪ test plan ▪ checklist ▪ success criteria □ Elements of interactive media to test/check ▪ testing input or behaviours ○ trying to break inputs ○ testing by following navigation paths or by deliberately not ▪ functionality tests ○ navigation ○ interactivity ○ inputs and outputs Performance of multimedia assets ▪ testing multimedia functions ○ testing playback/appearance ○ testing volume/quality ○ testing user controls for multimedia	To include: • The structure, content and use of test plans, checklist and success criteria • How to record test results and how and when to retest • How and why to test iteratively both during production post-production • Planning and carrying out a range of functionality tests to make sure interactive digital media products function as intended • Checking the component quality of interactive digital media products • Checking the suitability of file formats used for interactive digital media against lists of compatible formats with the intended platforms, devices or distribution channels Does not include: • Peer or client testing/focus group feedback • Performance tuning and debugging, black and white box testing, soak testing, load testing, regression testing
Techniques to review the fitness for purpose of completed interactive digital media □ Suitability for client requirements □ Suitability for target audience ▪ suitability of content ▪ accessibility □ Review of audio-visual quality, aesthetics, appeal, interaction, and engagement	To include: • Strengths and weaknesses of created interactive digital media • Comparing created interactive digital media products against client briefs, client requirement lists or success criteria • Assessing the appropriateness of chosen styles and approaches/conventions for clients and target audiences • Assessing fitness for purpose e.g. adverts should advertise; promotions should promote Does not include: • Client/peer/focus group feedback or review, questionnaires, vox pop

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Unit R097: Interactive digital media

3.2 Improvements and further developments

Constraints which limit the effectiveness of interactive digital media □ Interactive digital media constraints ▪ time ▪ resources ▪ hardware ▪ software ▪ skills □ Interactive digital media improvements ▪ overall style and design ▪ quality ▪ content and concept ▪ animation/video ▪ audio	To include: • How the quality of created interactive digital media products are constrained by time, resources, hardware, software, budget, legislation, skills • The feasible improvements to created interactive digital media products in terms of client requirements and target audience engagement
Further development opportunities for digital media □ Further developments ▪ scope ▪ additional multimedia elements ▪ more or different interactivity ▪ altering product type	To include: • How successful interactive digital media products can lead to repeat business/further commissions from a client • How different resources, software, budget and skills could help interactive digital media to be developed further • How to devise further developments in terms of client requirements and target audience

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R097 – Topic Area 1: Plan interactive digital media		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces a **basic** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **limited**.	Produces an **adequate** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **sound**.	Produces an **effective** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **comprehensive**.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Produces **basic** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **few** elements of the final product.	Produces **adequate** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **some** elements of the final product.	Produces **detailed** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **all** elements of the final product.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Demonstrates **limited** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **sound** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **comprehensive** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.

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Unit R097 – Topic Area 1: Plan interactive digital media Unit R097 – Topic Area 2: Create interactive digital media		
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity in the components are **limited** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components supports the creation of the final product in a **limited** way.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity in the components are **adequate** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components **partly** supports the creation of the final product.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **effective**. Conventions and creativity in the components are **fully** fit for purpose. The range of components **fully** supports the creation of the final product.
MB1: 1–5 marks	**MB2: 6–10 marks**	**MB3: 11–14 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the final product is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity are applied in the final product in a **limited** way. Final product is **limited** in its fitness for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity are **adequately** applied in the final product. Final product is **adequately** fit for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **effective**. Conventions and creativity are **effectively** applied in the final product. Final product is **fully** fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Formats of the saved/exported components are **limited** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **adequate** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **clearly** appropriate. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **clearly** appropriate.

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Unit R097 – Topic Area 1: Plan interactive digital media Unit R097 – Topic Area 3: Review interactive digital media		
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–7 marks**	**MB3: 8–10 marks**
Testing/checking is **limited** in its effectiveness in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **limited** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **partly** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **sound** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **fully** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **critical** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Recommendations demonstrate **limited** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations have **limited** explanation.	Recommendations demonstrate **sound** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **partly** explained.	Recommendations demonstrate **comprehensive** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **fully** explained.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** For Mark Band (MB)1, students may have simply stated the chosen audience and restated the client. An explanation of the content or chosen style of the interactive digital media product with reference to the client brief would be more appropriate for MB2 or MB3. An explanation of only one or two ways in which the intended product meets the client brief and appeals to the target audience would be suitable for MB1. MB3 could be achieved by explaining a few ways in great detail (depth) or by explaining many ways concisely (breadth). Diagrammatic representations would illustrate the interpretation but would not be sufficient on their own to fulfil the requirement to explain for the upper two bands. When interpreting the brief, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1b** Pre-production documentation for the interactive digital media product could be presented in a number of different formats. Basic planning for MB1 may cover only the basic structure, layout and content of the product, whereas detailed planning for MB3 would be expected to include breadth and depth. Indicating how and where interactive digital media elements are combined and controlled would contribute meeting the upper MB criteria. It would be unlikely for any single pre-production document to cover 'all' elements of the final interactive digital media product. To meet the criteria for MB3, separate planning for different types of multimedia assets as well as planning for the final product itself would be expected. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When planning their interactive digital media product and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1c** This strand requires students to demonstrate understanding of how assets contribute to the effectiveness of the interactive digital media product. A list of assets could be credited in MB1, but would not demonstrate understanding. A consideration of the technical properties of the assets chosen and reference to how the style or type of assets would appeal to the target audience or match the conventions of the type of interactive digital media product to be created would contribute to meeting the requirements for MB3.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 2	**Strand 2a** The component parts in this instance are the navigation elements and the multimedia assets. When creating the components, technical skills might be used to edit and prepare assets in suitable formats, sizes and quality. Demonstrating the skills and knowledge to create and repurpose assets to make sure they are technically suitable would be required to meet the criteria for MB3. Audio and video assets may be mixed and edited separately or together using a range of technical skills of appropriate software in order to meet the criteria for MB3. Fitness for purpose in terms of conventions used and creativity for MB3 could be credited if the multimedia components match the content stipulated in the client brief, and by adhering to the conventions of the product type requested. Where either the multimedia components or the final product is a poor match in terms of genre, content or design style a mark in the lower band would be suitable. Components support the creation of the final product by virtue of their range (different kinds of multimedia), and their properties. To fully support the creation of the final product for MB3, assets would need to be complete and technically fit for purpose. Few assets or types, or many assets but with limited technical suitability would be appropriately assessed in MB1. **Strand 2b** For MB1, the final product may be simplistic, incomplete or limited in its suitability as an interactive digital multimedia product. Some evidence of the tools used to create the product would support marks for this strand particularly if it is incomplete. Students might present screenshots to show the technical skills and tools of the software in use during the creation process. This is particularly helpful to credit some marks if the editing software is unavailable to assessors and the final product is not exported. An original idea which does not follow the conventions of an interactive digital media product would fit the criteria for MB1 in this strand for the conventions used and creativity. For credit in the upper mark bands both creativity and conventions should be evident in the final product. The criteria for fitness for purpose can be met by ensuring the final product is of a suitable, complexity, format and style and contains the content specified by the client. Typographical errors and omissions would limit fitness for purpose and so the mark for this descriptor would not be placed in the upper band. When creating their interactive digital media product, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create an interactive digital media product. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2c** This strand assesses the appropriateness of the components (the multimedia assets) and the final product (the interactive digital media product). In order to meet the criteria for MB3, the assets would need to be saved using appropriate formats and properties so that they can be incorporated in the final product. Choices of multimedia assets based on technical suitability and appropriateness of content would contribute to marks in the upper bands. Where the final product does not combine multimedia assets or is not exported to a suitable format to meet the brief, MB1 would be appropriate. For MB3, the naming of the final product file would contribute to demonstrate relevance to the client would be one way to make sure it is clearly appropriate. This criterion could also be supported by evidence that the file properties of the interactive digital media product are suitable for the output method or platform specified in the client brief. When exporting their interactive digital media product, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 3	Students must produce their own review. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process of reviewing their completed interactive digital media product. **Strand 3a** Review of the technical properties of the components and the finished interactive digital media product could be presented as a completed test plan. At MB1 this may only outline a few tests, or may be limited by testing only one or two components. If results and retests are considered this would contribute to MB2. An outline of how errors were resolved or prioritised for resolution might be expected at the upper end of the mark range. The components and product could be checked instead of or as well as testing. Evidence to support checking could include an account of how elements were watched or listened to, compared with the plans and designs and client brief and edited accordingly. To be effective for MB3, the technical properties of the components and product should be considered comprehensively. The second descriptor assesses understanding of the effectiveness of the interactive digital media product for the client and target audience. If only the client or target audience are considered, a mark in MB1 may be suitable. For the upper mark band both client and target audience, and the multimedia components and final product should be considered. A test plan on its own would not evidence understanding of effectiveness, only functionality; so, some form of account or explanation would be expected for the upper mark bands. **Strand 3b** This strand requires an understanding of areas for improvement and further development, and an explanation of the recommendations. A list of aspects which failed when testing the interactive digital media product would demonstrate limited understanding for MB1. For MB3 students may have prioritised aspects to be addressed. Explaining which are the most important and why might be one way to demonstrate comprehensive understanding. Areas for improvement and further development should be explained with reference to the client requirements and target audience engagement in order to demonstrate comprehensive understanding for MB3, and should include both the component parts of the product and the interactive digital media product itself. If only the components or the interactive digital media product are considered, a mark in MB1 would be suitable. Since there is no requirement for a prescribed number of improvements and developments, a few aspects considered and explained in detail could nevertheless meet the criteria for MB3.

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Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R097: Interactive digital media		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Plan interactive digital media	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
2	Create interactive digital media	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Review interactive digital media	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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4.7 Unit R098: Visual imaging

Aims

Static and moving images are widely used in the media industry for products as diverse as news/journalism, print publishing, advertisements, movies and interactive media. Visual images can be used to capture a moment in time, create memories, promote a product or idea, evoke an emotional response or influence opinions.

In this unit you will learn how to apply the conventions of both static and moving images, which make up the language of visual imaging and communication.

You will plan and capture photographs and moving images using a digital camera and learn to edit and process photographs and video sequences to create meaningful products in response to client briefs. Completing this unit will equip you with a range of skills to use digital camera equipment and editing software and provide a basis for further study or creative and technical job within the media industry.

Unit R098: Visual imaging

Topic Area 1: Plan visual imaging portfolios

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Features and conventions of photographic images and videos	
Features and conventions of photographic images □ Composition □ Use and placement of props □ Visual style □ Lighting effects	To include: • How purpose is linked to the composition for specific products, abstract, promotion or documentary use (orientation for the intended product and use of white space for text additions) • How lighting and camera angle are used for visual impact Does not include: • Analysis of famous photographers' work in fields such as fashion, portraits or landscapes
Features and conventions of video sequences □ Camera work □ Camera orientation □ Lighting □ Platform and medium related conventions □ Post-production techniques □ Use of in-camera audio	To include: • How the purpose of video is linked to content, structure and sequence for advertisements, tutorials and film trailers • Key characteristics of video for journalism, sport, documentary and film genres • The convention of landscape orientation for video • Impact and meaning of different camera shot types • Impact and meaning of different transitions e.g. Jump cuts, fades, dissolves • How lighting is used to create a mood, combining ambient lighting with spot lighting to emphasise key elements • How in-camera audio enhances visual content • The additional content added in post-production for titles, graphics and special effects Does not include: • Detailed breakdown of films or film genre (action/adventure, film noir, comedy)

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Unit R098: Visual imaging	
Creativity in photography and video □ Originality □ Imaginative concepts □ Derivative ideas	To include: • How original work differs from copying what has been done before • How imaginative work can be derivative • How to balance following conventions with originality/imagination to produce creative products
1.2 Content used in visual imaging portfolios	
□ Physical content of recorded video ▪ people ▪ props ▪ scenes ▪ sets □ Assets ▪ audio and sounds ▪ motion graphics ▪ recorded footage ▪ sourced/stock footage	To include: • Physical content which is used within recorded video • Types of assets and where they are sourced Does not include: • Recording and editing audio and effects (Foley)
1.3 Equipment for capturing images and video	
Technical capabilities of camera equipment and accessories □ Photographic image capture □ Video recording	To include: • How image quality is affected by the type of camera (DSLR, CSC, compact, video camera, smartphone) • How the resolution (MP) affects the reproduction size of photographic images and their potential use • How the lens zoom/field of view affects the images that are obtained for the shooting distance • What video formats and aspect ratio (SD, HD, 4K, 8K, 3D/360) can be recorded • How the recording time is limited by memory card size and battery • How use of accessories improves image capture e.g. Tripod, photographic flash, video lights Does not include: • Practical use and skills in using all different types of camera equipment

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

1.4 Pre-production and planning documentation and techniques for photoshoots and video recordings

Pre-production documentation and planning techniques for photography and video recording □ Hand drawn/written plans □ Digitally created plans using software applications □ Shot lists □ Storyboard for video production	To include: • Creating shot lists to include what, where, when (subject, location, time of day) • Creating storyboards for use in video recording and editing • Creating and formatting scripts Does not include: • Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts
Pre-production documentation and planning for shots and video recording □ Location recce □ Choice of viewpoint □ Lighting considerations	To include: • Creating location recces to choose locations for shots and video recording • Identifying where flash and videos lights would improve image quality Does not include: • Using photographers planning apps for specific sun angles and elevation throughout the day
Pre-production documentation to assess and minimise hazards and risk □ Risk Assessment	To include • Identifying potential hazards to people or equipment when working in studios, indoor sets or outdoor locations • Identifying safe working practices to minimise the risks for identified hazards • Completing standard risk assessment forms before photoshoots Does not include: • How to create risk assessment forms from scratch

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

Topic Area 2: Create visual imaging portfolios

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Techniques and tools to take photographs	
Compositional choices for taking photographs □ Rule of thirds □ Leading lines □ Natural frames □ Orientation □ Composition for points of interest, anticipating movement	To include: • Using intersection points in the rule of thirds • Using lines that draw the viewer's eye into photographic images • Using natural objects within photographs to frame subjects • Using still cameras in portrait and landscape orientation • Leaving space in front of moving objects Does not include: • Advanced compositional concepts such as negative space, golden ratio
Camera settings, techniques and choices for taking photographs □ Exposure settings □ Shutter speed □ Aperture □ ISO □ Lens focal length □ Depth of field □ Exposure compensation □ White balance □ Photographic image format	To include: • Choosing suitable exposure modes for the subject • The effect of shutter speed and any movement (camera or subject) on images taken • The effect of aperture on depth of field in the images • Selecting the optimum ISO for different lighting conditions • Deciding on the focal length of lens and field of view for wide angle and telephoto settings (28mm-200mm) depending on subject and distance away • Using exposure compensation in difficult lighting situations • Using white balance (WB) settings with different light sources for accurate colours • Using fill in flash • Using photographic image formats (RAW and JPG) depending on lighting and image processing workflow Does not include: • Using lens filters, exposure bracketing, HDR, off camera flash, light modifiers, AF tracking, zone focusing, hyperfocal distance, front/rear curtain sync, time lapse, interval timer, medium format techniques for high pixel count cameras (36Mp+), colour profile

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

2.2 Techniques for processing photographic images

□ Adjustments to improve suitability ▪ sharpness ▪ brightness/contrast ▪ colour balance ▪ cropping ▪ correction tools □ Selection of images based on technical suitability □ Selection of images based on composition and aesthetic qualities	To include: • Checking image sharpness by viewing at 100% • Adjusting brightness/contrast using sliders or levels • Adjusting/correcting colour balance • Cropping unwanted edges or changing the aspect ratio • Using correction tools to include cloning and spot removal • Identifying the strongest images based on technical quality and composition • Rejecting low quality images due to technical problems or poor composition e.g. out of focus, camera shake (blur) or under/over exposed Does not include: • Composite images, adding text, creative graphics, applying filters and effects

2.3 Techniques and tools to record video footage

Technical settings for video recording □ Video format/resolution □ Lighting scenes and subjects □ Orientation □ Frame rate	To include: • Selecting quality settings for SD and HD video recording • Recording audio with video • Ensuring scenes and subjects are lit appropriately when recording video e.g. positioning relative to ambient and/or additional lighting • Applying the convention of landscape orientation for video use • Using standard frame rates for video 25/30fps • The use of higher frame rates for slow motion effects Does not include: • Cinematography techniques, manual exposure and focussing • Using external microphones or separate audio recording equipment
Techniques for recording video footage □ Framing □ Shot types □ Camera angles □ Camera movement	To include: • Using different shot types (close up, mid, long) • Using high and low camera angles • Using camera movement (pan, tilt, zoom, track/dolly motion) Does not include: • Track and dolly, Steadicam equipment, additional image stabilisation equipment

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

2.4 Techniques and tools for editing video footage

Tools and techniques for editing video (post-production) □ Cut/split □ Move/position on timeline □ Adjustments □ Transition effects □ Applying effects □ Editing of audio track □ Insertion of still images	To include: • Importing video footage to create assets • Placing and sequencing video assets along timelines • Trimming/cutting unwanted parts of video assets • Adjusting brightness and colour of video assets • Adding text and captions on different tracks • Watermarking video using text captions or layer overlay • Applying transitions between assets • Importing audio material (recorded in-camera or additional) • Editing volume of audio track Does not include: • Video special effects (VFX), chroma key, motion graphics

2.5 Techniques to save and publish/export portfolios of photographs and video sequences

Techniques for creating image portfolios in different media □ Contact sheets for proofing purposes □ Folder of image files □ Presentation □ Framed prints for exhibition or display □ Digital portfolios	To include: • Using low resolution copies for proofing purposes plus full resolution files for display, exhibition or storage as digital negatives/ masters • Using watermark images for copyright purposes Does not include: • Printing of photo quality images, colour calibration, profile conversion
Processes to create a video file for playback □ Rendering video □ Techniques for saving/exporting □ Video formats for different platforms	To include: • Using version control and native file formats to maintain editable and master versions of video sequences • Exporting video files using suitable formats for client use • Exporting video in formats for different platforms e.g. HD broadcast, YouTube, Vimeo, social media, interactive media Does not include: • File formats for cinema release or public distribution of commercial film

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

Topic Area 3: Review visual imaging portfolios

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Techniques used to check and review visual imaging portfolios	
Techniques to check the technical properties of visual imaging portfolios □ Methods of checking ▪ checklist □ Elements of visual imaging portfolio to check ▪ file size, properties and format ▪ playback testing for display size and media compatibility	To include: • The structure, content and use of checklists • Checking the suitability of resolutions and file formats used for portfolios of photographs for different devices, platforms and products e.g. print publishing, digital graphics • Checking running time, audio volume and onscreen duration of content for comprehension by audiences • Checking the suitability of file sizes and formats used for video sequences for different devices, platforms and distribution channels Does not include: • Detailed use of formal test tables to document checks, noise (luminance or colour), peer or client testing/focus group feedback
Techniques to review the fitness for purpose of visual imaging portfolios □ Suitability for client requirements □ Suitability for target audience ▪ suitability of content ▪ accessibility □ Review of visual quality, aesthetics, appeal and engagement	To include: • Strengths and weaknesses of created visual imaging products • Comparing completed created visual imaging products against client briefs, client requirement lists or success criteria • Assessing the appropriateness of chosen visual style and approaches/ conventions for clients and target audiences • Assessing fitness for purpose e.g. an advert should advertise; a promotion should promote Does not include: • Client /peer/focus group feedback or review, questionnaires, vox pop

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Unit R098: Visual imaging

3.2 Improvements and further developments

Constraints which limit the effectiveness of visual imaging portfolios □ Visual imaging portfolio constraints ▪ time ▪ resources ▪ hardware ▪ software ▪ skills □ Visual imaging portfolio improvements ▪ Using camera settings ▪ composition ▪ stability of video ▪ image processing ▪ video editing	To include: • How the quality of visual imaging portfolios is constrained by time, resources, hardware, software, budget, legislation, skills • The feasible improvements to visual imaging portfolios in terms of client requirements and target audience engagement
Further development opportunities for a visual imaging portfolio □ Further developments ▪ length ▪ product type and placement ▪ story/narrative content ▪ reuse of components ▪ cross platform media	To include: • How successful visual imaging portfolios can lead to repeat business/further commissions from clients • How different resources, software, budget and skills could help portfolios to be developed further • How to devise further developments in terms of client requirements and target audience

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R098 – Topic Area 1: Plan visual imaging portfolios		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces a **basic** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **limited**.	Produces an **adequate** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **sound**.	Produces an **effective** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **comprehensive**.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Produces **basic** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **few** elements of the final product.	Produces **adequate** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **some** elements of the final product.	Produces **detailed** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **all** elements of the final product.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Demonstrates **limited** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **sound** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **comprehensive** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.

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Unit R098 – Topic Area 1: Plan visual imaging portfolios Unit R098 – Topic Area 2: Create visual imaging portfolios		
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity in the components are **limited** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components supports the creation of the final product in a **limited** way.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity in the components are **adequate** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components **partly** supports the creation of the final product.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **effective**. Conventions and creativity in the components are **fully** fit for purpose. The range of components **fully** supports the creation of the final product.
MB1: 1–5 marks	**MB2: 6–10 marks**	**MB3: 11–14 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the final product is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity are applied in the final product in a **limited** way. Final product is **limited** in its fitness for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity are **adequately** applied in the final product. Final product is **adequately** fit for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **effective**. Conventions and creativity are **effectively** applied in the final product. Final product is **fully** fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Formats of the saved/exported components are **limited** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **adequate** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **clearly** appropriate. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **clearly** appropriate.

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Unit R098 – Topic Area 1: Plan visual imaging portfolios Unit R098 – Topic Area 3: Review visual imaging portfolios		
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–7 marks**	**MB3: 8–10 marks**
Testing/checking is **limited** in its effectiveness in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **limited** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **partly** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **sound** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **fully** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **critical** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Recommendations demonstrate **limited** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations have **limited** explanation.	Recommendations demonstrate **sound** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **partly** explained.	Recommendations demonstrate **comprehensive** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **fully** explained.

Assessment guidance

Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** For Mark Band (MB)1, students may have simply stated the chosen audience and restated the client. To be credited in the higher mark bands, students would need to include evidence of generating and describing appropriate ideas which meet the client requirements and appeal to the target audience for both the photographs and video sequence. A detailed explanation of why the intended style of photographs and content/ sequence of video would be suitable for the client may be appropriate for the higher mark bands. If only one aspect is explained in detail, then best fit would enable access to MB2 at best. Diagrammatic representations would illustrate the interpretation but would not be sufficient on their own to fulfil the requirement to explain for the upper mark bands. When interpreting the brief, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work.

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Task	Assessment guidance
	Strand 1b Pre-production documentation for the photographs and video could be presented in a number of different formats. The breadth of pre-production planning covers both the capturing of materials and editing into final products. If only one is planned effectively then best fit would enable access to MB2 at best. It would be unlikely for any single pre-production document to cover 'all' elements of the capturing of final photographs and capturing and editing of video footage, and different types of planning document would be expected in order to meet the criteria for the upper mark bands. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When planning their visual imaging products and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1c** This strand assesses how the assets contribute to the effectiveness of the final product. For the purposes of this unit, the term 'assets' refers to the images and video that will be used in the final visual imaging portfolio of materials. A large part of these are being created in this assessment rather than sourced as a planning activity such that the task only refers to the video sequence. For this, additional content in the form of assets could be sourced to enhance the footage that is recorded. The evidence requires an understanding of how additional assets would contribute to the overall effectiveness, justifying any decisions that are made for the upper mark bands.
Task 2	**Strand 2a** The component parts in this instance are the photographs and recorded video footage. The technical skills are based on the camera settings, features used, video camera shots, stability and movement. Where the technical quality of the original photographs and video may only be evidenced by looking at the files, this would have a partial contribution around MB1 or possibly MB2. However, more explicit evidence would be needed for high MB2 and MB3. The use of a camera in a fully automatic 'point and shoot' photographic mode would be appropriate in MB1 whereas evidence of choosing and using advanced camera settings is needed for the upper mark bands. For video, the use of a range of appropriate shot types, camera angles and movements would contribute towards upper the mark bands. Fitness for purpose in terms of the conventions in the components is assessed through the visual aspects and composition of the photographs and video. A basic set of photographs with a similar subject/composition would be appropriate for MB1 whereas for the upper mark bands, different compositions and use of the rules of photography would be required. Creativity can be assessed such that artistic viewpoints and compositions would contribute to the higher mark band. For video, the shot angle and visual impact would contribute, especially where the shots demonstrate a strong visual impact that gives meaning to achieve MB3. The subject content in the photographs and video should be a good match for the set scenario for the upper mark bands when considering the range of components and their suitability to meet the assignment brief and client requirements. Photographs or video which are 'off topic' would be appropriately assessed in MB1.

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Task	Assessment guidance
	Strand 2b The first descriptor assesses technical skills in the image processing and video editing. Implied evidence from the final images and video may still be credited within MB1 but evidence must be explicit for the upper mark bands. The conventions (e.g. composition) for photographic images would be assessed by their selection for use in the final portfolio. The conventions of the video are represented by the sequence, structure and timing. Creativity would be more about the content of the video, story and whether the final sequence is original and engaging for an audience. Fitness for purpose could be achieved by ensuring the final photographic portfolio and video sequence are a good match for the brief, meeting the client requirements and appeal for a target audience. If the products are a mismatch for the purpose, then MB1 may be appropriate. If both clearly meet the requirements, then MB3 may be appropriate. When creating their visual imaging products, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create visual imaging products. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2c** The first part of this task is to save and export both of the finished visual imaging products in a suitable format as required by the parameters in the scenario. Proprietary formats such as raw or video files within video editing software would be assessed in MB1 (external moderation should not be expected to be able to view these). Generic, widely supported image and video file formats would be required for both the photographic portfolio and video sequence to achieve the upper mark bands. If minimal or no consideration of quality settings with respect to the file properties of the photographic portfolio and video sequence is evident, MB1 would be appropriate. When exporting their visual imaging products, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties.
Task 3	Students must produce their own review. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process of reviewing their completed visual imaging products. **Strand 3a** The nature of the checks for the first descriptor should be focused closely on reviewing the technical properties rather than visual content, especially to meet the higher mark band. The second descriptor assesses understanding of the effectiveness of the photographic portfolio and video sequence for the client and target audience. If only the client or target audience are considered, or if evidence that only states the materials meet the client requirements, a mark in MB1 may be suitable. An explanation, with reasons justifying any conclusions would be more appropriate to show understanding for MB3. **Strand 3b** This strand requires an understanding of what could be better in the materials produced for the brief together with opportunities to develop it more widely. A list of areas to improve could be credited in MB1 whereas an explanation of weaknesses, justifying how and why they could be better would be more appropriate for the upper mark bands. A similar assessment philosophy applies to the areas for further development, which is more about what else could be developed that would support the client and the product scenario. This should include both the photographic portfolio and video sequence for the upper bark bands. A list of recommendations for different ways to improve the materials and/or develop them further could be credited in MB1 but these would need to be supported by appropriate explanations for the higher mark band. Since there is no requirement for a prescribed number of improvements and developments, a few aspects considered and explained in extensive detail could nevertheless meet the criteria for MB3.

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Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R098: Visual imaging		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Plan visual imaging portfolios	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
2	Create visual imaging portfolios	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Review visual imaging portfolios	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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4.8 Unit R099: Digital games

Aims

The UK has one of the largest games markets in the world, and the UK's games industry is among the largest in Europe. Its workforce has one of the youngest profiles in the media industries with earnings above the media industry average. It is a sector with a huge variety of technical and creative job roles. This unit will open the door to a variety of roles within the media industry by enabling you to identify core features of digital games and understand the basics of planning, designing, creating and testing digital games.

In this unit you will learn to interpret client briefs to devise original digital game concepts. You will learn to plan digital games effectively and to use a Game Design Document to create engagement among developers and clients. You will learn to create, edit, test and export playable digital games which you have designed. Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative and technical job roles within the media industry.

Unit R099: Digital games

Topic Area 1: Plan digital games

Teaching content	Exemplification
1.1 Types, characteristics and conventions of digital games	
Types of digital game and their characteristics □ 2D arcade □ 3D RPG □ MMO □ Simulation □ Game-based learning □ Augmented/virtual reality	To include: • Characteristics of each digital game type • Digital game types which are most appropriate for specific target audience groups • Digital game types which are most appropriate for particular platforms • Applying the concept of MVP (Minimum Viable Product) when planning games to ensure audience engagement Does not include: • The technical features of game platform hardware
Conventions and styles of digital games □ Game genres and their conventions ▪ action ▪ sports ▪ role playing game ▪ quest ▪ strategy □ Gameplay styles ▪ first person or third person ▪ selectable views ▪ arcade-style ▪ top-down views □ Visual styles ▪ theme ▪ fantasy ▪ animated/cartoon ▪ photorealism/VR	To include • Key conventions of each genre and style, how they differ from each other and the types of games which are best suited to each • How games increase in difficulty or complexity to maintain player engagement through multiple levels, spin-offs, side missions • How different features of games appeal to different audience types Does not include: • Investigation of existing games, user feedback reviews, games which are rated or certificated as 18 or for adults only

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Unit R099: Digital games

Game objectives □ Quest □ Collect □ Race □ Shoot □ Strategy or tactics of battle □ Escape □ Survive □ Build □ Problem-solve □ Score □ Beat the clock	To include: • Distinguishing features of each type of game objective • Identifying objectives and deciding which are the most appropriate for target audiences and/or platforms • Choosing game objectives which make games immersive or engaging/appealing Does not include: • Extended testing of games, games which are rated or certificated as 18 or for adults only, non-digital games (fairground/arcade machines/board games)
Creativity in digital games □ Originality □ Imaginative design □ Derivative design	To include: • How original work differs from adaptations to existing designs • How imaginative work can be derivative • How to balance following conventions with originality/imagination to produce creative products
1.2 Resources required to create digital games	
Hardware and peripherals □ Computer systems □ Speakers □ Interface controls □ Simulators □ Target platform test beds	To include: • Key features, capabilities and limitations of game creation hardware and peripherals • Hardware and peripherals which are best suited to particular game types, genres or platforms • The positive and negative impacts hardware and peripheral choice has on final games
Software □ Games Engine □ Games Editor □ Integrated Development Environment (IDE)	To include: • Differences between game IDEs, drag-and-drop visual programming languages and scripting languages • Why developers would use game engines, game editors, app development or software development kits (SDK) • The positive and negative impacts which software choice has on final games Does not include: • Investigation and comparison of technical features of different software packages for game creation

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Unit R099: Digital games

1.3 Pre-production and planning documentation and techniques for digital games

Game concepts □ Idea generation □ Pre-production documents to illustrate game concepts ▪ reference art and concept art ▪ unique selling point ▪ objectives	To include: • What is meant by the term 'game concept' • What constitutes 'derivative' game ideas (as opposed to original games) • Devising original game concepts • Devising and setting out narratives or sets of objectives for original game concepts • Using pre-production documentation to outline game concepts to clients (as distinct from those needed by the developer or programmer) Does not include: • Investigation of existing games as a separate research activity • Design constraints and opportunities in terms of availability of development timescales, costs, distribution channels and marketing/release/ promotion
Game planning □ Pre-production documentation and planning for digital game appearance ▪ concept art □ Pre-production documentation and planning for digital game structure ▪ flowcharts ▪ decision trees ▪ narrative pathways ▪ story arc □ Techniques for planning digital game mechanics ▪ scoring mechanisms ▪ measures of success/ completion/ progression through the game □ Concept of MVP (minimal viable product)	To include: • Using concept art to show overall visual style and style and appearance of elements including player characters, NPCs, objects, terrains/scenery/rooms, start screens/menu options • Creating flowcharts/decision trees/narrative pathways/story arcs to plan structures by indicating choices for gameplay/different routes or pathways through digital games • Planning how scoring mechanisms are displayed and integrated within the visuals of digital games and how feedback to players is provided during gameplay. Documentation (prose/diagrammatic) to include: ○ flowcharts ○ if-then/input-output tables/diagrams ○ narrative/description of story arc • Applying the concept of MVP (Minimum Viable Product) when planning digital games to ensure audience engagement Does not include: • Any form of project management planning documentation including workplans and Gantt charts

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Unit R099: Digital games

Topic Area 2: Create digital games

Teaching content	Exemplification
2.1 Techniques to explain game concepts	
Game Design Documents (GDDs) □ Audience for GDDs ▪ elements for developers ▪ elements for clients/customers/investors □ Purpose and Using GDDs ▪ engagement ▪ information ▪ keeping the game creation 'on track' □ Format, layout and templates for GDDs □ Content of GDDs ▪ unique selling point (USP) ▪ genre ▪ platform ▪ target audience ▪ synopsis ▪ gameplay ▪ objectives ▪ art ▪ sound and music	To include: • How GDDs are used to engage and inform developers and clients, keeping games 'on track' during their creation by setting out the key goals and concepts of game ideas • Format, layout and structure of GDDs to explain concepts clearly • Creating GDDs to engage and inform clients or investors by explaining key elements of concepts including Unique Selling Points (USP) /elevator pitches/concept statements, genres, platforms, target audiences, characters, synopsis of story, gameplay, in-game purchases or monetisation, objectives and art, sounds and music • Design specifics to inform and engage developers, including progression, scoring, timing, levels, interactivity, user interface and controls, game objects, core loops and game structures, concept art, geometric parameters and game mechanics
2.2 Technical skills to create and/or edit and manage assets for use within digital games	
Preparation of assets for use as □ Animation □ Backgrounds/scenery/terrain/textures □ Characters □ Objects □ Sounds □ Text □ Tile sets □ Video	To include: • Preparing assets for use within digital games by editing properties e.g. size and resolution, cutting, cropping, changing length/duration of video or animation, formatting text, animating static images to create moving objects or characters, duplicating graphics to create larger backgrounds or textures, creating infinite backgrounds for scrolling games out of static images • Using graphics editing software and/or hand-drawn artwork to generate assets for characters, objects or scenery/terrains • Using graphics editors which are built into game creation software to create or edit library images • Using appropriate file formats for assets to be compatible with game creation software Does not include: • Generating cut-scene animation or video or recording original music soundtracks for background sound in a game

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Asset management within game creation software □ Techniques, tools and peripherals used to ▪ import/digitise assets ▪ create and organise assets □ Asset naming conventions	To include: • Importing/digitising assets by using scanning, photographing, recording, drawing and/or importing visual assets from online sources • Creating derivative graphics, music and effects from pre-existing assets, libraries or tile sets • Using naming conventions for asset suffixes/affixes within game creation software (_spr, _obj _snd), numerical naming of animated sprite files, folder use for tile sets Does not include: • File naming or file or folder structures outside the game creation software
2.3 Technical skills to create digital games	
Techniques used to create digital games □ Tools of game creation software □ Game actions and events ▪ inputs and outputs ▪ cause and effect/if-then □ Game start mechanisms □ Shortcuts/cheats for use by the developer during game creation □ Game end mechanisms	To include: • Writing routines, procedures, blocks, scripts, actions and events to generate outputs based on player inputs in a game • Creating movement of players, objects and/or NPCs • Creating scoring and timing mechanisms in digital games, including game start/customisation/menu and game end/restart/level up/high score table • Generating rooms/levels to include appearance and parameters including movement/scrolling background/gravity • Creating player characters and NPCs/objects in digital games • Setting geometric parameters including scale, speed, visibility, solidity, gravity and timing • Setting up collision detection to control actions and events Does not include: • Generating 'infinite'/open world game spaces as found in games like Minecraft

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Unit R099: Digital games

2.4 Techniques to save and export digital games

Saving digital games during creation □ Digital game native file formats □ Version control	To include: • Saving digital games in native software using propriety formats to maintain editable versions during creation • Using version control and naming conventions to help rollback of features during the testing phase
Exporting finished digital games □ Techniques for exporting □ Platform independent file formats	To include: • Using settings/processes to export finished digital games • Using appropriate file formats for games to be played without requiring installation of specialist software, compatibility of file formats with platforms and devices Does not include: • Using formats for MMORPG or multiplayer real-time/online games • Providing evidence that games have been installed on mobile devices/platforms such as smartphones or PlayStation • Publishing finished games to online galleries/ marketplaces including the Gamemaker or Google Play Store

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Unit R099: Digital games

Topic Area 3: Review digital games

Teaching content	Exemplification
3.1 Techniques to test/check and review digital games	
Techniques to test/check the technical properties of digital games □ Methods of testing and checking ▪ test plan ▪ types of test data ○ normal ○ extreme ○ exceptional □ Elements of digital games to test/check ▪ test input or behaviours ○ trying to cheat or break ○ testing by playing to the rules or by deliberately breaking the rules ▪ functionality tests ○ navigation features ○ interactive features ○ inputs and outputs ○ scoring, timing, game start and game end ○ object movement ○ geometric parameters	To include: • The structure, content and use of test plans, checklists and success criteria • How to record test results and how and when to retest • How and why to test iteratively both during production and post-production • Planning and carrying out a range of functionality tests to make sure digital games function as intended • The importance of testing each variable as it is amended or introduced and recording the results of tests/keeping test logs • Carrying out retests and using version control to rollback features to earlier states where necessary • Determining acceptable glitches or errors and how to prioritise fixing errors or correcting programming where tests have failed Does not include: • Peer or client testing/focus group feedback • Performance tuning and debugging, black and white box testing, soak testing, load testing, regression testing
Techniques to review the fitness for purpose of a Game Design Documents (GDDs) □ Suitability for client requirements □ Suitability for target audience ▪ suitability and detail of content ▪ clarity of explanation □ Review of originality, appeal, engagement and audio-visual quality	To include: • Strengths and weaknesses of created digital games • Comparing created digital games against concepts outlined in GDDs • Assessing the appropriateness of chosen style and approaches/conventions of GDDs and digital games for clients and target audiences • Assessing fitness for purpose of GDDs and digital games in terms of audience engagement and functionality e.g. digital games should be playable, GDDs should outline digital game concepts Does not include: • Client/peer/focus group feedback or review, questionnaires, vox pop

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Unit R099: Digital games

3.2 Improvements and further developments

Constraints which limit the effectiveness of digital games □ Digital game constraints ▪ time ▪ resource ▪ hardware ▪ software ▪ skills □ Digital game improvements ▪ fixing errors to improve gameplay, mechanics and geometric parameters ▪ improving visual and/or audio components to increase player engagement ▪ altering gameplay difficulty or scoring mechanisms to improve player experience	To include: • How the quality of digital games is constrained by time, resources, hardware, software, budget, legislation, skills • The feasible improvements to digital games in terms of client requirements and target audience engagement • How to identify which changes to the programming, visuals and audio of digital games would make the most difference to player engagement and experience
Further development opportunities for digital games □ Further developments ▪ appearance and style ▪ gameplay ▪ narrative or objectives ▪ interactions ▪ player feedback/outputs ▪ difficulty ▪ downloadable content ▪ expansion packs ▪ second game instalment	To include: • How successful digital games can lead to repeat business/further commissions from a client • How different resources, software, budget and skills could help digital games to be developed further • How to devise further developments in terms of client requirements and target audience • How to ascertain which elements of an MVP can be developed and the order of priority for such developments

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Marking criteria

Section 6.4 provides full information on how to mark the NEA units and apply the marking criteria. The marking criteria descriptor words are further explained in Appendix B.

The tables below contain the marking criteria for the tasks for this unit. If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Unit R099 – Topic Area 1: Plan digital games		
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Produces a **basic** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **limited**.	Produces an **adequate** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **sound**.	Produces an **effective** interpretation of the client brief. Explanation of how the intended product meets the client brief and why it appeals to the target audience is **comprehensive**.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Produces **basic** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **few** elements of the final product.	Produces **adequate** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **some** elements of the final product.	Produces **detailed** pre-production and planning documentation. Pre-production and planning documentation support the creation of **all** elements of the final product.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Demonstrates **limited** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **sound** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.	Demonstrates **comprehensive** understanding of how assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product.

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Unit R099 – Topic Area 1: Plan digital games Unit R099 – Topic Area 2: Create digital games		
MB1: 1–4 marks	**MB2: 5–8 marks**	**MB3: 9–12 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity in the components are **limited** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components supports the creation of the final product in a **limited** way.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity in the components are **adequate** in their fitness for purpose. The range of components **partly** supports the creation of the final product.	Use of technical skills to create the component parts is **effective**. Conventions and creativity in the components are **fully** fit for purpose. The range of components **fully** supports the creation of the final product.
MB1: 1–5 marks	**MB2: 6–10 marks**	**MB3: 11–14 marks**
Use of technical skills to create the final product is **limited** in its effectiveness. Conventions and creativity are applied in the final product in a **limited** way. Final product is **limited** in its fitness for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **partly** effective. Conventions and creativity are **adequately** applied in the final product. Final product is **adequately** fit for purpose.	Use of technical skills to create the final product is **effective**. Conventions and creativity are **effectively** applied in the final product. Final product is **fully** fit for purpose.
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–6 marks**	**MB3: 7–8 marks**
Formats of the saved/exported components are **limited** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **limited** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **adequate** in their appropriateness. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **adequate** in their appropriateness.	Formats of the saved/exported components are **clearly** appropriate. Properties and format(s) of the final product are **clearly** appropriate.

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Unit R099 – Topic Area 1: Plan digital games Unit R099 – Topic Area 3: Review digital games		
MB1: 1–3 marks	**MB2: 4–7 marks**	**MB3: 8–10 marks**
Testing/checking is **limited** in its effectiveness in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **limited** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **partly** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **sound** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.	Testing/checking is **fully** effective in reviewing technical properties. Review demonstrates **critical** understanding of the effectiveness of the final product for client and target audience.
MB1: 1–2 marks	**MB2: 3–4 marks**	**MB3: 5–6 marks**
Recommendations demonstrate **limited** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations have **limited** explanation.	Recommendations demonstrate **sound** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **partly** explained.	Recommendations demonstrate **comprehensive** understanding of areas for improvement and further development. Recommendations are **fully** explained.

Assessment guidance

Task	Assessment guidance
Task 1	**Strand 1a** For Mark Band (MB)1, students may have simply stated the chosen audience and restated the client. An explanation of a single game idea would fit into MB1, whereas if several ideas are outlined and the preferred option chosen this would be more appropriate for MB2 or MB3. An explanation of only one or two ways in which the game idea meets the client brief and appeals to the target audience would be suitable for MB1. MB3 could be achieved by explaining a few ways in great detail (depth) or by explaining many ways concisely (breadth). Diagrammatic representations would illustrate the interpretation but would not be sufficient on their own to fulfil the requirement to explain for the upper mark bands. When interpreting the brief, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work. **Strand 1b** Pre-production documentation for the game idea could be presented in a number of different formats. Basic planning for MB1 may cover only the main points of the game, whereas detailed planning for MB3 would be expected to include depth. It would be unlikely that any single pre-production document would cover 'all' elements of the final game, and different types of planning document would be expected in order to meet the criteria for the upper mark bands. Students must not be directed to complete specific planning tasks but may be referred to the teaching and learning content for the unit. When planning their digital game and justifying their design choices, students need to make decisions independently. Although it is to be expected that different students may make similar decisions and develop similar ideas, it would be highly unusual for all students in a cohort to have identical work.

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Task	Assessment guidance
	Strand 1c This strand requires students to demonstrate understanding of how assets contribute to the effectiveness of the game. A list of assets would therefore be suitable for MB1, but would not demonstrate understanding. A consideration of the technical properties of the assets chosen and reference to how the style or type of assets would appeal to the target audience or match the genre of the game would contribute to meeting the requirements for MB3.
Task 2	**Strand 2a** The Game Design Document (GDD) may briefly outline a few aspects of the game for MB1, but at MB2 and above should include explanations and could include diagrams and illustrations to improve clarity. The conventions of Game Design Documents would be expected to be applied to meet the requirements of MB3 in terms of the structure, format and content of the GDD. To be fit for purpose the GDD should both inform the client and promote the game idea and concept. Assets as components for the game support the creation of the product by virtue of their range and their properties. To fully support the creation of the game for MB3, assets would need to be complete and technically fit for purpose. Few assets, or many assets but with limited technical suitability would be appropriately assessed in MB1. **Strand 2b** This strand relates to the students' playable game. For MB1, the game may be simplistic, incomplete or limited in its functionality. Some evidence of the tools used to create the game would support marks for this strand, even if the game is not finished or exported. Students can be given credit for presenting screenshots to show the tools of the game creation software they used, especially as some software may not be available to assessors. A game which functions correctly but is not original would fit the criteria for MB1 in this strand for the creativity and technical skills used. For MB3, the game should be playable in order to meet the criteria for fitness for purpose. Evidence to support this could comprise video or screen recording of the game being played by the student, especially if the skill level required to play the game is high. When creating their digital game, students must make decisions independently. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process to create a digital game. Students must not be directed to use particular software or software tools and/or techniques. **Strand 2c** This strand assesses the appropriateness of the components (the GDD and the assets) and the final product (the finished game). In order to meet the criteria for MB3, the GDD, assets and the playable game should all be saved using appropriate formats and properties. The GDD could be presented as a collection of separate files at MB1, whereas for MB3 the different elements could be collated into a single document or product which is named and saved suitably for the client to access. Where the final game is not exported from the native software, MB1 would be appropriate. For MB3, there should be clear evidence of saving/exporting in a format which is fully suitable for all the aspects of the client brief and the assessment requirements. When exporting their digital game, students need to independently decide on suitable electronic formats and properties. Students can provide evidence of this by either submitting the exported final product or a video or screen recording clearly showing how they exported their final product.

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Task	Assessment guidance
Task 3	Students must produce their own review. They must apply what they have learnt and not be led through a process of reviewing their completed digital game and concept. **Strand 3a** Evaluation of the technical properties of the finished game could be presented as a completed test plan. At MB1 this may only outline a few tests, or may be limited by testing only some aspects. If results and retests are considered this would contribute to MB2, whereas to be fully effective for MB3 the technical properties should be considered comprehensively. An outline of how errors were resolved or prioritised for resolution might be expected at the upper end of the mark range. The second descriptor assesses understanding of the effectiveness of the game and GDD for the client and target audience. If only the client or target audience are considered, a mark in MB1 may be suitable, whereas for MB3 both client and target audience, and the game and its concept should be considered. A test plan on its own would not evidence understanding of effectiveness, only functionality; so, some form of account or explanation would be expected for MB2 and MB3. **Strand 3b** This strand requires an understanding of areas for improvement and further development, and an explanation of the recommendations. A list of aspects which failed when testing the game would demonstrate limited understanding for MB1. For MB3 students may have prioritised aspects to be addressed. Explaining which are the most important and why might be one way to demonstrate comprehensive understanding. Areas for improvement and further development should be explained with reference to the client requirements and target audience engagement in order to demonstrate comprehensive understanding for MB3, and should include both the playable game and the concept as set out in the GDD. If the game or GDD only are considered, a mark in MB1 would be suitable. Since there is no requirement for a prescribed number of improvements and developments, a few aspects considered and explained in detail could nevertheless meet the criteria for MB3.

Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R093. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R099: Digital games		R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
Topic Area		**Topic Area**	
1	Plan digital games	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
2	Create digital games	3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations
3	Review digital games	2	Factors influencing product design
		3	Pre-production planning
		4	Distribution considerations

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

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5 Assessment and grading

5.1 Overview of the assessment

Entry code	Qualification title	GLH	Reference
J834	**OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia**	**120***	**603/7090/7**
Made up of three mandatory units: • Units R093 and R094 • And one from R095, R096, R097, R098 or R099			

*the GLH includes assessment time for each unit

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	
48 GLH 1 hour 30 minute written examination 70 marks (80 UMS) OCR set and marked Calculators are not required in this exam	This question paper has two parts: • Part A – includes closed response, multiple choice and short answer questions which assess PO1 [10 marks]. • Part B – includes closed response, short answer and three extended response questions. Two of the extended response questions will assess PO3 and the third, PO1/PO2. All part B questions relate to a single scenario [60 marks].
Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics	
30 GLH OCR-set assignment 50 marks (50 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains two practical tasks. It should take approximately 10-12 GLH to complete.
Unit R095: Characters and comics	
42 GLH OCR-set assignment 70 marks (70 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains three practical tasks. It should take approximately 12-15 GLH to complete.
Unit R096: Animation with audio	
42 GLH OCR-set assignment 70 marks (70 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains three practical tasks. It should take approximately 12-15 GLH to complete.
Unit R097: Interactive digital media	
42 GLH OCR-set assignment 70 marks (70 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains three practical tasks. It should take approximately 12-15 GLH to complete.

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Unit R098: Visual imaging	
42 GLH OCR-set assignment 70 marks (70 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains three practical tasks. It should take approximately 12-15 GLH to complete.
Unit R099: Digital games	
42 GLH OCR-set assignment 70 marks (70 UMS) Centre-assessed and OCR moderated	This set assignment contains three practical tasks. It should take approximately 12-15 GLH to complete.

The terminal assessment rule or 'terminal rule' means that the exam must be taken in the final assessment series of the student's course. Non examined assessment (NEA) units can be submitted in the same series as the exam or an earlier series but the exam must be taken in the final series.

If a student takes the exam in a series before their work for NEA units are submitted, this is considered as a 'practice' attempt and will not contribute to their final qualification grade. The student must take their exam again in their final assessment series and that exam result will be used towards the student's final qualification grade.

For more information on the terminal rule and also what it means for performance tables see Section 7.3. Resitting units before certification and Retaking the qualification.
OCR-set assignments for units R094-R099 are available on our secure website for teachers, Teach Cambridge.

5.2 Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment is a built-in feature of this qualification. It means that students need to use an appropriate selection of their knowledge, understanding and skills developed across the qualification in an integrated way and apply them to a key task or tasks.

This also helps students to build a holistic understanding of the subject and the connections between different elements of learning, so they can go on to apply what they learn from this qualification to new and different situations and contexts.

The externally assessed unit R093 allows students to gain underpinning knowledge and understanding relevant to the digital media industry, and the non examined assessment (NEA) units R094 - R099 draw on and strengthen this learning by letting students apply their learning in a practical, skills-based way.

It is important to be aware of the synoptic links between the units so that teaching, learning and assessment can be planned accordingly. Then students can apply their learning in ways which show they are able to make connections across the qualification when they are assessed.

5.3 Transferable skills

This qualification also allows students the opportunity to gain broad, transferable skills and experiences that can be applied as they progress into their next stages of study and life and to enhance their preparation for future employment.

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills that are transferable to different real-life contexts, roles or employment:

- Problem Solving (PS) - within the NEA units students will learn about the tools and techniques used to create digital media products. This will include techniques to record ideas, plan solutions and review outcomes to check if the requirements of clients and audiences/consumers are met.
- Analytical Skills (AS) – students will learn how to analyse scenarios and work out who clients, audiences/consumers are and what they require from digital media products. They will also learn written analysis skills through the review of pre-production documents and the digital media products created.

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- Digital Presentation (DP) – throughout the Creative iMedia qualification students will learn to identify and make use of the tools and techniques appropriate to the digital media product they are planning and creating. This will include the selection of appropriate media (text, images, audio or video) to convey meaning, create impact and/or engage audiences.
- Planning (P) – students will learn planning techniques within the EA unit relevant to the media industry but also applicable much more generally.
- Creative Thinking (CT) - within each NEA unit students will learn about the different forms of creativity and how creativity is integral to producing effective digital media products. This will involve them exploring and generating ideas, making connections to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that add value.

5.4 Grading and awarding grades

All results are awarded on the following scale:

- Distinction* at Level 2 (*2)
- Distinction at Level 2 (D2)
- Merit at Level 2 (M2)
- Pass at Level 2 (P2)
- Distinction at Level 1 (D1)
- Merit at Level 1 (M1)
- Pass at Level 1 (P1).

The shortened format of the grade will show within results files and results reports. However, the full format of the grade will be on the certificates issued to students.

The boundaries for Distinction at Level 2, Pass at Level 2, and Pass at Level 1 are set judgementally. Other grade boundaries are set arithmetically.

The Merit (Level 2) is set at half the distance between the Pass (Level 2) grade and the Distinction (Level 2) grade. Where the gap does not divide equally, the Merit (Level 2) boundary is set at the lower mark (For example, 45.5 would be rounded down to 45).

For the examined unit, the Distinction* (Level 2) grade is normally set at about 0.75 of the D2-M2 distance above the D2 boundary mark.

To set the Distinction (Level 1) and Merit (Level 1) boundaries, the gap between the Pass (Level 1) grade and the Pass (Level 2) grade is divided by 3, and the boundaries set equidistantly. Where this division leaves a remainder of 1, this extra mark will be added to the Distinction (Level 1) to Pass (Level 2) interval, meaning the Distinction (Level 1) boundary will be lowered by 1 mark. Where this division leaves a remainder of 2, the extra marks will be added to the Distinction (Level 1) to Pass (Level 2) interval, and the Merit (Level 1) to Distinction (Level 1) interval, meaning the Distinction (Level 1) boundary will be lowered by 1 mark, and the Merit (Level 1) boundary will be lowered by 1 mark.

For example, if Pass (Level 2) is set judgementally at 59, and Pass (Level 1) is set judgementally at 30, then Distinction (Level 1) is set at 49, and Merit (Level 1) is set at 39.

Grades are indicated on qualification certificates. However, results for students who fail to achieve the minimum grade (Pass at Level 1) will be recorded as unclassified (U or u) and **will not** be shown on certificates.

This qualification is unitised. Students can take units across different series and can resit units (see section 7.8 Unit and qualification resits). Grade boundaries are set per unit, per series, so may be set in different places for a unit in different series. When working out students' overall grades, OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries may have been set, and between different units. We use a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) so this can be done.

A student's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the student's raw mark on that unit. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the student's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit (for example, 42/60).

The table below shows the Raw marks and UMS marks for each unit:

	Exam	NEA1	NEA2
Raw marks	70	50	70
UMS	80	50	70

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The uniform mark boundaries for each of the assessments do not change and are shown below:

Unit GLH	Max Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade							
		Distinction* at L2	Distinction at L2	Merit at L2	Pass at L2	Distinction at L1	Merit at L1	Pass at L1	U
30	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	**0**
42	70	63	56	49	42	35	28	21	**0**
48	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	**0**

The student's uniform mark for Unit R093 will be combined with the uniform mark for the NEA units to give a total uniform mark for the qualification.

The student's overall grade will be determined by the total uniform mark. The following table shows the minimum total mark for each overall grade:

Max Uniform Mark	Qualification Grade							
	Distinction* at L2	Distinction at L2	Merit at L2	Pass at L2	Distinction at L1	Merit at L1	Pass at L1	U
200	180	160	140	120	100	80	60	**0**

On results day we will publish a marks calculator, for the specific series, on our website to help you convert raw marks/number of achieved criteria into uniform marks.

5.5 Performance descriptors

Performance descriptors give a general indication of likely levels of attainment by representative students performing at boundaries: Distinction at Level 2, Pass at Level 2 and Pass at Level 1.

Performance descriptor – Distinction at Level 2

Students will be able to:

- recall a wide range of information relating to the media industry and the planning, creating and reviewing of digital media products
- perceptively evaluate the purpose and uses of digital media products
- understand and use a wide range of media related terminology correctly
- demonstrate analytical and evaluative skills
- interpret and present information with sensitivity to needs and with a flair for effective communication
- work independently and manage time efficiently
- use techniques efficiently to source, select and store appropriate assets effectively, in a wide variety of contexts
- create solutions which demonstrate detailed consideration of target audience and for a specific brief
- confidently use and apply a wide range of techniques to create work that is fit for purpose
- perceptively analyse problems encountered in a media context.

Performance descriptor – Pass at Level 2

Students will be able to:

- recall a range of information relating to the media industry and the planning, creating and reviewing of digital media products
- evaluate the purpose and uses of digital media products
- understand and use a range of media related terminology correctly
- demonstrate analytical and evaluative skills
- present information with awareness of needs and communication
- work independently and manage time efficiently
- create solutions which demonstrate consideration of target audience and for a specific brief
- use techniques to source, select and store appropriate assets, in a variety of contexts
- use and apply a range of techniques to create work that is fit for purpose
- analyse problems encountered in a media context.

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Performance descriptor – Pass at Level 1

Students will be able to:

- recall some information relating to the media industry and the planning, creating and reviewing of digital media products
- understand the purposes and uses of digital media products
- understand and use some media related terminology correctly
- demonstrate some evidence of basic analytical and evaluative skills
- present information with some awareness of needs
- work with guidance to given timescales
- create solutions which demonstrate some awareness of target audience and a specific brief
- use techniques to source, select and store information
- use and apply some techniques to create work that is suitable for a specific brief
- demonstrate an understanding of some problems encountered in a media context.

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6 Non examined assessment (NEA) units (R094 – R099)

This section provides guidance on the completion of the NEA units (R094 – R099). The NEA units are designed so that students can build a portfolio of evidence to meet the topic areas for the unit.

Assessment for this qualification must adhere to JCQ's Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications).

Please **do not** use JCQ's Instructions for Conducting Non-examination Assessments (GCE and GCSE Specifications) – these are only relevant to A Level and GCSE specifications.

Units R094 – R099 are centre assessed and externally moderated by us.

You **must** make sure that you have read and understood all of the rules and guidance provided in this section **before** your students complete and you assess the set assignments.

If you have any queries please contact us for help and support.

6.1 Preparing for NEA unit delivery and assessment

6.1.1 Centre and teacher/assessor responsibilities

For the NEA units of this qualification we assume the teacher is the assessor.

Before you plan to get approval from us to offer this qualification you must be confident your centre can fulfil all the responsibilities described below. Once you're approved, you can offer any of our general qualifications, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Advanced Nationals or enrichment qualifications without having to seek approval for individual qualifications.

The quality of the delivery of teaching and the integrity of assessments and quality assurance is paramount. Systems must be in place so that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and authentic. One of the key factors behind valid, fair and reliable assessment is the expertise of those doing the assessment and internal quality assurance.

With this in mind, here's a summary of the responsibilities that your centre and teachers must be able to fulfil. It is the responsibility of the head of centre[1] to make sure our requirements are met:

- there are enough trained or qualified people to teach and assess the expected number of students you have in your cohorts and they will complete the **Cambridge Nationals: Essentials for the NEA** online training, prior to assessment of the set assignment. This is available on-demand and accessed through Teach Cambridge or Cambridge OCR Train.
- teaching staff have the relevant level of subject knowledge and skills to deliver and assess this qualification
- teaching staff will fully cover the knowledge, understanding and skills requirements in teaching and learning activities
- necessary resources are available for teaching staff and students during teaching and assessment activities, to give students every opportunity to meet the requirements of the qualification and reach the highest grade possible
- there's a system of standardisation in place so that all assessment decisions for teacher-marked (centre assessed) assignments are consistent, fair, valid and reliable (see Internal standardisation in section 6.4.3)
- there's enough time for effective teaching and learning, assessment and internal standardisation
- processes are in place to make sure that students' work is individual and confirmed as being authentic (see Ways to authenticate work in section 6.2.1)
- you must use the OCR-set assignments for students' summative assessments. You must make sure that students use the assignment that is live for the period during which they are taking their summative assessment.
- the OCR-set assignments must not be used for practice (see section 6.2, Requirements and guidance for delivering and marking the OCR-set

1 This is the most senior officer in the organisation, directly responsible for the delivery of OCR qualifications, For example, the headteacher or principal of a school/college. The head of centre accepts full responsibility for the correct administration and conduct of OCR exams.

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assignments) This includes both assignments that are currently live or live assignments that have expired. Sample assessment material for each of the NEA units is available on Teach Cambridge and the OCR website. The sample assessment material can be used for practice purposes

- students understand what they need to do to get the highest marks possible
- students understand what it means when we say work must be authentic and individual and they (and you) must follow any requirements we set out to make sure their work is their own
- students know they must not reference another individual's personal details in any evidence produced for summative assessment in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). It is the student's responsibility to make sure evidence that includes another individual's personal details is anonymised
- marks submitted to us are correct, accurately recorded and adhere to the published deadlines
- assessment of set assignments must adhere to the JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) and JCQ AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- a declaration is made at the point you're submitting any work to us for assessment that confirms:
  - all assessment is conducted according to the specified regulations
  - students' work is authentic
  - marks have been transcribed accurately
- centre records and students' work are kept according to the requirements below:
  - students' work must be kept until after their unit has been awarded and any review of results or appeals processed. We will not consider any review if the work has not been kept
  - internal standardisation and assessment records must be kept securely for a minimum of three years after the date we've issued a certificate for a qualification
- All cases of suspected malpractice involving teachers or students must be reported (see 'Reporting suspected malpractice' in section 6.3.1).

6.2 Requirements and guidance for delivering and marking the OCR-set assignments

The assignments are set by us, taken under supervised conditions, marked by the teacher and moderated by us. Assignments are available on our secure website, Teach Cambridge.

The set assignments give an approximate time that it will take to complete all tasks. These timings are for guidance only, but should be used by you, the teacher, to give students an indication of how long to spend on each task. You can decide how the time should be allocated between each part or individual task. You are also permitted to spread the tasks across several sessions, and therefore it is permissible for evidence to be produced over several sessions.

We will replace the set assignments each year. New set assignments will be released on 1st June. You **must**:

- only download assignments from our secure website, Teach Cambridge and use the assignments for the assessment series shown on the front cover.
- have made entries for the series you are intending to submit the NEA work for.
- not share the set assignments with anyone from outside of your centre. These must only be shared with appropriate centre staff and students taking the assessments. (More information about maintaining the integrity of assessment materials is in the JCQ document General Regulations for Approved Centres General and Vocational qualifications.)
- make sure students know that they must not share assessment material or their own work with others, including posting or sharing on social media. (More information is in the JCQ guidance Information for candidates Using social media and examinations/ assessments.)

Assessment of the set assignments must adhere to the JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications).

Appendix A of this specification gives guidance for creating electronic evidence for the NEA units. Please read Appendix A along with the unit content and marking criteria grids as it might help you plan your delivery of the units.

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The rest of this section deals with how we expect you to manage the delivery and marking of the set assignments, so that assessment is valid and reliable. Please note that failing to meet these requirements may be deemed to be malpractice.

Here is a summary of what we need you to do.

You **must**:

- have covered the knowledge, understanding and skills with your students and be sure they are ready for assessment before you start the summative assessment
- use the correct live OCR-set assignment for summative assessment (the dates for which set assignments are live are shown on the front cover). These assignments are only available on **Teach Cambridge**.
- give students the Student Guidance document before they start the assessment
- make sure students are clear about the tasks they must complete and the criteria they are expected to meet. You can:
  - explain the task
  - provide a copy of the marking criteria to students
- allow students a reasonable amount of time to complete the assignments and be fair and consistent to all students. The time you allow should be in line with the estimated time we think it should take which is stated in the OCR-set assignments. Within that time students can work on the tasks under teacher supervision any time until the date the centre collects the work for centre assessment
- tell the students the resources and sources of assets that they can use in the assignment before undertaking the assessment tasks
- only give students OCR-provided templates. If they opt to use a template from a book, a website or course notes when, for example, creating pre-production documentation or producing a review, they must make sure the source is referenced
- monitor students' progress to make sure work is capable of being assessed against the marking criteria, on track for being completed in good time and is the **student's own** work:
  - NEA work **must** be completed during normal curriculum time and supervised and marked by the teacher/assessor
  - work must be carried out with enough supervision to make sure that the work submitted can be confidently authenticated as the student's own work. You must also be familiar with the requirements of the JCQ document AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
  - if you provide any material to prepare students for the set assignment, you must adhere to the rules on using referencing and on acceptable levels of guidance to students set out within the Plagiarism and Feedback sections (see 6.2.2 Plagiarism and 6.3 Feedback)
  - students must produce their work independently (see 6.2.1 and 6.3 on Ways to authenticate work and Feedback)
  - you must make sure students are aware of the requirement to keep their work secure, not share with other students and keep their passwords secure
- allow students to take the initiative to improve any element of their work as they work through the assignment
- use the marking criteria to mark students' work

Before submitting a final mark to us, you can mark students' completed assignment work and allow them to repeat any element of the assignment, reworking their original evidence, provided the assignment is still live for use. We call this a reattempt. Students must have completed the whole assignment before you mark their work. Any feedback given to students on the marked work must:

- be factual: telling the student what you have observed, not what to do to improve their work.
- be recorded and available to the moderator (see section 6.3 Feedback).

You **must not**:

- change any aspect of the OCR-set assignments (scenarios or tasks)
- accept multiple reattempts of work where small changes have been made in response to feedback. Marking and feedback must not be an iterative process
- allow teachers or students to add, amend or remove any work after students have submitted work for moderation. This will constitute malpractice
- give detailed advice and suggestions to individuals or the whole class on how work may be improved to meet the marking criteria
- practise the OCR-set assignment tasks with the students. We provide Sample Assignments for you to use for practice purposes
- create or use practice assignments and practice data which are similar in nature to those set by us
- use past OCR-set assignments, or amend past set assignments, for practice purposes.

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6.2.1 Ways to authenticate work

You must be confident that the work you mark is the student's own. Every student must produce their own work independently under teacher supervision. You must use enough supervision, or complete sufficient checks, to be able to judge the authenticity of the student's work.

Wherever possible, the teacher should discuss work-in-progress with students. This will make sure that work is being completed in a planned and timely way and provide opportunities for you to check authenticity of the work.

You must:

- have read and understood the JCQ document AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- make sure students and other teachers understand what constitutes plagiarism and not accept plagiarised work as evidence (you might find the JCQ document Plagiarism in Assessments helpful)
- use supervision and questioning as appropriate to confirm authenticity
- make sure students and teachers fill in authentication statements.

6.2.2 Plagiarism (including AI misuse)

When producing final 'written' pieces of work for the OCR-set assignments, students must use their own words to show they have genuinely applied their knowledge and understanding. When students use their own words, ideas and opinions, it reduces the possibility of their work being identified as plagiarised.

Plagiarism is:

- the submission of someone else's work as your own
- failure to acknowledge a source correctly, including any use of written material, the internet or Artificial Intelligence (AI).

You might find the following JCQ documents helpful:

- Plagiarism in Assessments
- AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications

Plagiarism (including AI misuse) makes up a large percentage of cases of suspected malpractice reported to us by moderators. Teachers must ensure students understand they must not include plagiarised work as evidence.

Plagiarism (including AI misuse) often occurs innocently when students do not know that they must reference or acknowledge their sources or aren't sure how to do so. It's important to make sure your students understand:

- the meaning of plagiarism (including AI misuse) and what penalties may be applied
- that they can refer to research, quotations or evidence produced by somebody else, but they must list and reference their sources and clearly mark quotations
- quoting someone else's work, even when it's properly sourced and referenced, doesn't evidence understanding. The student must 'do' something with that information to show they understand it. For example, if a student has to analyse data from an experiment, quoting data doesn't show that they understand what it means. The student must interpret the data and, by relating it to their assignment, say what they think it means. The work must clearly show how the student is using the material they have referenced **to inform their** thoughts, ideas or conclusions.

We have a Guide to referencing on our website. We have also produced a poster about referencing and plagiarism which may be useful to share with students.

You must teach your students:

- to always reference or acknowledge material copied from the internet or other sources. This applies to infographics (graphical information providing data or knowledge) as well
- how to reference and explain why it's important to do it. They must:
  - use quote marks to show the beginning and end of the copied work
  - for website text, to list the html address and ideally the date they accessed the website
  - show the name of any AI source used and the date the content was generated for computer-generated content (such as an AI Chatbot).
    - retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference, assessment and authentication purposes (see JCQ Guidance for full requirements)
  - for other publications, to list the name of the resource/book/printed article and ideally the year in which it was published.
- to identify information they have copied from teaching handouts and presentations for the unit, using quote marks and stating the text is from class handouts.

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Identifying copied/plagiarised work

Inconsistencies throughout a student's response are often indicators of plagiarism. For example:

- different tones of voice, sentence structure and formality across pieces of work
- use of American expressions, spellings and contexts (such as American laws and guidelines)
- dated expressions and references to past events as being current
- sections of text in a document where the font or format is inconsistent with other sections.

What to do if you think a student has plagiarised

If you identify plagiarised work at the point of marking or moderation:

- this must be taken into account when applying the mark scheme
    - the work **must** be included with any work that is sent to the moderator if it is part of the moderation sample, with a note on the Unit Recording Sheet to state that there is plagiarism in the work and that marks have been adjusted accordingly
- the student(s) must be reported for plagiarism in line with the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures
    - fill in the JCQ form M1.

In line with the policy and procedures of JCQ on suspected malpractice, the sanctions applied for plagiarism (including AI misuse) could result in a warning, loss of marks or loss of aggregation or certification opportunity.

6.3 Feedback

Feedback to students on work in progress towards summative assessment

You can discuss work-in-progress towards summative assessment with students to make sure it's being done in a planned and timely way. It also provides an opportunity to check the authenticity of the work. You must intervene if there's a health and safety risk.

Generic guidance to the whole class is also allowed. This could include reminding students to check they have provided evidence to cover every aspect of the task. Individual students can be prompted to double check for gaps in evidence providing that specific gaps are not pointed out to them.

You can give general feedback and support if one or more students are struggling to get started on an aspect of the assignment or following a break between sessions working on the assignment. For example, if a student is seeking more guidance that suggests they are not able to apply knowledge, skills and understanding to complete their evidence you can remind them that they had a lesson which covered the relevant topic. The student would then need to review their own notes to find this information and apply it as needed.

Feedback must not provide specific advice and guidance that would be construed as coaching. This would compromise the student's ability to independently perform the task(s) they are doing and constitutes malpractice. Our moderators use a number of measures to assure themselves the work is the student's own.

If an individual student needs additional help or support because they are struggling to start a task or part of a task that is **critical to them accessing the rest of the task or assignment**, this **must** be recorded on the student's work and/or Unit Recording Sheet (URS) for our Moderator to see. In this situation, the student should **not** be awarded the marks for the work for which they received help.

Assessing completed work

When students have completed all their work on an assignment, you must assess it (mark it) and give feedback to them. Assessment should not be an iterative process. This means you must not assess work and give feedback on it in stages. You must only assess the work when the assignment is complete.

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Feedback **must**:

- be supportive, encouraging and positive
- tell the student what has been noticed, not what you think (for example if you have observed the student completing a task you can describe what happened, what was produced and what was demonstrated).

Feedback **can**:

- identify what task and part of the task could be improved, but not detail how to improve it. You could show the student work from a **different** unit that demonstrates higher achievement, but you must not detail to the student how they could achieve that in their work. If you are using another student's work as a model answer, please anonymise this work. You could remind students that they had a lesson on a specific topic and that they could review their notes, but you must not tell them how they could apply the teaching to improve their work
- comment on what has been achieved, for example 'the evidence shows a **sound** understanding for MB2'
- identify that the student hasn't met a descriptor word or mark band requirement. For example, 'This is only a description, not an evaluation'
- use text from the specification, assignment or marking criteria in general guidance to clarify what is needed in the work. For example, 'You have produced a basic interpretation of the client brief and adequate pre-production and planning documentation'
- point out where the work sits within the mark bands but students must make their own decisions as to what to improve and how. For example, the feedback can say 'this shows a **sound** understanding' (for mark band 2) but not precisely what should be added to make it show a **comprehensive** understanding (for mark band 3).

Feedback **must not**:

- point out specific gaps, for example you must not prompt the student to include specific detail in their work, such as 'You need to improve this by giving more detail'
- be so detailed that it
    - leads students to the answer, for example you must not give model answers on the **same** unit being taken or explain specifically what amendments should be made. If work from another student on a **different unit** is being used to model answers, please ensure it is anonymised.
    - provides a step-by-step guide on what to do to complete or improve work, for example you must not give headings or templates that include examples which give all or part of what students have to write about or produce.
- talk the student through how to achieve or complete the task.
- give detail on where to find information/evidence.

In other words, feedback must help the student to take the initiative in making changes. It must not direct or tell the student what to do to complete or improve their work in a way that means they do not need to think how to apply their learning. Students need to recall or apply their learning. You must not do the work for the student(s).

Neither you nor the student can add, amend or remove any work after the final mark has been submitted for moderation.

Please see additional guidance for students who wish to resubmit their work following OCR moderation in Section 6.7.

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Informing students of their marks

When you have marked students' work, you must inform students of the marks achieved. **Before** you submit marks to us, you must provide enough time for:

- students to appeal the marks.
- you to complete a review and make changes if needed.
- you to inform students of the outcome of the review.

What improper assistance might look like

When we see anything that suggests the teacher has led students to the answer, we become concerned because it suggests students have not worked independently to produce their assignment work. The following are examples of what may indicate improper assistance by the teacher:

- prompts that instruct students to include specific detail in their work, such as, 'Your story board does not include details of'
- headings or templates that include examples which give all or part of what students have to write about or produce, such as 'Improvements to your digital media product could be'

Moderators will report suspected malpractice when they cannot see differences in content between students' work in the sample they are moderating. An exception is when students have only used and referenced technical facts and definitions. If the moderator is in any doubt, they will report suspected malpractice. The decision on whether or not to investigate is made by us not the moderator.

6.3.1 Reporting suspected malpractice

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to report all cases of suspected malpractice involving teachers or students.

A JCQ Report of Suspected Malpractice form (JCQ/M1 for student suspected malpractice or JCQ/M2 for staff suspected malpractice) is available to download from the JCQ website and must be completed as soon as possible and emailed to us at compliance@ocr.org.uk.

When we ask centres to investigate instances of malpractice, heads of centres must act promptly and report the outcomes to us.

More information about reporting and investigating suspected malpractice, and the possible sanctions and penalties which could be imposed, is in the JCQ publication: Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures. You can also find out more on our website.

6.3.2 Supervision

NEA work must be completed in normal curriculum time and supervised and marked by the teacher. You must use enough checks so you're confident the student's work is authentic.

For example, you can use questioning to confirm the depth and breadth of their understanding of the topic they've covered in a specific piece of work.

6.3.3 Candidate and teacher authentication

Both students and teachers must declare that the work is the student's own:

- **Each student** must sign an authentication form before submitting their work to you. By signing the form, they declare the work is their own and any assistance given and/or sources used have been acknowledged.

  It is your responsibility to make sure every student does this.
- **Teachers must** also sign the authentication form for each student to declare the work submitted is the student's own.

You must retain authentication forms in your centre until all reviews of results, malpractice investigations and appeals have been resolved.

The authentication form is on Teach Cambridge and OCR website.

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6.3.4 Group working

We do not assess the skills associated with group work in this qualification and the OCR-set assignment will not include it. If it is necessary to use group work to make the delivery of the assignment more manageable, you must make sure that all practical tasks and evidence submitted for assessment that shows the student has met the marking criteria is entirely the individual's own work.

6.3.5 Methods of assessment

It is your responsibility to choose the best method of assessing a student in relation to their individual circumstances. The methods chosen must be:

- valid
- reliable
- safe and manageable
- suitable to the needs of the student.

Valid

Validity can be compromised if a student does not understand what is being asked of them. For example, one valid method of assessing a student's knowledge and understanding is to question them. If the questions posed are difficult for the student to understand (not in terms of the content but the way they are phrased, for example) the validity of the assessment method is questionable.

As well as assessment methods being valid, the evidence presented must also be valid. For example, it would not be appropriate to present an organisation's equal opportunities policy as evidence towards a student's understanding of how the equal opportunities policy operates within the organisation. It would be more appropriate for the student to incorporate the policy within a report describing different approaches to equal opportunities.

Reliable

A reliable method of assessment will produce consistent assessment results for different teachers assessing on each occasion. Internal moderators must make sure that all teachers' assessment decisions are consistent.

Safe and manageable

You must make sure that the assessment methods and approaches taken:

- are safe and manageable
- do not put unnecessary demands on the student
- are appropriate and in line with ethical standards and your centre's safeguarding responsibilities.

Suitable to the needs of the student

We are committed to ensuring that achievement of these qualifications is free from unnecessary barriers. You must follow this commitment through when amending tasks and/or considering assessment.

6.3.6 Presentation of the final piece of work

Students must observe the following procedures when producing their final piece of work for the NEA tasks:

- work can be word processed or hand-written
- tables and graphs (if relevant) may be produced using appropriate ICT
- any copied material must be suitably acknowledged
- quotations must be clearly marked, and a reference provided
- a completed Unit Recording Sheet must be attached to work submitted for moderation. The Unit Recording Sheet can be downloaded from Teach Cambridge
- centres must provide guidance on the Unit Recording Sheet (URS) to show where specific evidence can be found. This may be through the use of the 'page number' column and/or by referencing file names and locations
- work **must** be submitted digitally for moderation and be in a suitable file format and structure. A list of approved file formats and the structure for electronic evidence is provided in Appendix A. Students must submit their completed product(s) in an electronic format that is suitable for the client in the set assignment
- work should be uploaded to us using our Submit for Assessment service or sent by post. When sent by post, work **must** be supplied digitally on USB.

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6.4 Marking NEA units

All NEA units are internally marked by teachers using the OCR marking criteria and guidance. This could be the teacher who has delivered the programme or another person from the centre. The work is then externally moderated by our moderators. Assessment of the set assignments must adhere to the JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications).

The marking criteria must be used to mark each student's work. These specify the levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that the student is required to demonstrate.

6.4.1 Use of a 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment tasks should be marked by teachers/assessors according to the OCR marking criteria using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the marking criteria, teachers/assessors select the band descriptor provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria.

- Each band descriptor covers all the relevant content for the topic areas.
- The descriptors should be read and applied as a whole.
- Make a best fit match between the answer and the band descriptors.
- An answer does not have to meet all of the requirements of a band descriptor before being placed in that band. It will be placed in a particular band when it meets more of the requirements of that band than it meets the requirements of other bands.
- Where there is more than one sub-strand within the band descriptors for a topic area and a sub-strand has not been addressed at all, it is still possible for the answer to be credited within that mark band depending upon the evidence provided for the remaining sub-strands. The answer should be placed in the mark band most closely reflecting the standard achieved across all sub-strands within the band descriptors for a topic area; however in this scenario, the mark awarded for that band should reflect that a sub-strand has not been addressed.

When deciding the mark within a band, the criteria below should be applied:

- the extent to which the statements within the band have been achieved. For example:
    - an answer that convincingly meets nearly all of the requirements of a band descriptor should be placed at or near the top of that band. Where the student's work convincingly meets the statements, the highest mark should be awarded
    - an answer that meets many of the requirements of the band descriptor should be placed in the middle of the band. Where the student's work adequately meets the statements, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
    - if an answer is on the borderline between two bands but it is decided that it better fits the descriptors for:
        - the lower of these two bands - it should be placed near the top of the lower band
        - the higher of these two bands - the lowest mark for the higher band should be awarded.
- If a student's work does not meet any Mark Band 1 (MB1) criteria for the task, you must award zero marks for that task.

Teachers/assessors should use the full range of marks available to them and award full marks in any band for work that fully meets that descriptor. This is work that is 'the best one could expect from students working at that level'.

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6.4.2 Annotating students' work

Each piece of NEA work should show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria.

Writing comments on students' work and Unit Recording Sheet (URS) provides a means of communication between teachers during the internal standardisation, and with the moderator if the work is part of the moderation sample. You should include the set assignment's title on each Unit Recording Sheet (URS) in the scenario title field to help easily identify the assignment taken.

If you have given additional, more specific support or guidance to an individual student to get them started on a task, because they could not start a task or part of a task that was **critical to them accessing the rest of the task or assignment**, this **must** be recorded on the student's work and/or Unit Recording Sheet (URS) for our Moderator to see (see Section 6.3). In this situation, the student should **not** be awarded the marks for the work for which they received help, and the marks achieved must be adjusted appropriately. Recording this on the student's work and/or URS will help our Moderator to understand why the marks have not been awarded.

6.4.3 Internal standardisation

It is important that all teachers/assessors work to common standards. Centres must make sure that, within each unit, the internal standardisation of marks across teachers/assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In following years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. We advise centres to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will help final adjustments to be made.

If you're the only assessor in your centre for this qualification, then it's still advisable to make sure your assessment decisions are internally standardised by someone else in your centre, ideally someone who has experience of the nature of this qualification (For example, is delivering a similar qualification in another subject) or relevant subject knowledge and asking them to review a sample of the assessments.

You must keep evidence of internal standardisation in the centre for the moderator to see.

We have a guide to how internal standardisation may be approached on our website.

6.4.4 Reattempting work before submitting marks to OCR

As described in Section 6.2, before submitting a final mark to us, you can allow students to repeat any element of the assignment and rework their original evidence – we refer to this as a '**reattempt**'. This is to allow the student to reflect on the feedback, which must be recorded, and improve their work. It is not an iterative process where they make small modifications through ongoing marking and feedback to eventually achieve the desired grade.

6.4.5 Submitting marks

All work for NEA units is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to us. You can find the key dates on our website.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a student submits no work for a NEA unit, the student should be identified as being absent from that unit.

If a student completes any work at all for a NEA unit, then the work should be assessed according to the marking criteria and the appropriate mark awarded. This may be zero.

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6.5 Moderating NEA units

The purpose of external moderation is to make sure that the standard of marking is the same for each centre and that internal standardisation has taken place.

The administration pages of our website provide full details about how to submit work for moderation.

This includes the deadline dates for entries and submission of marks. For moderation to happen, centres must submit their marks.

6.5.1 Sample requests

Once you have submitted your marks, we will tell you which work will be sampled as part of the moderation. Samples will include work from across the range of attainment of students' work. Work for moderated units can be uploaded to us using our Submit for Assessment service or sent by post.

When sent by post, work must be supplied digitally via USB.

Copies of students' work must be kept until after their units have been awarded and any review of results or appeals processed.

As it is essential for us to have sample work available at awarding meetings, we may ask some centres to release work for awarding and archive purposes. We will let you know as early as possible if we need this from you and always appreciate your co-operation.

6.5.2 Outcome of moderation

Centres will receive the final outcomes of moderation when the provisional results are issued. Results reports will be available for you to access. More information about the reports that are available is on our administration pages.

6.6 Resubmitting moderated work to us to improve the grade

We use the term '**resubmission**' when referring to student work that has previously been submitted to us for moderation. Following moderation, if you and the student feel they have not performed at their best during the assessment, the student can, with your agreement, improve their work and resubmit it to you again for assessment. You must be sure it is in the student's best interests to resubmit the work for assessment.

There is one resubmission opportunity per NEA assignment. Students can only resubmit work using the **same** assignment if the assignment is still live. The series for which the assignment is live will be shown on the front cover of the assignment. We will not accept resubmitted work based on an assignment that is no longer live.

If students wish to resubmit a unit after the live assessment date has passed, they must submit work using the new live assignment for the unit for the resubmission.

If students are resubmitting in a different academic year, they can use the evidence they produced for the previous year's assignment, but they will need to make any changes that are necessary so that the work meets the requirements of the new scenario and task. (In some cases, using work from a previous year's assignment could mean using it and only making minor changes because the evidence still meets the requirements of the new assignment.)

Students can also build on the work to improve it. All work for a resubmission must be completed under the required teacher supervised conditions and marked against the marking criteria. You must not over direct students on how to adapt/improve work to meet the requirements of the new assignment. You must adhere to all requirements relating to giving and recording feedback from sections 6.3 and 6.7.

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6.7 Recording feedback and decisions

For reattempts and resubmissions, you must record the reasons why a student has been allowed to reattempt or resubmit in your centre's assessment decisions records. You must also follow our guidelines on giving feedback and record the feedback given to the student. All feedback given to the student for the purpose of a reattempt or resubmitting work must be recorded. We have created a set assignment feedback form, available on Teach Cambridge, which you can use to help support this. We monitor the assessment decisions you make. You must follow the guidelines outlined in Section 6.

We reserve the right to request the written feedback and the work in its original state. If you do not meet the requirements this will be treated as malpractice.

Neither you nor the student can add, amend or remove any work after the final mark has been submitted for moderation.

See Section 7.3 for terminal assessment rules.

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7 Administration

The information in this section gives an overview of the processes involved in administering this qualification. All of the following processes require you to submit something to OCR by a specific deadline. More information about the processes and deadlines involved at each stage of the assessment cycle can be found in the Administration area of the OCR website.

7.1 Assessment availability

There are two assessment series available each year in January and June to all students. Students can be entered for different units in different assessment series.

All students must take the exam at a set time on the same day in a series. Certification (where students achieve the qualification) is available each January and June.

Series	Unit availability	
	Unit R093	Units R094 – R099
January	✓	✓
June	✓	✓

- First assessment for externally assessed unit R093 is January 2024.
- First assessment for NEA units R094-R099 is January 2023.
- Certification is available from January 2024.

7.2 Collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system

Regulators have published guidance on collecting evidence of student performance as part of long-term contingency arrangements to improve the resilience of the qualifications system. You should review and consider this guidance when delivering this qualification to students at your centre.

For more detailed information on collecting evidence of student performance please visit our website.

7.3 Entry rules, including Terminal Assessment

Terminal assessment rule

The externally assessed unit must be taken as terminal assessment. This means the exam for unit R093 must be taken in the student's final assessment series which could be in January or June. This exam contributes 40% of the total marks available for the qualification.

NEA units can be submitted in any series but must be submitted either before or in the same series as the externally assessed unit.

Certification entries

- For a student to achieve the qualification, you need to make a qualification certification entry (aggregation) for the student's final series
- To be eligible to receive a result, the student must have been entered for both NEA units and met the terminal assessment rule
- You can make certification entries for the final series:
  - via Interchange or EDI at the same time as unit entries for the exam
  - by submitting a post-results late certification request via Interchange before the post-results late certification deadline for the series, which is after you have received exam results for that series
- As a contingency arrangement, if you miss the post-results late certification deadline, you can make a certification entry in a future series, provided:
  - no further assessment has taken place since the terminal rule was met, and
  - you are making a certification entry only for the qualification in that future series (meaning you are not resitting or resubmitting a unit in the same series).

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- You can make certification entries in the January or June series – this is the series that will appear on the qualification certificate
- Certification entries and late certification requests are always free of charge.

Post-result late certification

- Post-results late certification requests must be submitted via Interchange by the post-results deadline for the series. The deadline for each series can be found in the key dates document in the Administration area of our website
- **Note: Once the student has sat the exam in the June series, it is not possible to make a late certification request for the January series, as the final assessment series is now June.**

Resitting units before certification

- Students can take the exam before all the NEA units are completed. This is classed as a 'practice attempt'
  - 'Practice attempts' do not count towards the student's overall grade or in performance tables. The student will be issued with a unit result only
  - When the student has completed all the NEA units, if you do not make a certification entry when you enter for the exam, the exam will be classed as a practice attempt unless you make a late certification entry or a certification entry in a subsequent series
  - If a student takes the exam again after a practice attempt, the result of the latest attempt will count towards the qualification result, even if the practice attempt result was higher
- Work for each NEA assignment can be re-submitted once before the overall qualification is awarded. Students can only resubmit work using the same assignment if the assignment is still live. We will use the best result of both attempts towards the qualification result.
- If a student takes an NEA unit multiple times using different assignments for that unit, the best result of all attempts will be used to calculate the qualification result as long as they meet the terminal assessment rule.

Retaking the qualification

- After a student has achieved a qualification result, they can resit the externally assessed unit and submit the NEA units again in a later series to improve their qualification result:
  - students can resit the exam without resubmitting the NEA units
  - students cannot resubmit the NEA units only to improve results. In order to meet terminal assessment requirements, they must also resit the exam if they are resubmitting NEA units.
- Students can only resubmit work using the **same** assignment if the assignment is still live. The live assessment dates will be shown on the front cover of the assignment. We will not accept work based on an assignment that is no longer live. If students wish to resit a unit after the live assessment date has passed, they must submit work using the new live assignment.
- The result from the first overall qualification result is used towards the performance tables.

Please refer to the Administration pages of the OCR website (Administration - OCR) for more information on early entry and discounting.

7.4 Equality Act information relating to Cambridge Nationals

The Cambridge Nationals require assessment of a broad range of skills and, as such, prepare students for further study and higher-level courses.

The Cambridge Nationals qualifications were reviewed to check if any of the competences required presented a potential barrier to disabled students. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to make sure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject.

7.5 Accessibility

There can be adjustments to standard assessment arrangements on the basis of the individual needs of students. It's important that you identify as early as possible whether students have disabilities or particular difficulties that will put them at a disadvantage in the assessment situation and choose a qualification or adjustment that allows them to demonstrate attainment.

If a student requires access arrangements in assessments that need approval from us, this must be gained in Access Arrangements Online. You must select Cambridge Nationals at time of application;

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approval from GCSE or A Level applications do not extend to Cambridge Nationals. However, more than one qualification type can be selected when making an application. For guidance or support please contact the Special Requirements Team.

The responsibility for providing adjustments to assessment is shared between your centre and us. Please read the JCQ booklet Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

If you have students who need a post-examination adjustment to reflect temporary illness, indisposition or injury when they took the assessment, please read the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process.

If you think any aspect of this qualification unfairly restricts access and progression, please email or call our Customer Support Centre.

The access arrangements permissible for use in this specification are as follows:

Access arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Reader/Computer reader	Yes	All assessments
Scribes/Speech recognition technology	Yes	All assessments
Practical assistants	Yes	All assessments
Word processors	Yes	All assessments
Communication professional	Yes	All assessments
Language modifier	Yes	All assessments
Modified question paper	Yes	Timetabled examinations
Extra time	Yes	All assessments with time limits

7.6 Requirements for making an entry

We provide information on key dates, timetables and how to submit marks on our website.

Centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries. We recommend that centres apply to become a registered centre with us, well in advance of making their first entries. Details on how to register with OCR can be found on our website.

7.6.1 Making estimated unit entries

Estimated entries are not required for Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia.

7.6.2 Making final unit entries

When making an entry, centres will need the unit entry codes and component codes. Students submitting work must be entered for the appropriate unit entry code from the table below.

Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
R093	01	Written paper	Creative iMedia in the media industry
R094	01	Moderated – Upload	Visual identity and digital graphics
R094	02	Moderated – Postal	Visual identity and digital graphics
R095	01	Moderated – Upload	Characters and comics
R095	02	Moderated – Postal	Characters and comics

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Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
R096	01	Moderated – Upload	Animation with audio
R096	02	Moderated – Postal	Animation with audio
R097	01	Moderated – Upload	Interactive digital media
R097	02	Moderated – Postal	Interactive digital media
R098	01	Moderated – Upload	Visual imaging
R098	02	Moderated – Postal	Visual imaging
R099	01	Moderated – Upload	Digital games
R099	02	Moderated – Postal	Digital games

The same component code must be used for all students entered for a unit in the same session.

Work for moderated units can be uploaded to us using our Submit for Assessment service or sent by post. When sent by post, work **must** be supplied digitally on USB.

The short title for these Cambridge National qualifications is CAMNAT and will display as such on our secure website, 'Interchange' and some of our administrative documents.

You do not need to register your students first. Individual unit entries should be made for the series in which you intend to submit or resubmit an NEA unit or sit the externally assessed examination.

Only make a certification entry using the overall qualification code (see section 7.7) in the final series.

7.7 Certification rules

Students must be entered for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded. Students must be entered for:

- OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia – certification code J834.

7.8 Unit and qualification resits

Students may resit the externally assessed unit R093. Please see section 7.3 for information relating to our terminal assessment approach.

Students may resit each NEA assignment once. The best unit result from the NEA units will be used to calculate the certification result.

You must make sure that when arranging resit opportunities, they are fair to all students and do not give students an unfair advantage over other students. For example, the student must not have direct guidance and support from the teacher in producing further evidence for NEA units. When resitting a NEA unit, students must submit new, amended or enhanced work, as detailed in the JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications).

Centres must make sure that when arranging resit opportunities, they do not adversely affect other assessments being taken.

Arranging a resit opportunity is at the centre's discretion. Summative assessment series must not be used as a diagnostic tool and resits should only be planned if it is clear that the student has taken full advantage of the first assessment opportunity and formative assessment process.

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7.9 Post-results services

A number of post-results services are available:

- reviews of results – if you think there might be something wrong with a student's results, you may submit a review of marking or moderation
- missing and incomplete results – this service should be used if an individual subject result for a student is missing, or the student has been omitted entirely from the results supplied
- access to scripts – our free service for exams officers to download copies of students' completed question papers
- late certification – following the release of unit results, if you have not previously made a certification entry, you can make a late request, which is known as a **late certification**. This is a free service.

Please refer to the JCQ Post-Results Services booklet and the OCR Administration page for further guidance about action on the release of results.

For internally assessed units the review of results process cannot be carried out for one individual student; the outcome of a review of moderation must apply to a centre's entire cohort.

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Appendix A: Guidance for the production of electronic evidence

Structure for evidence

The centre-assessed (NEA) units in this qualification are units R094 – R099. For each student, all the tasks together will form a portfolio of evidence, stored electronically. Evidence for each unit must be stored separately.

An internal assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the student's evidence. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index called 'Home Page'.

There should be a top-level folder detailing the student's centre number, OCR candidate number, surname and forename, together with the unit code (R094 – R099), so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one student.

Each student's internal assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre's network. Before submitting the portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing the internal assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues it will be necessary to save students' work using an appropriate file format.

Students must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. **Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.**

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, presentation documents, digital photos and digital video.

To make sure files are compatible, all files submitted electronically must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, we will provide further guidance. We advise against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. Files should be exported in a generic format that can be opened on a PC computer system without any specialist software applications. It is the centre's responsibility to make sure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each student.

Standard file formats acceptable as evidence for the Cambridge Nationals are listed here.

File type	File format	Max file size*
Audio	.3g2 .3ga .aac .aiff .amr .m4a .m4b .m4p .mp3 .wav	25GB
Compression	.zip .zipx .rar .tar .tar .gz .tgz .7z .zipx .zz	25GB
Data	.xls .xlsx .mdb .accdb .xlsb	25GB
Document	.odt .pdf .rtf .txt .doc .docx .dotx	25GB
Image	.jpg .png .jpeg .tif .jfif .gif .heic .psd .dox .pcx .bmp .wmf	25GB
Presentation	.ppt .pptx .pdf .gslides .pptm .odp .ink .potx .pub	25GB
Video	.3g2 .3gp .avi .flv .m4v .mkv .mov .mp4 .mp4v .wmp .wmv	25GB
Web	.wlmp .mts .mov-1 .mp4-1 .xspf .mod .mpg	25GB

If you are using **.pages** as a file type, please convert this to a pdf prior to submission.

*max file size is only applicable if using our Submit for Assessment service.

Submit for Assessment is our secure web-based submission service. You can access Submit for Assessment on any laptop or desktop computer running Windows or macOS and a compatible browser. It supports the upload of files in the formats listed in the table above as long as they do not exceed the maximum file size. Other file formats and folder structures can be uploaded within a compressed file format.

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Appendix B: Command and descriptor words

External assessment

The table below shows the command words that will be used in exam questions. They show what we mean by the command word and how students should approach the question and understand its demand. Remember that the rest of the wording in the question is also important.

Word(s)	Students will....
Analyse	• Separate or break down information into parts and identify their characteristics or elements. • Explain the pros and cons of a topic or argument and make reasoned comments. • Explain the impacts of actions using a logical chain of reasoning.
Annotate	• Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final. • Add all the needed or appropriate parts.
Calculate	• Get a numerical answer showing how it has been worked out.
Choose	• Select an answer from options given.
Circle	• Select an answer from options given.
Compare and contrast	• Give an account of the similarities and differences between two or more items or situations.
Complete	• Add all the needed or appropriate parts. • Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final.
Create	• Produce a visual solution to a problem (for example: a mind map, flowchart or visualisation).
Describe	• Give an account including all the relevant characteristics, qualities or events. • Give a detailed account of.
Discuss	• Present, analyse and evaluate relevant points (for example, for/against an argument).
Draw	• Produce a picture or diagram.
Evaluate	• Make a reasoned qualitative judgement considering different factors and using available knowledge/experience.
Explain	• Give reasons for and/or causes of. • Use the words or phrases such as `because', `therefore' or `this means that' in answers.
Fill in	• Add all the needed or appropriate parts. • Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final.
Identify	• Select an answer from options given. • Recognise, name or provide factors or features.
Justify	• Give good reasons for offering an opinion or reaching a conclusion.
Label	• Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final. • Add all the necessary or appropriate parts.
Outline	• Give a short account, summary or description.
State	• Give factors or features. • Give short, factual answers.

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Non examined assessment (NEA)

The tables below show the descriptor words that will be used in the NEA Marking Criteria grids. They explain the type of evidence that you should expect to see to meet each descriptor word.

Mark Band (MB1) Words:

Descriptor word	Meaning
Basic	• Work includes the minimum required. It is a starting point but is simplistic and not developed. • Understanding and skills are applied in a way that partly achieves the wanted or intended result, but it would not be useable without further input or work.
Brief/Briefly	• Work includes a small number of relevant facts or concepts but lacks detail, contextualisation or examples.
Dependent	• The student can perform a task when given regular assistance or help.
Few	• Work produced is restricted or narrow. It includes less than half of the information or examples expected for a full response.
Inefficient	• Outputs are produced but with great expense or effort because of poor organisation or design and not making the best use of available resources.
Limited	• Work produced is restricted in range or scope and includes only some of the information required. It evidences partial rather than full understanding. • Work produced is a starting point rather than a developed process, concept or output.
Minimal	• Includes very little in amount or quantity required.
Simple	• Includes a small number of relevant parts, which are not related to each other.
Superficial	• Work completed lacks depth and detail.

Mark Band (MB2) Words:

Descriptor word	Meaning
Adequate(ly)	• Work includes the appropriate number of relevant facts or concepts but does not include the full detail, contextualisation or examples.
Assisted	• The student can perform a task with occasional assistance or help.
Part(ly)/Partial	• To some extent but not completely. • Work produced is inclusive in range and scope. It evidences a mainly developed application of understanding, performance or output needed. • Work produced results in a process, concept or output that would be useable for its purpose.
Some	• Work produced is inclusive but not fully comprehensive. It includes over half the information or examples expected for a full response.
Sound	• Valid, logical, shows the student has secured most of the relevant understanding, but points or performance are not fully developed. • Applies understanding and skills to produce the wanted or intended result in a way that would be useable.

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Mark Band (MB3) Words:

Descriptor word	Meaning
Accurate(ly)	• Acting or performing with care and precision. • Correct in all details.
All	• Work produced is fully comprehensive and wide-ranging. It includes almost all, or all the information or examples expected for a full response.
Clear(ly)	• Focused and accurately expressed, without ambiguity.
Complex	• Includes many relevant parts, all of which relate to each other logically.
Comprehensive(ly)	• The work produced is complete and includes everything required to show depth and breadth of understanding. • Applies the understanding and skills needed to successfully produce the wanted or intended result in a way that would be fully fit-for-purpose.
Consistent(ly)	• A level of performance which does not vary in quality over time.
Critical	• Objective analysis and evaluation in order to form: a judgement, evaluation of the evidence or effective trouble shooting/fault finding.
Detailed	• Gives point by point consideration of all the key information.
Effective	• Applies the skills required to the task and is successful in producing the desired or intended result. • The work produced is effective in relation to a brief.
Efficient	• Able to produce results or outputs with the minimum expense or effort, because of good organisation or design and making the best use of available resources.
Full(y)	• Work produced is comprehensive in range and scope. It evidences a fully developed application of understanding, performance or output needed. • Work produced results in a process, concept or output that would be fully fit-for-purpose.
Independent(ly)	• The student can perform a task without assistance or reliance on others.
Justify/Justified	• The reasons for doing something are explained in full.
Most(ly)	• Includes nearly all of what is expected to be included.
Wide (ranging)	• Includes many relevant details, examples or contexts; all of which are fully detailed, contextualised or exemplified.

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