

Cambridge Technicals (2012)

Level 2 / Level 3

Media

**05380, 05382, 05385
05387, 05389, 05392, 05395, 05398**

Moderators' report 2019 series

About this Moderators' report

This report on the 2019 series assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice for future assessment/moderation

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of moderation**
- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our CPD programme

Reviews of results

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Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other assessments, can be found on the [OCR website](#).

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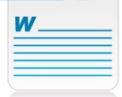
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Overview

The Cambridge Technical in Media continues to be a popular post-16 qualification across the country. Schools and colleges have been attracted by the strong vocational grounding provided by the combination of non-specialist units and specialist pathways, including writing and publishing; TV and Film, Audio and Games Design. The qualification is structured to enable centres to deliver projects across a number of units, which reinforces the vocational opportunity for learners to develop a range of transferable skills in preparation for further study, and a variety of career pathways.

The qualification enables learners to develop a range of relevant skills and build a strong portfolio. Some centres have indicated that the Level 3 qualification, in particular, has enabled them to consistently place their learners in higher education establishments often in the same institution year on year. Further education and sixth form educational establishments often use Level 2 as an entry level requirement as part of a progressive learning framework for their learners, as the Level 2 qualification naturally leads into the Level 3 qualification or other media qualifications including A Levels or Apprenticeships. At Level 3 learners are also able to take their skills into Level 4 apprenticeships and a diverse range of careers using their portfolio as evidence of their wide and relevant skills base.

Most centres have endeavoured to keep pace with technological developments to ensure learners have relevant and appropriate resources. There is also evidence that centres have invested in staff with relevant skills and, where possible, industry experience to encourage learners to embrace the fullness of the vocational range of units.

It is commendable that a number of centres have taken to devising assignment briefs which have a clear link to the Learning Outcomes in the grading criteria as this encourages a vocational approach and supports learners in achieving the higher grades. This approach has also enabled centres to devise projects which encourage the combination of units to offer learners scenarios which replicate those they are likely to face in the workplace and industry. Some centres have been particularly enthused by this approach to delivery and are currently planning for a range of new projects with outside agencies for first delivery in September 2019.

The quality of the work remains consistent and centres encourage learners to present their work through a variety of formats. E-folders and blogs remain one of the most popular ways in which learners evidence their work, the advantages of this approach enables the Visiting Moderator to easily see where the evidence is located, which is also incredibly helpful when units of work are approached in conjunction as part of a project. This represents good practice and enables learners to demonstrate their understanding of developing technologies as their portfolios are current and can be used to present their work at interviews.

There is evidence that, on the whole, assessment decisions were taken in line with the qualification with centres making it clear how they reached their final grading decisions. It is also beneficial for centres to consider adopting the practice of earlier visits from their Visiting Moderator, as this provides an opportunity to take stock and ensure that the work is on track. Where centres took this practice on board, it gave them the opportunity to respond to feedback earlier in the year and to take on board action points raised by the moderator. Typically centres are planning for a first visit at Easter with their second visit in June/July. It may be helpful for centres to engage with their Visiting Moderator in the autumn to discuss their plans for their annual visits so that it is possible to schedule in provisional dates. There seems to be very little evidence of centres opting for a chargeable third visit within the academic year.

OCR processes were successfully implemented in most centres, with evidence of these procedures available to the Visiting Moderator. Virtually all centres demonstrated good practice in filling out and presenting the Unit Recording Sheets (URS). The URS forms are integral to the moderation process and there is evidence that these documents have been used effectively to reference the individual Learning Outcomes for a unit, clearly marking these on portfolio pages, supported by a clear summative statement to indicate how the evidence has been met for each Learning Outcome.

There is still the opportunity to strengthen internal standardisation, although this is an area which has seen marked improvement across the year. This process can be a challenge, particularly when there is more than one member of staff delivering the qualification, however there is evidence of good practice in a number of centres, with well-established systems enabling newer staff to pick up the process of assessing the qualification with confidence.

Another area of improvement has been the way in which group work is evidenced and signposted for moderation, especially in relation to individual contributions to a final outcome, particularly when a 'project approach' is adopted. This enables moderators to easily access evidence for each of the grading criteria for each unit, particularly when supported by correctly filled out URS forms clearly outlining the centre assessor's decisions regarding how each learner in a production group has achieved each of the relevant Learning Outcomes. Centres have also correctly adopted this approach where units have been approached in isolation.

Centres are also making good use of witness statements, audio-visual and/or audio recordings to clearly identify an individual's contribution to group work. It is important to remember that when producing material for an original media product, the material produced by learners must be evidenced in the same format, for example if producing an audio-visual product the material could include rushes of the footage and/or audio samples/tracks; if the learner is producing audio samples/tracks, these must be evidenced separately from the final audio media product; in the instance of a print media product, learners must evidence these with print samples etc. This will ensure that it is possible to identify evidence of an individual learner's contribution to the production process. For production units, centres need to ensure the production materials produced by the learner are evidenced separately from the final outcome.

Visiting Moderators have appreciated that on the day of the moderation visit centres have made available all portfolios for all learners entered for that moderation, not only the sample requested by the Visiting Moderator. In most instances there is good evidence that Interchange is working well as centres are entering grades onto Interchange at least two weeks before the date for the moderation visit, which helps moderators to select the sample in advance of the visit. It also provides time for the centre to prepare for the visit and to ensure that the sample and the full range of learners' work entered for moderation are accessible to the moderator on the day of the moderation visit.

There were fewer Subject Expert Visits delivered by the Chief Coordinator during the year, although these remain a useful training tool for centres particularly when there are new members of staff delivering the qualification. OCR also offers a caller ID system, which has proved to be helpful for centres who are unfamiliar with some of the units in the suite, or for staff new to the subject area.

General comments

At both Level 2 and Level 3 learners have consistently performed well at the higher grades producing interesting and innovative work with successful application of the qualification across the majority of centres. The most successful centres were those who demonstrated an ability to take on board the advice of their Visiting Moderator and fully embrace the vocational nature of the qualification. It is good to see how the work the learners are producing demonstrates their growing understanding of an ever media-dominated society.

At Level 2, throughout the life of the qualification, learners have continued to challenge themselves with centres traditionally entering the learners for the lower level of the qualification and subsequently upgrading to the next level, for instance from the Certificate to the Extended Certificate or the Extended Certificate to the Diploma.

The work produced by these learners increasingly demonstrates their understanding of the relationship with the audience, media text and the institutions that produce them. This has been evidenced particularly with a range of successful outcomes when units have been linked together. A common linkage is Unit 13 Planning and producing a media product with Unit 14 Print-based advertising media. Learners have successfully understood and executed the production of a music video with the majority of learners reaching the higher grades by demonstrating an understanding and ability to cut to the beat of the music, achieving a high technical standard and quality in their editing. Learners have then successfully taken the final music promo and produced a supporting print-based advertising campaign and print-based advert for the band and song featured in the music promo. Learners have clearly demonstrated their knowledge of the interlinked nature of the media industry as they also included photographs of the production of the music promo in the posters, magazine adverts and bus stop adverts they chose to produce for the print-based advert in Unit 14.

Learners tended to produce less essay-based recces and risk assessments, increasingly creating formatted documents, which include images of their proposed location. Planning and pre-production materials produced by learners have improved over time and are now, on the whole, well-developed and heading more towards industry standards, however this is still a point of development. In particular production schedules and launch dates continue to challenge learners and should be a focus for centres to ensure that learners understand the importance of these specifics not just to meet the grading criteria, but also as essential points of consideration when working in the industry.

Production work has developed over time, in particular the technical skills of learners, as it appears that in many centres learners increasingly have access to more advanced technology and on the whole have successfully used it to produce media products which are both conventional as well as conveying the learners' planned intentions and meaning. Learners' print-based production work has been particularly successful this year. Although audio-visual and audio productions have come on, audio remains an issue, particularly learners' understanding of appropriate audio levels. This is a specific skill that would enhance final productions and centres are encouraged to enable learners to skill up on how to match audio levels and to appreciate that this is an essential part of their production.

Centres are encouraged to challenge their learners creatively, especially as learners are increasingly demonstrating their technical skills. Centres are also encouraged to provide opportunities for learners to experience the interlinked nature of the media industry by linking units together. Some centres have successfully linked the following units in projects: Unit 31 with

32, enabling learners to take the photographs for the intended two linked promotional graphic design media items. Unit 40 with Unit 41 and Unit 50, learners producing the visual effects for the 2-minute segment in Unit 41, for an original film or TV media product in Unit 40 while producing the soundtrack for the production in Unit 50. The suite offers many more opportunities to link units beyond these examples.

Level 3 learners this year have developed their knowledge and understanding of media institutions and how they produce, advertise and distribute media texts. Learners have also improved their media production skills and have increasingly been using and producing technically higher resolution productions from full HD audio/visual productions to CGI computer games.

Learners have undertaken the full range of the qualification from the Certificate through to the Extended Diploma. This year both the Introductory Diploma and the Extended Diploma have been popular with centres and learners alike.

When approaching Unit 1 learners have increasingly moved away from the traditional media industries and institutions like the BBC and Disney to branch out into a wider range of industries including Japanese anime and products from the Games industry. This broadening of institutions and media texts seems to have aided learners to demonstrate a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between media institutions, the texts they produce and their audiences. Learners who have attended visits to the BBFC seem to have benefited from the time spent there. This use of external enrichment, industrial experts and companies who provide briefs matching the Learning Outcomes not only gives learners an industrial experience but truly incorporates the vocational nature of the qualifications. Learners have obviously engaged with these experiences producing some well-developed and executed work.

Centres working only in their own institutions with their own resources have also produced well-executed work, with many centres providing their learners with a more vocational experience through linking units together. A good example is linking Unit 20 and Unit 54, as the outcome for Unit 20 can be integrated within the radio play produced in Unit 54, with learners producing a radio trailer as the final original audio media product in Unit 20 for the radio play produced in Unit 54, in addition the learner could produce a radio advert to be integrated in a talk and music radio programme extract. In both instances the final outcomes i.e. the radio trailer produced for Unit 20 and the radio play produced in Unit 54 would have to be evidenced separately in their respective units for the Visiting Moderator, this would be the same for the Unit 20 radio advert to be incorporated in the Unit 55 talk and music radio programme extract.

Planning and pre-production materials produced by learners have demonstrated more use of industry formatted documents, in particular reces and risk assessments. Learners are also using more digital technology and software to produce storyboards and set designs, again more in line with industry standards. Whether using traditional or new technology techniques, this year learners have increasingly developed their skills in the planning process, although it is worth mentioning that the use of Gantt charts as production schedules can be limiting especially when the higher grades in a unit require a detailed schedule.

The media production work produced by learners at Level 3 has seen a development in both learners' creativity, especially in the framing, composition and lighting of productions, and the technical application of audio/visual effects during the post-production process in print, audio and audio-visual productions. Learners are experimenting more with a vast array of creative

processes across different mediums, while increasingly working to live community-based briefs. This has been very exciting and gratifying to see and is truly in the spirit of the qualification.

Games production and animation production have increased over this year with examples of the use of 2D and complex 3D animations and gameplay, which have been particularly successful. Traditional production mediums and storytelling have continued to be popular with learners devising creative and challenging film sequences and film trailers, this creativity has extended into the text-based elements of productions as more learners are experimenting with graphics, especially in the title sequences. This has also extended into film trailers where learners have produced more polished and conventional graphics especially in the use of certification and call to action graphics at the end of productions.

As in Level 2 sound recording on productions continues to be an issue at Level 3, in particular on location recording of dialogue. Learners are encouraged to use a windshield on the microphone and if one is not available get the microphone in closer to the actors.

Print-based units continue to be popular with the production of magazines and posters demonstrating ever increasing sophistication.

It was good to see an increase in the production of audio products, especially talk and music radio shows where the learners have shown a positive engagement with the medium.

Centres and learners are advised to, where possible, facilitate group work as this allows learners to gain more of a sense of how the media industry works. This should be encouraged at all stages of the production process not just the production stage. It is particularly important during the pre-production stage of the production, as it requires the sharing of ideas and decision-making in a team. This type of collaborative working is a key element in the media industry.

Comments on individual units

For both Level 2 and Level 3, Unit 1 is the only mandatory unit.

Unit 01: Analysing media products and audiences

There is an scenario available for Unit 1 on the OCR website which offers an example of one approach, however centres are encouraged to devise their own scenario in order to best suit the requirements of their learners, as long as this scenario enables learners to achieve the criteria for the unit at all the available grades.

Unit 1 continues to present some challenges and centres are reminded that learners need to concentrate on one media institution and one media product ensuring that evidence of one media product is carried through the learning outcomes. P2/M1/D1; P3/M2/D2; P4; P5/M3 should all be evidenced through one media product and this should be the same media product for all the above-mentioned criteria. Centres should note that the media product should be one which is produced by the institution the learner has investigated in P1. So in practical terms if in P1 the learner investigated an institution such as the BBC focusing on Radio 1 as the context for their investigations, then for P2/M1/D1 the learner should select a programme produced and broadcast by Radio 1, selecting for example any of Radio 1's programmes.

Centres are also reminded that whilst Unit 1 is a theory-based unit, which aims to provide learners with an understanding of media institutions, their audience and the products they

produce, it is recommended that learners should have the opportunity to evidence the grading criteria through a variety of mediums, (e.g. written presentations, verbal presentations, audio content, audio-visual content). A successful approach for Unit 1 adopted by some centres has been for learners to create an active information website, such as a blog or Prezi.

Level 2

Unit 13: Planning and producing a media product

LO1 Be able to generate appropriate ideas for an original media product, when generating ideas learners are expected to produce a range of ideas for the narrative of the production which could be evidenced through mind maps or spider diagrams, as this will allow the learner the opportunity to select one idea from the range of ideas to carry forward through the remaining Learning Outcomes.

Unit 14: Print-based advertising media

Centres are reminded that in order to achieve M1 learners must give consideration to seasonal and calendar events when scheduling launch dates, for instance when producing a plan for a print-based advertisement for a new horror production, learners should take into account key seasonal dates for instance Christmas, Halloween.

Level 3

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

LO3 Be able to develop ideas by creating proposals and sample material for two products, the Learning Outcome requires that learners have to produce sample materials which does involve learners producing their own sample materials for both ideas. A common practice among centres, who tackle both Units 13 & 14, is to link the two units i.e. the idea they develop in Unit 13 becomes the print product they produce in Unit 14. The sample material produced in Unit 13 for the final idea can be developed into the final product produced in Unit 14.

Unit 32: Graphic design for media products

LO2 Be able to generate conceptual ideas for related graphic design items, learners are required to generate conceptual design ideas for three related graphic design items. It would be expected the images, for instance the photographs used in the three related graphic design items, would be the learners' own work.

Unit 43: Production and post-production for TV

LO3 Be able to edit production materials to produce an original 5-minute segment of an original TV programme, it is acceptable to include pre-recorded sequences as evidence for LO2, if the pre-recorded sequence inserts have allowed the learner to film/video sufficient footage/rushes from which they can make a selection of shots to present for moderation. It is also acceptable to count the pre-recorded sequences as evidence for LO3 if learners are able to edit the footage/rushes in the pre-recorded sequences. This will allow the learner to fulfil all the criteria of LO3 as long as these pre-recorded sequences are included in the live programme.

Sector update

The industry is changing rapidly with developments in mobile technology and smartphones providing learners with access to the opportunity to create projects, which rely less on high levels of equipment, as readily available smartphones present the opportunity to capture high-resolution imagery. Learners need to be mindful that whilst smartphones offer high quality visual content, equal consideration should be given to audio recordings, which may not be of sufficient

quality when obtained on a smartphone. There are now more opportunities to download advanced editing packages, which can encourage more creativity and artistry amongst learners.

More advanced sound apps could be useful for learners particularly when filming on location, and in the studio, especially if combined with newer headphones, which can enable learners to detect changes in audio levels more easily.

Learners need to be aware that more traditional art forms such as the theatre are producing more audio-visual material for live performance, in addition gaming and animation are also growing industries, so learners will need to become increasingly familiar with the latest software for instance Maya, Nuke and Resolume, as this will ensure their skills are relevant and current. Learners will also need to become familiar with 4K if they are looking at careers in production. Learners would benefit from becoming familiar with the relevant software to expand their possible opportunities when deciding on their future careers.

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