

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

Unit code: DV73 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to give candidates an understanding of copywriting, by balancing creativity with the conventions of the advertising industry. It not only focuses on writing advertising copy, it also focuses on the target audience.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Evaluate copy across a variety of media.
- 2 Write advertising copy appropriate to selected media.

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. A competence in communications is beneficial. This may be demonstrated by possession of Core Skill Communications at Intermediate 2.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills of Written Communication and Information Technology at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: In order to achieve this Unit, candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have satisfied the minimum evidence requirements for each Outcome. It should be noted that Outcome 1 refers to the evaluation of a variety of written copy across various media. This Outcome will be completed under restricted open-book using an extended response written paper.

Outcome 2 refers to the writing of copy within one campaign for specific media and will be assessed by the production of two separate pieces of copy for two distinct media.

The evidence generated from Outcome 1 can also be assessed in Outcome 2, which requires those knowledge and skills, encouraging a more holistic assessment process.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Evaluate copy across a variety of media

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Above and below the line advertising
- ◆ Conventions of professional copy in relation to specific media
- ◆ Copy length
- ◆ Professional script format
- ◆ Structure and role of the creative team in an advertising agency
- ◆ Appropriate language and style for audience
- ◆ Call to action and response mechanisms
- ◆ Voluntary codes
- ◆ Legal requirements
- ◆ Objectives of campaign

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills of the broad conventions of copywriting by evaluating one piece of copy from broadcast and one piece from non-broadcast.

Each candidate must correctly:

- ◆ define at least two objectives of the campaign material
- ◆ state a minimum three distinctions between above and below the line media
- ◆ identify the target market of the respective copy
- ◆ outline the structure of a creative team within an advertising agency
- ◆ state advantages of appropriate use of media for delivery of message
- ◆ identify two key roles within advertising agency creative team
- ◆ explain the importance of convention in terms of copy length, layout and use of language
- ◆ identify adherence to relevant voluntary codes and legal requirements

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

Assessment guidelines

Candidates may be supplied two pieces of copy, one from broadcast and one from non-broadcast media at a suitable time prior to the assessment being undertaken. For the assessment, candidates may answer a set of extended response questions related to the evidence requirements of the Outcome. Alternatively, candidates may produce a report of a minimum of 1,000 words.

A dedicated checklist may be employed.

Outcome 2

Write advertising copy appropriate to selected media

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Target market recognition
- ◆ Media platforms, conventions and controls
- ◆ Brand consistency over different media
- ◆ Industry format

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can fulfil the requirements of a creative brief.

The candidate must provide evidence to show they can:

- ◆ fulfil a creative brief producing copy written for both broadcast and non-broadcast media
- ◆ use media platforms to identify appropriate copy length, style and language
- ◆ adhere to voluntary and legal requirements
- ◆ meet agreed deadlines

Assessment guidelines

Candidates could be issued with a creative brief referring to a product or service. After relevant self-directed research using a variety of sources has been undertaken, the candidate produces suitable copy for the broadcast and non-broadcast media.

When writing, candidates should use appropriate language for intended audience, adhere to all voluntary and legal requirements and utilise industry standard layouts appropriate to media.

Length of copy will be dictated by chosen medium.

Administrative Information

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Superclass category:	BA
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This is an optional Unit within the Group Award HNC/D Advertising and PR and may also form part of other Higher National programmes. It may be offered as a Unit within other Group Awards.

This Unit is intended for candidates who wish to pursue a career in the creative side of advertising. It is a specialised unit, however the skills gained and the knowledge learned can serve well candidates who may find employment in other areas within the structure of an advertising agency or other media entity.

As part of the learning process for Outcome 1, candidates may initially wish to work in groups. Time should be allocated for group discussions and evaluation of copy, although the copy examples used for the actual assessment could be presented to candidates on the day of the assessment. Time should be allocated for each candidate to familiarise him/herself with the material prior to assessment.

The copy chosen could be selected by the assessor. Copy should have been published or broadcast and could range from newspaper and/or magazine advertisements, sales/information brochures, corporate/governmental website copy, television/cinema and/or radio scripts, billboard/poster copy and copy used in ambient media.

The following notes give additional information on each Outcome:

Outcome 1

Above the line advertising: classified: press and magazines, television, commercial radio, outdoor (billboards, six-sheets), transport and cinema, Internet.

Below the line advertising: classified, direct marketing, sponsorship, point of sale, exhibitions, sales literature

New and alternative media: SMS messaging, washroom advertising, viral

Conventions of professional copy in relation to specific media and target audience

Outcome 2

Target audience: who is the message aimed at? This will affect style, tone and language.

Professional format: the correct way to present (especially) broadcast scripts.

Length of copy: crucial for radio commercials, which are always produced in blocks of ten seconds, thirty seconds being the average length, however 20 and 40 second scripts are also common.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

Timing: Candidates should be encouraged to time their own radio scripts by reading them aloud, and this need not be done in the classroom.

Television format: A simple format is to divide an A4 sheet into two columns. The left hand column is headed VIDEO, the right, AUDIO. Succinct descriptions of visuals are recommended. Sound effects (SFX) are placed under the audio column, as is any speech. Like radio, TV is sold in blocks of ten seconds, and thirty seconds is the recommended length for candidate scripts.

Redrafting: In all cases, be it broadcast media or otherwise, revisiting work over again is the key to writing good copy. Candidates may wish to seek one another's opinions, emulating a standard in the industry.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

An integrated approach is adopted in the delivery of this unit. Candidates and assessors will identify a tangible link between Outcomes 1 and 2, making for a holistic learning method.

In both Outcomes 1 and 2, it is suggested that selecting examples of work broadly targeted to candidates will encourage a deeper understanding. Many resources exist, in particular on the Internet, where successful and notable examples of relevant material are archived. Advertising agencies are often happy to supply briefs, scripts, and even end-products in the form of printed advertisements, CDs of radio commercials and examples of television commercials on video or DVD. These are excellent, dynamic support materials.

As part of the learning process for Outcome 2, candidates are required to craft their own examples of copy. The references to client meetings are important in emulating so far as possible, a celebrated industry convention.

Candidates will be issued with a creative brief. They may be encouraged to initially discuss the brief in groups before answering it. Self-directed research should be encouraged, utilising a variety of sources (Internet, libraries, relevant media titles).

Where possible the brief should originate from an advertising agency, although assessors may prefer to either construct their own brief, or manipulate an actual professional brief at his/her own discretion.

Where candidates are unable to undertake a written response, it is suggested that oral responses be restricted to 10 minutes per candidate. Oral responses may be conducted under normal classroom conditions and may be recorded.

Candidates unable to undertake a written assessment may wish to supplement oral responses, with the employment of visual aids such as AV slides or I.T. applications.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills of Communication and Information at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Candidates will be expected to source, produce and present written materials to an industry acceptable level. Skills in accessing, analysing and evaluating a range of sources which provide current and complex information will be developed in order that candidates are able to read and evaluate in depth and in detail current materials from a range of paper based and electronic sources.

Resources available to candidates should include appropriate software packages to support accuracy and the effective presentation of materials.

Some formative opportunities to create documents, designs, compositions or models from different types of data appropriate to context with appropriate use of presentation styles, may be useful for candidates, to assure that materials produced are most effective in terms of impact of both context and presentation.

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning. However, it would require planning by the Centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate's evidence.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 — publication code A1030).

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website **www.sqa.org.uk**.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Advertising: Copywriting

This Unit is designed to give you a competent grounding in advertising copywriting.

It balances the creativity of the craft with the conventions found in the industry itself. The Unit focuses not only on what you are writing about, but crucially who your writing will be read by.

It is important to put yourself in your target audience's position. Broadly speaking, who are they? What language are they familiar with? What will engage them? What will turn them off?

In the first Outcome you are asked to evaluate copy - to discuss it and deconstruct it.

You will be given the opportunity to evaluate advertising copy over different media before your assessment.

Outcome 1 will give you the knowledge and skills you will require to complete Outcome 2. This Outcome sees you crafting your own copy in one campaign for two distinct media: one from broadcast (TV or radio) and one from the variety of non-broadcast media like the press, magazines, outdoor advertising, transport etc.

On completion of this Unit you should be able to:

- ◆ evaluate copy across a variety of media, recognising the importance of style, tone and length of copy in relation to target audience
- ◆ write advertising copy within one campaign over two specific media