Examiners' Report/
Lead Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in
Creative Digital Media Production

Unit 1: Digital Media Sectors and
Audiences (21526E)

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Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?
A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries
When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments
Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:
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Unit 1: Digital Media Sectors and Audiences (21526E)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 1 Pass	Level 2		
			Pass	Merit	Distinction
Boundary Mark	0	11	19	27	36

Introduction

This paper was the seventh version sat by learners and the performance has been on a par with previous successful series. With the picture stimulus question moving to one of the long answer items, learners appeared to have been so well taught in answering the question in terms of stylistic codes, that this informed their answers on representation (targeted by the question).

There are still some areas of the unit specification that learners appear to be unfamiliar with. Centres are reminded that the entire specification is in scope for this exam.

Responses that achieved high marks came from learners who had both breadth and depth of their understanding of the subject within the unit.

Learners who had been prepared well for writing the long answer questions (giving a clear and detailed answers covering all sides of the argument or scenario) tended to perform well on this paper.

Overall there was evidence of learners having been well taught across the range of unit content, with the extended questions allowing for differentiation across learner abilities.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Learner performance was generally consistent across the paper, however some questions proved more challenging than others. Overall, there was evidence of learners having been well taught across the range of unit content, with the extended questions allowing for differentiation across learner abilities.

The two, four-mark questions Q12a and Q12b (eight marks of the total 50 from the paper or 16% of the total mark) performed poorly. This is highly unusual for four-mark questions with 'explain' as the command verb that are designed to be accessible through identifying items (in this case uses of narrative in a soap opera for Q12a) and conventions of a sitcom (for Q12b) and gain further marks for being able to explain them.

Whilst the larger eight-mark questions showed normal distribution across a range of marks there were many responses that again failed to gain a mark. Just over a fifth of learners scored 0 marks on Q10c (the most frequent mark trait) and around an eighth of the cohort were unable to access any of the marks for Q13 (which is perhaps more normal). For both items there is a ceiling around seven marks with very few learners being able to access maximum marks.

Combined with the relatively low scoring performance on Q09b (over three quarters unable to directly recall a term from the specification), the performance on these questions affected the cohort's ability to access 29 from the 50 available marks (meaning 58% of the total available marks were far less accessible than intended).

It is extremely important that learners are given the opportunity to practice responding to shorter questions as well as extended question writing. There are a number of occasions where learners have written extremely lengthy and detailed responses to a two-mark question and the points have been achieved within the first sentence. It is possible to give a comprehensive and correct answer in one line as it is in an entire paragraph. Learners would be best served to utilise their time efficiently and save their extended responses for the questions with a higher mark weighting.

Although it may seem like an obvious comment, it is extremely important that learners read the questions carefully and identify what is being asked of them.

Individual Questions

The following section considers each question on the paper, providing examples of popular learner responses and a brief commentary of why the responses gained the marks they did. This section should be considered with the live external assessment and corresponding mark scheme.

Q01
This multiple-choice question was generally, answered accurately although this did prove to be slightly more difficult than intended (with only two thirds of the learners answering correctly). Mostly learners were able to identify that streaming video on a games console was an example of technological convergence.

Q02
There were variable responses to this question. Often learners seem to confuse distribution with promotion and give responses such as adverts when asked to give distribution methods.

This response gained 2 marks

> 2   Give **two** methods for the distribution of radio programmes.
>
> 1   Podcasting applications
>
> 2   Live & Catchup radio broadcasts (BBC iPlayer)
>
> (Total for Question 2 = 2 marks)

Podcast apps and live broadcast or streaming through iPlayer are all valid distribution methods for a radio programme so this learner receives the maximum two marks.

This response gained 1 mark

> 2   Give **two** methods for the distribution of radio programmes.
>
> 1 ...... *internet* ......
>
> 2 ...... *Synergy* ......
>
> **(Total for Question 2 = 2 marks)**

The Internet is a valid distribution method and is worth one mark. The second response of synergy may describe distribution strategy but is not in itself valid.

Q03
In this multiple-choice question learners were required to identify the secondary audience as the term being described in the question. The vast majority were able to do so demonstrating that this concept had been well-taught.

Q04

Rather surprisingly, fewer learners were able to identify the primary research method from multiple choice than identified secondary audience in the previous question. Research is a large part of this unit and should be covered thoroughly.
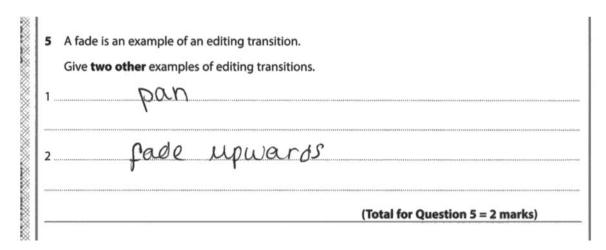
Q05
This two-mark question required learners to give two further editing transitions (in addition to a fade). A large number failed to achieve any marks for this question meaning, possibly that transitions had not been covered. Some learners repeated the example given in the question (fade) or used it to form another response (fade-out) but this was not credited with a mark.

This response gained 2 marks

> 5 A fade is an example of an editing transition.
>
> Give **two other** examples of editing transitions.
>
> 1 Cut
>
> 2 Dissolve
>
> **(Total for Question 5 = 2 marks)**

This response includes 'cut' (worth one mark) and 'dissolve'. As dissolve is listed separately to fade in the specification we can accept it as a different transition and this is worth a mark. 'Cross fade' although technically a 'dissolve' would be seen as repeating the example in the question and would not receive a mark.

This response gained 0 marks

> 5 A fade is an example of an editing transition.
>
> Give **two other** examples of editing transitions.
>
> 1 pan
>
> 2 fade upwards
>
> **(Total for Question 5 = 2 marks)**

Pan is camera movement and not a transition so receives no marks. Fade upwards is repeating 'fade' from the question so does not receive a mark.
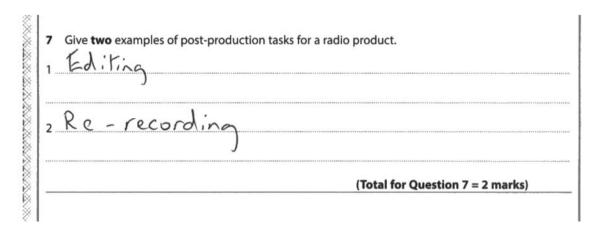
Q06
This question was well responded and many learners were able to identify the pre-production task than those given. This multiple choice question was strong and in line with expectations of this cohort.

Q07
Many learners gave incorrect responses for this question that confused post-production with distribution and promotion. Learners do need to have a clear idea of the different stages of development of media products. Perhaps, the use of radio as scenario proved unfamiliar for some learners in this item.

This response received 2 marks

7 Give **two** examples of post-production tasks for a radio product.

1 Editing

2 Re - recording

(Total for Question 7 = 2 marks)

This response receives two marks. Editing is clearly valid. Re-recording could relate to adding dropped lines or overdubbing (such as adding in questions in a pre-prepared radio news package) which would take place during post production.

This response received 0 marks

7 Give **two** examples of post-production tasks for a radio product.

1 writing a script

2 creating a mood board

(Total for Question 7 = 2 marks)

Neither script writing (which relates to radio but is preproduction) nor moodboard production (which probably would not relate to radio or post production) are valid so this receives no marks.

Q08
This item differentiated well with few learners able to fully explain two separate valid reasons why games producers use personalisation. When answering explain questions, learners should be reminded to relate their point back to a benefit for (in this case) the games producer (or audience if this is the thrust of the question).

This response received 4 marks

> **8** Explain **two** reasons why media producers use personalisation in video games.
>
> 1 It allows creativity to expressed within children, this will remove some of the negative light on video games.
>
> 2 To gain money from the user, through the use of micro-transactions people can by certain things within the game to personalise it.

This response explains two separate reasons. The first is that it promotes creativity (one mark) thus enhancing the reputation of the game (second mark). The second is that the act of customising attributes can lead to transactions (third mark) that increase the company's revenue (fourth mark).

This response received 3 marks

> **8** Explain **two** reasons why media producers use personalisation in video games.
>
> 1 To make the user feel special as it makes them feel unique compared to everyone else.
>
> 2 To make more money, in games there are micro-transactions where people can buy in game things to customize their character.

The learner receives one mark for the first part of the answer as they do not explain why the games company wants the players to feel unique (so that they share their experiences with others or play the game the more). The second part of the answer receives two marks as it links the buying customisable attributes for the character (one mark) can make the company more money (second mark).

Q09a
Nearly half of the cohort achieving full marks. Some learners were able to give a valid response but repeated it across the two responses. Where questions ask learners for more than one example it is important that they attempt to think of two entirely different examples.

This response received 2 marks

> 9 A travel magazine aimed at students is distributed as a mobile app.
>
> (a) Give **two** advantages for the reader of the magazine being distributed as a mobile app.
>
> (2)
>
> 1 majority of people have their phone on
> then at all times therefore its quickly accessible
> 2 they can easily share its content.

This is a complicated response. The first point (that anyone can buy it) could be a benefit for the magazine and not the reader but it then goes onto mention portability (so gets one mark). The second part of the response relates to user generated content and feedback which is valid and receives the second mark.
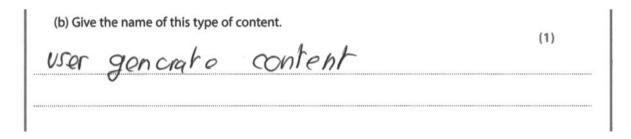
This response received 1 mark

> 9 A travel magazine aimed at students is distributed as a mobile app.
>
> (a) Give **two** advantages for the reader of the magazine being distributed as a mobile app.
>
> (2)
>
> 1 they can read it as and when they want
> 2 Students are always on phones

This response receives a mark for the first answer (relating to portability). The second part is more of a benefit for the magazine and not the reader (that there is a wider audience using mobile devices) and so is not credited with a mark.
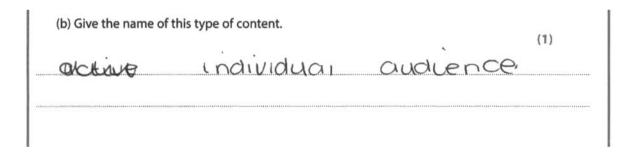
Q09b
This was conceived as a relatively easy question that required learners to give the response "user generated content" or "consumer generated content." Where learners are given responses in a list of multiple choice items they tend to perform strongly but relatively few achieved the mark for this question where they had to recall this from the specification.

This response received 1 mark

> (b) Give the name of this type of content.
>
> (1)
>
> user gencrato content

Although the answer has incorrect spelling it is clear that this learner understands the concept of user generated content so this receives one mark.

This response received 0 marks

> (b) Give the name of this type of content.
>
> (1)
>
> active individual audience

The learner has given individual audience which may be true of the travel magazine but does not describe user generated content so receives no marks.

Q09c
This question gave a normal distribution across the three mark traits with most learners able to access one mark and few not able to access any and few able to receive all possible marks. Many learners failed to give two reasons why the use of user generated content would benefit the magazine (with many focussing wrongly on how it would benefit the audience).

This response received 2 marks

> advantages of user generated content

(c) Give **two** advantages for the travel magazine of including readers' own travel
pictures and reviews.

(2)

1 Readers feel part of a community so are more likely to keep buying her travel magazine - increased sales

2 The magazine comes across to readers as more realistic + reliable which could help increase sales of the magazine

(Total for Question 9 = 5 marks)

Both responses are valid and give real advantages to the magazine. The magazine is able to maintain its audience (1 mark) and seem more reliable (second mark).

This response received 0 marks

(c) Give **two** advantages for the travel magazine of including readers' own travel
pictures and reviews.

(2)

1 It is very personal to the person who put it on there.

2 It can help other people decide whether they want to go or not.

(Total for Question 9 = 5 marks)

Neither of these responses relate to advantages for the travel magazine. Firstly, the advantage is for the audience member posting the content and the second advantage is for the wider readership of the magazine rather than the magazine itself.
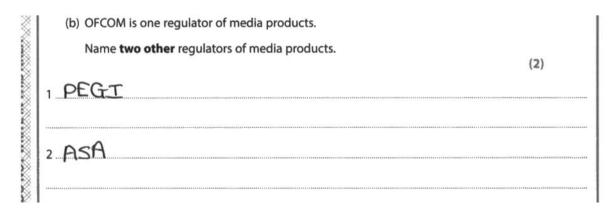
Q10a

Learners appear to be well-versed in responding to questions that require them to interpret data from tables or charts. A high proportion of learners were able to choose the correct response from those offered.

Q10b
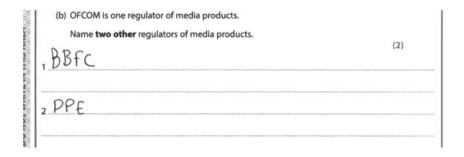Most were able to give alternatives to Ofcom as regulators of media products.

This response received 2 marks

(b) OFCOM is one regulator of media products.

Name **two other** regulators of media products.

(2)

1 PEGI

2 ASA

Both responses are valid and give active regulators of media products. Abbreviations are acceptable as this is how both bodies are regularly referred to.

This response received 1 mark

(b) OFCOM is one regulator of media products.

Name **two other** regulators of media products.

(2)

1 BBFC

2 PPE

This response received a mark for identifying the BBFC but received no marks for their second response (possibly referring to health and safety equipment).

Q10c

This is the first eight-mark question on the paper. Responses to this question, that move into the middle band of the levels based mark scheme, more than just a list of points about Ofcom's regulation of online media products and that go into some form of argued discussion as to why this should or should not be beneficial. Weaker learners are likely to give responses to this question that give a brief list of advantages or disadvantages or cover very few points in their discussion.

This response received 6 marks

> Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of OFCOM having more powers to regulate all digital platforms.
>
> (8)
>
> The advantages of OFCOM having powers to regulate digital platforms are that it is able to cencor inappropriate content for younger viewers. It gives people someone to complain to if they feel they are being descriminated against, for example racism in a blog post or sexism in a video. We would be able to know what type of content to expect from something if we originally did not know what it was about, for example if something is meant for an adult audience but there was no idication for a child, they would probably go on to it; however with OFCOM it would let us know that the content is only meant for an odult audience. If their is a website for example that is not appropriate to be viewed by anyone, then OFCOM will be able to instantly shut it down.
>
> The disadvantages of OFCOM having powers is that some websites/platforms will loose alot of money and traffic as they might of had to cencor some of their content. This could lead to the websites/

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platforms shutting down and making consumers unhappy and producers loosing their jobs. To some people, censoring the whole internet for example could make it a very boring platform and this could lead to people loosing interest.

This response remains in mark band 2 but moves to the top with six marks achieved as it covers more ground and makes more points than others. The learner has given a more rounded response that includes specific examples of the advantages and disadvantages of further Ofcom regulation of online media products.

This response received 4 marks

This would be a good idea as the regulator would ensure all content on the platforms is safe and does not offend the user's. Unfortunatley it would be very expensive for Ofcom to regulate online platforms, this makes the process time consuming. As you must have authority to do this. The listeners would be protected and no illegal or harmful content would be on there, this could stop ~~your~~ all users from being influenced to do something illegal, parents would be more satisfied with their children watching it as they know that the listeners are protected by a regulator.

This response gives one or two points so has limited range but does argue this point well (giving the advantage of further regulation but also the drawback with the cost). This puts the response at the bottom of the second mark band.

Q11a

The majority of the cohort achieved one out of two marks. Many learners were unable to give two valid qualitative methods (generally giving a quantitative example in error).

This response received 2 marks

> **11** A researcher for a website is asked to perform some qualitative, primary research.
>
> (a) Give **two** qualitative research methods.
>
> (2)
>
> 1 interview
>
> 2 questionaire

The learner has given two separate and valid examples. Both interviews and questionnaires could be seen as primary and qualitative research methods.
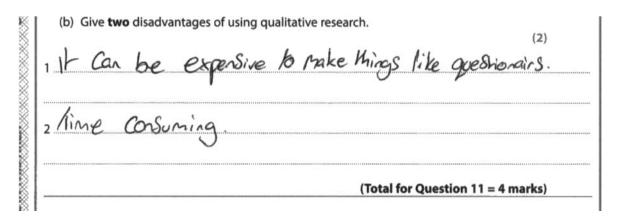
This response received 0 marks

> **11** A researcher for a website is asked to perform some qualitative, primary research.
>
> (a) Give **two** qualitative research methods.
>
> (2)
>
> 1 Beliefs
>
> 2 Opinions

This response receives no marks. Beliefs and Opinions may well be a result or what is gleaned from carrying out qualitative and primary research but neither are research methods.

Q11b
It is generally more challenging for learners to give disadvantages of an activity rather than advantages. Because of this the performance was slightly less than originally expected.

This response received 1 mark

(b) Give **two** disadvantages of using qualitative research.

(2)

1. It can be expensive to make things like questionairs.

2. Time consuming.

(Total for Question 11 = 4 marks)

Although the first point is rather muddled (questionnaire design can be for quantitative research and in itself is not particularly costly), there is a valid point that qualitative research is costly which receives one mark. The second point (time consuming) is valid and receives the second mark.

This response received 0 marks

(b) Give **two** disadvantages of using qualitative research.

(2)

1. easy to stray off topic

2. to many opinions and not enough facts

(Total for Question 11 = 4 marks)

Here the first point is not valid. A good researcher would keep their research on subject so this response does not receive a mark. Giving benefit of doubt to the second part, the point that there are "too many opinions" could relate to the bias inherent in qualitative research so receives one mark.

Q12a
This item was far more difficult than was expected. It may be the case that learners had not covered this part of the specification (narrative structures). Potentially, there may also be an issue with the use of soap operas as the context being not uniformly familiar with the cohort of learners.

This response received 4 marks

> (a) Explain **two** typical narrative structures of a soap opera.
>
> (4)
>
> 1 follow a multi-strand narrative, meaning they ~~~~~~~ often have a number of storylines going on at once & ~~~~~~~ end in cliffhangers, next episode continues on from the other.
> 2 last up to 45 mins or an hour.

This receives all four marks. The answer includes the identification of multi-strand narrative structures (1 mark) then explains what this means (2 marks), identifies cliffhangers (3 marks) and explains how these conjoin subsequent episodes (4 marks).

This response received 0 marks

> (a) Explain **two** typical narrative structures of a soap opera.
>
> (4)
>
> 1 A love triangle between characters
>
> 2 A murder mystery

Neither love triangles nor murder mysteries (while typical storylines of soap operas) are strictly narrative structures. Neither is valid and neither warrant a mark.

Q12b
Similar to the previous item this question was also more difficult than expected. This question required learners to explain two generic codes and conventions of situation comedies. Again, perhaps the example of a traditional TV format in a question may have proved less accessible.

This response received 4 marks

(b) Explain **two** typical codes and conventions of a TV sitcom.

(4)

1. There is always an audience reaction. Whether its a live audience or edited in, sitcoms generally have laughter and audience reactions in the background to identify which areas are comedic etc.

2. The characters will tend to break the fourth wall by engaging questions directly to the audience engaging them and involving them within the scene especially if the situation has comedic elements to it.

This response gives two conventions of a sitcom and manages to explain both of them. The first (audience reaction relating to canned laughter) is linked to the production technique of editing this in or recording it live as well as the audience reaction. The second point about the characters breaking the fourth wall and communicating with the audience explains this device and links it to audience response.

This response received 0 marks

(b) Explain **two** typical codes and conventions of a TV sitcom.

(4)

1. There shouldn't be any discrimination such as swearing as it will be found offensive.

2. It shouldn't be offensive such as in the depiction of women or children, for example.

Neither of these responses are valid. Both responses are often incorrect as some sitcoms are deliberately offensive or discriminatory to social groups.

Q13
This eight-mark item performed well. Better responses achieving high marks are likely to have picked up on issues of the representation of masculinity, the references to street or urban culture in the poster and connections with negative connotations and present a well-argued and fluent discussion on why there are concerns about the poster.

This response received 8 marks

This poster shows an image of an extremely muscular man, this could create ~~problems~~ problems with representation as it may cause other individuals to believe this energy drink will allow you to become like this man, when the only way to achieve that is through exercise and a good diet.

The poster also says 'Max-performance' this is a problem as the real best thing to drink for performance is water.

The poster shows the muscular man standing with an aggresive stance this would create a problem with representation as it is re-inforcing the stereotype that men are aggresive and violent.

Furthermore Also about the man
being muscular, this image may
influence young boys to think the they
that they need to have that sort of
super muscular body, this would
may cause them to adopt a poor
diet and lead to them damaging themselves

Although it is hard to tell because of the
black and white colour, it appears that
the man is of a darker skinned ethnicity
and this combined with his aggresive
stance would further re-inforce the
violent stereotypes which are falsely
given to certain ethnic groups.

This response engages with the issue of representation and gives a number of points. The response succinctly discusses numerous representation issues and although not particularly argues these well. This is certainly a top mark band response and acheives the full 8 marks.

This response received 2 marks

The image is in black and white and has no color to it. The title is big and bold and stands out of all the text which says 'Sustain', theres a eye level camera shot of a mans back which is ment to show off his muscles from possibly the energy drink. I think that theres not much relevance to the energy drink they have branded as there isn't a logo of the product or an image of the drink which doesn't make the company proffesional. The font they have chosen for this poster may be hard to read and understand for people. the may be hard to read and understand for people. The link to there website is in the bottom left of the poster for people to access there website information.

This response receives two marks only. The response has become fixated upon the stylistic codes within the poster and has barely discussed any issues of representation. There is an attempt to link the developed muscles of the model with the drink and that this link may not be valid. Otherwise there is very little commentary about representation.

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, learners should:

- Use appropriate technical language throughout your responses, i.e. Use the correct names such as transitions, cuts, fades, shot types and angles etc.
- Tailor your response based on the command word in the question, e.g. explain will require an expansion of a point, discuss requires looking at both possible points/arguments, evaluation will require some form of conclusion.
- Use the number of marks awarded as a guide to the depth of response required.
- Be clear about terminology used in the specification as these words will be repeated in the exam paper, eg edits, camerawork, use of sound.
- Know the different theories and theorist and be able to apply them in different contexts

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