Unit Title: **Research Techniques for the Creative Media Industries**

Unit Credit Value: 10  
Unit Level: Three  
Unit Guided Learning Hours: 60  
Ofqual Unit Reference Number: L/600/6669  
Unit Review Date: 31/12/2016  
Unit Sector: 9.3 Media and Communication

**Unit Summary**
The aim of this unit is to develop understanding of and skills in research relevant to creative media production. Learners will present their findings in both written and oral forms and will learn how to cite and reference their sources.

**Unit Information**
It is expected that before the unit is delivered, the tutor will have read the Qualification Specification to ensure all conditions regarding Rules of Combination, delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance are fulfilled. Additional guidance is available below as Assessment Guidance for Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in **bold**.

This unit has 3 learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA</th>
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<td>The learner will:</td>
<td>The learner can:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Understand the nature and purposes of research in the creative media industries</td>
<td>1.1. Describe the nature and purposes of research in the creative media industries with some appropriate use of subject terminology</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Be able to apply a range of research methods and techniques</td>
<td>2.1. Apply research methods and techniques with some assistance</td>
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<td>3. Be able to present results of research</td>
<td>3.1. Present results of research</td>
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**Assessment Guidance**

**Learning Outcome 1**
Learners will outline the main purposes of research, covering audience research, market research and production research. They will also outline the main methods and sources of research covering primary, secondary, qualitative and quantitative. All aspects of these descriptions will be accurate and relevant. Whatever is being dealt with will be covered substantially — though not necessarily absolutely completely. Concerning the purposes of research, a learner might write, ‘There are a lot of reasons...”

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for researching in the media industries. If you are making a film or game you have to research to find out who your audience is, and who your competitors are. You also need to find out how much it will cost you to make it and if you have the right equipment.’ Evidence will show a basic understanding of technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it.

**Nature and purposes of research:**

*Types of research:* quantitative research, e.g. programme ratings, readership circulation figures, hits on a website, box office figures, sales of CDs and DVDs; qualitative research, e.g. film reviews, game reviews, fanzine websites, attitudes to media products, responses to news coverage, responses to advertising campaigns, discussion

*Methods and sources of research:* secondary research (books, journals, reference based books and directories, periodicals, newspapers, film archives, photo libraries, worldwide web, searching internet forums, CD Rom databases, audio material, ratings, circulation figures, government statistics, data gathering agencies, e.g. Broadcasters’ Audience Research Board, Radio Joint Audience Research Ltd, ABC); primary research (interview techniques, observations, questionnaires, surveys, types of questions, focus groups, audience panels, participation in internet forums, self-generated, e.g. own video, audio or photographic records of events).

*Purposes of research:* audience research (audience data, audience profiling, demographics, geo-demographics, consumer behaviour, consumer attitudes, audience awareness); market research (product market, competition, competitor analysis, advertising placement, advertising effects); production research (content, viability, placement media, finance, costs, technological resources, personnel, locations).

**Learning Outcome 2**

Learners will apply some research methods, such as surveys or questionnaires, to obtain useful and relevant information. They will be able to use secondary as well as primary sources. Learners will obtain relevant qualitative material but will not evaluate it or draw clear conclusions from it, presenting data and information without reflecting on issues such as influence or bias. Quantitative research will be accurate and relevant but thin. Work at this level is likely to show limited understanding of procedures and is also likely to rely too heavily on internet research. Learners will need frequent assistance and support, though they will take note of and make use of this help when it is given. If they are in frequent need of such help but fail to make positive use of it they should not be considered for a pass for this unit.

**Range of research methods and techniques:**

*Secondary research:* quantitative research, e.g. programme ratings, readership circulation figures, hits on a website, box office figures, sales of CDs and DVDs;
qualitative research, e.g. film reviews, game reviews, fanzine websites, attitudes to media products, responses to news coverage, responses to advertising campaigns, searching internet forums.

**Primary research:** quantitative research, e.g. questionnaires, surveys; qualitative research, e.g. interviews (face-to-face, telephone, email), focus groups, participation in internet forums, audience panels; self-generated, e.g. observations, own video, audio or photographic records of events.

**Audience research:** audience classification (socio-economic, geodemographic, psychographic, ethnographic, age, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, education); media preferences; product preferences; buying patterns.

**Market research:** product market; competition; competitor analysis; advertising placement; advertising effectiveness.

**Production research:** content; resources, e.g. personnel, talent, finance, suppliers, facilities, locations, logistical support; costs; viability; placement, e.g. publication, broadcast, webcast, podcast, audience.

**Interpreting results:** collate; evaluate; summarise.

**Learning Outcome 3**

Presentation of results will be basic, and, in oral presentation of results, delivery will lack confidence. Though visual aids or graphics will be unsophisticated and will typically not be clearly linked to the content of the presentation or report they will nonetheless provide the basic relevant information. Findings are likely to be basic and conclusions drawn will be assertions lacking support. Referencing and citation of sources may typically be incorrectly formatted and imprecise.

**Present results of research:**

*Format:* written report; oral presentation, e.g. individual, group, PowerPoint, overhead transparencies, multimedia, video diary, audio diary; illustration, e.g. graphs, pie charts, bar charts, graphics, video clips, audio clips.

*Content:* procedures; data; findings; conclusions; proposals.

*Quotation and reference:* bibliography styles, e.g. Harvard, Modern Languages Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA); quotation and citation; footnotes; acknowledgements; credits; appendices; acknowledgement of copyright material, e.g. print, film, video, audio, photographs, published letters; disclaimers.
Delivery
The first part of this unit introduces learners to the reasons for research in the media industries. Whilst some of this material can be taught through fairly formal means there are opportunities for learners to put their own research skills to use in exploring, for example, the purposes for which market research is carried out. Thinking about why and how production research is undertaken can, perhaps, be more profitably linked to learners own production activity in other units.

In covering Learning Outcome 2, learners should be encouraged to engage with a range of research methods both independently and through group tasks. Where possible it would be useful for the class as a whole to visit archives and specialist libraries such as the British Library or the Reading Room of the National Film Theatre.

Again, learners will gain a greater understanding of the range, purpose and limitations of research methods and techniques if the learning is linked to projects being undertaken for other units. In preparing a proposal or treatment for film, radio or television production, for example, learners could work in small groups. Each group should employ a range of primary and secondary research methods to explore the viability of the proposal. If, for example, learners were researching material and ideas to produce a proposal and treatment for a new radio comedy, then it would be expected that they would listen to radio comedy as part of their primary research. In considering secondary sources learners would look at data such as that produced by RAJAR. It is vital, of course, that individual learners keep a record of this research work in their portfolios for assessment purposes.

When the research is completed a small presentation to the whole class could be set in order to enable learners to share what they have learnt from doing the exercise — how their procedures worked, what results they obtained, the comparative value of qualitative and quantitative research methods, etc. In order to engage learners in the vocational relevance of their study primary research methods can also be taught through role plays and simulations such interviews and focus groups.

When presenting the results of their research, learners might be asked to present the process and findings of their research activities in both written and oral forms. One-to-one tutorials present the opportunity to go through learners’ notes and portfolios in order to ensure a good range of research activity has been evidenced and to provide opportunities for evaluation and reflection.

Evidence Requirements
Evidence of practical ability must be demonstrated.
Resources

Equipment
This unit will require access to public and specialist libraries and archives as well as the internet.

Books

Blaxter L et al — How to Research (Open University Press, 2006)


Davies M — Doing a Successful Research Project: Using Qualitative or Quantitative Methods (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)


Sparkes G — Media Effects Research: A Basic Overview (Wadsworth, 2009)

Wimmer R D and Dominick J R — Mass Media Research: An Introduction (Wadsworth, 2005)

Journals
Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods

Qualitative Market Research

Research Magazine

Websites
www.alertnet.org/aletnet.nsf — Reuters news agency

www.archive.org/ — an internet archive site

www.bbcfootage.com — BBC film archives

www.britmovie.co.uk — British movie archive

www.businessballs.com — a great business site with lots of info on research techniques, demographics, etc
www.gamasutra.com — a sister publication to the print magazine Game Developer

www.guardian.co.uk — The Guardian and The Observer

www.imdb.com — internet movie database

www.monitor.bbc.co.uk — BBC Worldwide News Monitoring

www.rcuk.ac.uk/ — research councils site

www.red3d.com/cwr/games — portal site with links to game research and technology

www.research.scea.com — Sony game research

www.research-live.com/ — Research Magazine