CUA - Creative Arts and Culture Training Package

CUA31015—Cert 3 in Screen and Media

Unit

CUAWRT301
Write content for a range of media

Trainer/Teacher Manual

Passing Lane Pty Ltd
PO Box 975
COWES VICTORIA 3922

STUDENT/TRAINEE DETAILS

Student/Trainee Name

Student/Trainee Email

Teacher / Trainer Name

School / Institution / Training Organisation / Employer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SAMPLE SAMPLE

INTRODUCTION

This manual is developed to provide training content that addresses the specific 'Unit of Competency' as outlined on the following pages.

It provides the teacher and/or trainer with a document that includes all that the student and/or trainee manual content plus guidance notes as well as answers to the learning activities in the student/trainee manual.

This manual can be packaged with various manuals addressing other 'Units of Competency' in order to meet the 'Packaging Rules' of a particular Australian Training Package Qualification.

This resource has been designed to be delivered in a form that is conducive to the learning environment including:

- ☆ Online delivery
- ☆ Classroom delivery
- ☆ On the job training

The documents are designed in a 'landscape' format in order to make reading on a computer screen easier as well as reduces the need to scroll down pages. Documents can be easily printed if the learning environment requires the student or trainee to have hard copies of the learning materials.

INTRODUCTION—CONT'D

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The learning activities in the student and/or trainee manuals are 'Form Enabled' so that if the resources delivered online, the activities can be filled in using the computer keyboard.

Each learning activity is identified with the following icon.

Learning Activity

Learning activities come in the following forms.

- ☆ Questions
- ☆ Research
- ☆ Tasks
- ☆ Interviews

Questions

Questions would relate to the information presented on previous pages.

Research

This type of learning activity would require the student or trainee to locate information by using research methods. The information they would be require to locate would be in line and/or support the information that the manual had outlined in previous pages.

INTRODUCTION—CONT'D

Tasks

This learning activity type would require the student/trainee to actually do or undertake something and would be reinforcing the knowledge they have gained from reading the manual's previous pages.

Interviews

This learning activity type would require the student/trainee to interview person(s) in an actual workplace environment or a person(s) who are experienced in the industry sector which the student/trainee is currently undergoing training.

The student/trainee is made aware of the type of learning activity by noting the learning activity type displayed under the learning activity icon.

Learning Activity

Research

SELF ASSESSMENT

At the end of each manual is a series of questions that the student/trainee should review and answer.

This self assessment is to ensure in the student's or trainee's mind that they have reviewed and understood the information that was presented in their manual.

If they are unsure of their understanding in any of the topics reviewed, they are encouraged to go back and review the information again and/or seek the assistance of their teacher or trainer.

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UNIT OF COMPETENCY OVERVIEW

The following pages are extracts from Training.gov.au website and outlines this specific 'Unit of Competency' including the 'Elements' and the 'Performance Criteria'. The content within this manual has been developed to address this unit.

CUAWRT301 - WRITE CONTENT FOR A RANGE OF MEDIA

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Prepare to write content	1.1 Identify production requirements for content with relevant personnel 1.2 Identify purpose of content and publishing medium that may affect the way content will be written 1.3 Identify text-based content that may be incorporated and referenced, and organise copyright clearances as required 1.4 Cross-check with additional sources to find information where there are perceived gaps in text-based content 1.5 Analyse available data to identify needs and perspectives of target users and audience 1.6 Generate a range of ideas relevant to content purpose and target audience 1.7 Evaluate and select most appropriate content ideas and writing styles in consultation with relevant personnel
2. Draft content	2.1 Classify, structure and sequence content so it is easy to read or navigate 2.2 Draft content using writing and communication principles 2.3 Draft content using writing techniques appropriate to content purpose 2.4 Refine and redraft content to meet creative requirements 2.5 Check content complies with laws and codes of practice relevant to broadcasting and publication 2.6 Provide captions or descriptions for media assets as required 2.7 Apply presentation techniques to enhance readability 2.8 Proofread content and conduct readability tests if appropriate 2.9 Submit final draft to relevant personnel for consideration and review, where appropriate 2.10 Adopt safe ergonomic practices when using screens and keyboards for long periods of time

Teacher/Trainer
Manual

Copyright
2019

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
3. Finalise content	3.1 Incorporate feedback from relevant personnel into final content, where appropriate 3.2 Submit content by agreed deadline according to organisational procedures 3.3 Save and archive content according to enterprise procedures 3.4 Seek feedback from relevant personnel on content and writing process and note areas for improvement, where appropriate

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Section One

Prepare to Write Content

WRITE CONTENT FOR A RANGE OF MEDIA

SECTION ONE—PREPARE TO WRITE CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Preparation for the writing of content is a crucially important stage in the writing process. The writer has to be certain of a number of things relating to the content and its delivery. Central to this is the purpose of the content and the audience to which it is targeted as this will determine a number of aspects of your writing such as style, tone and vocabulary.

If you are using other authors' text-based content as part of your piece, it must be properly referenced and copyright clearance obtained if appropriate. Preparation also involves generating ideas to cover all aspects of your finished written piece.

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

  ☆ Identifying production requirements for content with relevant personnel
  ☆ Identifying purpose of content and publishing medium that may affect the way content will be written
  ☆ Identifying text-based content that may be incorporated and referenced and organising copyright clearances as required
  ☆ Cross-checking with additional sources to find information where there are perceived gaps in text-based content
  ☆ Analysing available data to identify needs and perspectives of target users and audience
  ☆ Generating a range of ideas relevant to content purpose and target audience
  ☆ Evaluating and selecting most appropriate content ideas and writing styles in consultation with relevant personnel

IDENTIFY PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTENT WITH RELEVANT PERSONNEL

When you're writing content for different media, a number of different considerations will shape how you write that content. Two questions that should be foremost in your mind before you start is 'for what purpose am I writing and what are the production requirements'?

The two questions are related and we'll look more at identifying purpose of written content shortly, but production requirements can be critically important in determining what and how you write.

You need to understand the media you are writing for and how that will impact the style, tone and length of content. For example, a script for a screen production will employ a very different style and tone and will be considerably longer than, a post on a social media page, or a community service announcement or advertising copy for radio or television. A media release to be sent to print and online media outlets will be of a very different nature again, as will the copy for a company website.

Production requirements govern the length of what you write and the text formatting you use. They can also impose different protocols such as how to name and save text files.

Sometimes you'll be provided with a template specifically designed for use during the entire production process – for example those used for scripts for drama and screen, which may be used by the writer, script editor, producer, director, online editor, audio engineer, director of photography, lighting technician and so on.

Other templates are designed solely to enable easy and seamless conversion of what you write to the finished output.

Production processes vary across and within different types of media. It is important to understand how and where the writing process fits in. If other writers or editors are involved, all will be required to do their work within the same parameters.

Regardless of which media you are writing for, it is critical to know what the production requirements are and they should be established in conjunction with relevant personnel. Once production requirements are . It is imperative to ensure you have all the information relevant to what you are writing and that you have checked it all with relevant people within your organisation and if appropriate, external to it – before you write anything.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

A music festival is coming to town!

It will be held across a weekend and expected to draw a crowd of thousands.

Working as the festival's communications director, you are required to brief a team of writers who will review different acts at the festival about the content you require to be posted on a dedicated page of the festival's website.

You need to:

- ☆ Determine the genre of music for the festival (your choice)
- ☆ Generally describe who will be reading the content (the website's target audience)
- ☆ Establish how many acts each writer must review
- ☆ Decide how many words should be in each of the written reviews, and briefly summarise the style and tone the written reviews should incorporate
- ☆ Specify what else you require alongside written text, such as images and/or videos
- ☆ Provide guidelines about how the formats in which finished copy and imagery should be presented

Put all this information on a writing brief you will give to each of the writers, together with anything else you think is relevant and present it to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The aim of this activity is for students or trainees to identify and consider the production requirements for content to be posted on a website. While they can use their own preferred musical genre and establish the target audience, it is important that the information they include on the brief aligns with that audience.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWO

A government organisation embarks on a campaign to encourage participation in a 'Leave the car at home' day.

The campaign will deliver its information through the following channels:

- ☆ A dedicated government website
- ☆ Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- ☆ An email sent to all federal and state public servants
- ☆ Newspaper articles
- ☆ Radio advertising
- ☆ Community service announcement on TV

Compile a list of production requirements for each of the delivery channels.

Present your list to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This activity has students or trainees looking more broadly than in Activity One at a range of different media and identifying the key production requirements for each one, using the same content.

IDENTIFY PURPOSE OF CONTENT AND PUBLISHING MEDIUM THAT MAY AFFECT THE WAY CONTENT WILL BE WRITTEN

As a writer you can be required to create original material, or re-purposed material – that is, taking material already written (by you or another author) and re-purposing it, which could include rewriting it for a different audience or medium, updating it or changing its focus.

Regardless of what you are writing, it is critical to be clear about the purpose of any written content before you start writing.

The publishing medium will determine the length of what you write and how it is presented. The audience – those who engage with the publishing medium – determines how you write it.

The basic questions to ask yourself here include:

☆ For whom is this content intended and what is its purpose?
☆ What needs to be conveyed and how does it need to be written (what style, tone and vocabulary is appropriate)?

Consider two examples taken from writing briefs that we have outlined on the next page.

EXAMPLE 1

☆ ***The task***—A daily social media post focusing on promoting the company's range of casual teen street wear in a fun way using stories of customers' everyday interaction with our products to accompany a range of still and video imagery.

☆ ***Length***—100 words per post

EXAMPLE 2

☆ ***The task***—A summary of the main events in the academic and social calendar of the college over the past two years, to go on our website. Use the principal's monthly newsletter columns for reference, as well as any other information that staff can provide.

☆ ***Length***—400 words

In ***Example 1***, the content will be original, drawing on the customer anecdotes. Its primary purpose is promotional.

The required length is 100 words – social media posts are typically brief and a good deal of the content in this case would be carried via imagery.

The audience is teenage, so the language used, style and tone of writing must engage that demographic.

In ***Example 2***, the content will be re-purposed. Its primary purpose is to highlight major events in a college over the past two-year period.

The required length is 400 words – this information will be placed on a website, which means more publishing space is available compared with some social media platforms. Visitors to the college's website would expect to find more substantial text-based information.

The audience ranges across demographics – from parents and prospective parents of students, as well as students themselves. Its language, style and tone would be of a more formal nature and suitably professional in tone.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY THREE

Find an example of published written content designed for either a mass audience, or an audience with a common interest (for example, sports fans, refugee advocates, people who love to travel, etc.). It can be content that is delivered online, or via another medium.

Identify and describe:

- ☆ The delivery medium
- ☆ Its purpose
- ☆ Its target audience
- ☆ The writing style used
- ☆ The number of words
- ☆ The presentation
- ☆ What hook has been used to draw the reader in

Comment on how the purpose of the content and the delivery medium used, have each had an impact on the writing of the finished piece.

Put your summary in a report style format and present it to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

Using an actual piece of published writing, the aim of this activity is for students or trainees to gain an understanding of the ways in which the purpose of written content and the delivery medium used directly affects the way content is written.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOUR

Now it is your turn. This activity introduces your project, which will form the major part of the assessment for this unit. A number of activities that follow will involve this project.

You are required to set yourself a writing task where you will prepare and write a piece for a specified media outlet, which you will determine, according to the following guidelines:

- ☆ You must make a clear statement about the audience you are targeting – it can be for a general readership (for example, a report on a current social/economic/political issue); or it can be for a specific readership (for example, teenagers, young adults, family people, older people, disadvantaged people, those with special interests)
- ☆ You must also make a clear statement about the purpose of the article (for example, to inform, question, persuade, draw a specific response or amuse and entertain)
- ☆ The final written piece will be between 500 and 1000 words in length
- ☆ It will be accompanied by at least one other type of media asset, which could be still imagery, a video, still or animated graphics, or anything else that you think is appropriate, and which is decided in consultation with your trainer/teacher
- ☆ Given the two points above, you must also make a clear statement about the medium you are writing for – how will your content be delivered?
- ☆ The written item will be on a topic of your choice but must involve research and gathering of information
- ☆ It can be a news report, feature or general interest article, or one targeting an audience with a specific interest (for example, technology, environment, sport, etc.)
- ☆ You can use any appropriate writing style, but it must align with your audience and the purpose of the content

If you are involved in preparing a written piece that aligns with the points listed above for another purpose (for example a workplace-related task or written piece for other areas of your study), it may be used for this activity also, rather than developing a hypothetical topic, purpose, audience and delivery medium.

Address all of the dot points above in a written format and present it to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This project is the key assessment task for this unit, and a number of other activities from this point refer to the project. While students or trainees have the choice of the topic, purpose, audience and (hypothetical or other) medium for delivery, the article written needs to be substantial enough to warrant research and information-gathering.

Some students or trainees may require assistance to select their topic so it can meet all the criteria required for the project.

IDENTIFY TEXT-BASED CONTENT THAT MAY BE INCORPORATED AND REFERENCED, AND ORGANISE COPYRIGHT CLEARANCES AS REQUIRED

Writing for media involves handling a lot of copy, including your own and that written by others. It is very common to incorporate existing text-based material into newly written content, both original and re-purposed – and it is vital that any such material is appropriately referenced, and if necessary, copyright clearances organised.

Failing to document, or clearly indicate when work is borrowed, through correct referencing is both unethical and illegal. If you don't document work by other writers, intentionally otherwise, you run the risk of plagiarising.

The ways in which other people's work can be appropriately attributed include citation and referencing.

A citation is where a specific source is used and followed up immediately with a reference. For example, quotes from existing works are often used as citations – like this:

> *The Parliamentary working committee said "the prevalence of gambling advertising on television has the potential to normalise gambling as part of any sport, particularly to young viewers." (Report Into Media Advertising; Australian Government; 2018).*

This is an example of direct citation – that is a direct quote has been taken from the work in question. It is important also to reference work that involves indirect citation – that is, where you alter the original work by paraphrasing or summarising.

An example of an indirect citation is:

> *According to the Report into Media Advertising 2018, the amount of gambling advertising on television could have the effect of normalising gambling on sport for younger viewers in particular.*

When a piece of work is referenced, usually the author, title, publisher, location of the publisher and year of publication are provided. It guides the reader to the source(s) used in writing your piece, and does not necessarily give specific chapter, section or page references.

When using online references, provide a link to the relevant web pages and the date you accessed the information.

Most text and images are covered by copyright.

Copyright is an international system that enables the protection of the rights of content creators – such as those producing written, audio-visual and software material, including books, journal and newspaper articles, plays and other performances, apps and computer programs and audio recordings.

When incorporating text-based material into your own work, it is important to carefully check copyright requirements. Using quoted material from other writers – even small amounts – may require copyright clearance as well as citation and/or referencing. Copyright clearance is generally obtained from the publisher of content or directly from the author or organisation responsible for writing it.

The Copyright Council of Australia and Copyright Agency are also able to assist with advice on various aspects of copyright, protection of copyright, permissions and licences, and further information is available from either of those organisation's websites.

Content creators can use Creative Commons material, which carries a licence that authorises them to use other people's content copyright-free, although conditions may apply in some cases.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIVE

This activity involves you researching existing text-based content that could be incorporated into your project and referenced accordingly.

If your project consists of an article for hypothetical delivery to an audience, identify any of the text-based content you find that would require copyright clearance, and indicate how you would go about obtaining this clearance.

If your project involves an article for genuine delivery to an audience, identify any content where copyright clearance would be required and take steps to obtain that clearance, documenting how you go about it.

Present this to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The aim of this activity is to make students or trainees aware of instances where copyright clearance would be required, and to list the steps they would take to obtain that clearance.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY SIX

Choose the correct answer:

1—Existing text-based content can be incorporated into:
   a) Any written piece for delivery through any media
   b) Re-purposed written pieces only
   c) Other text-based material, but not multimedia content
   d) Original written pieces only

2—Non-original work should be attributed through citation or referencing:
   a) Only when the source of the non-original work is known
   b) Whenever the publisher or copyright owner of the non-original work requests it
   c) At all times in any written piece
   d) Only when the author of the non-original work is alive

3—Quoting and attributing what someone said or wrote is an example of:
   a) Copyright clearance
   b) Indirect citation
   c) Plagiarism
   d) Direct citation

4—When another person's published work is referenced in a written piece, which of the following does NOT necessarily have to be stated:
   a)   The chapter and page of the publication
   b)   The author
   c)   The date of publication
   d)   The publisher

5—Copyright clearance can be required:
   a)   Only when more than 200 words of another author's work is used
   b)   Any time non-original content is used in a piece of writing
   c)   If the publisher of another author's work requests it
   d)   Any time non-original content is used in a piece of writing
   e)   Only if the work originated in Australia

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

Answers:

1)   a)
2)   c)
3)   d)
4)   a)
5)   b)

Learning Activity

Research

LEARNING ACTIVITY SEVEN

Visit the website of Copyright Agency. For anyone seeking copyright clearance, Copyright Agency deals with four different types of licences. Briefly summarise each one below.

License One

License Two

License Three

License Four

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The four types of licences are:

Statutory Education Licences – covering educational institutions such as schools and universities. Copyright Agency oversees the licensing process and collects and distributes royalties.

Commercial Licences – applicable to organisations conducting business activities. Pay-per-use licences can be organised for businesses, local governments and religious organisations in relation to material in newspapers, magazines, books and journals.

Government Licences – enabling authorised people within Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to use copyright material for the services of government.

Visual Arts Licences – covering the use of imagery.
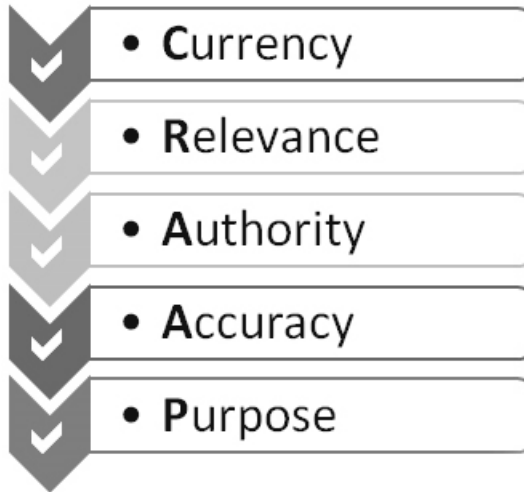
- Currency
- Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose

CROSS-CHECK WITH ADDITIONAL SOURCES TO FIND INFORMATION WHERE THERE ARE PERCEIVED GAPS IN TEXT-BASED CONTENT

When you're writing for different media, every aspect of what is in your brief must be covered, but there will often be content gaps.

One of the most important skills of writing content is being able to source the required information effectively.

Sometimes it is a case of simply finding out a date or another small but important detail related to a topic; other times a substantial amount of information might be required and a number of additional sources needed over and above any you have already used.

If you obtain content from additional sources, verify that information by cross-checking it with other sources.

If there are discrepancies between two or more sources, keep cross-checking to satisfy yourself that you have accurate, current and verifiable information.

When collecting information from different sources, the key thing is the credibility of the sources used. So much information is available online but not all online sources are reliable.

It is important to establish the credibility of the writer and/or organisation from which material is sourced and it is just as important to differentiate between what is fact and what is opinion.

There is a concept called the 'Crapp' test. It basically suggests that for every piece of information you have gather you ask yourself:

- ☆ Is it current
- ☆ Is it relevant
- ☆ Is it written by someone who is an authority on the subject matter
- ☆ Is it accurate information
- ☆ Why was it written

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY EIGHT

This activity relates to your project.

After researching and reviewing suitable text-based content for your project, now Identify any information gaps you still have, and note these down.

Find additional sources of information to fill those gaps, clearly stating which sources you have accessed and the how each one is able to supplement your information requirements.

Present this to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This activity is to have the student or trainee get into the habit of always reviewing information and filling gaps when and where needed.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY NINE

Complete the following using the words from the word bank below. Use each word only once.

The ability to find all the _____ needed when writing for media is critical.

Any information _____ need to be identified and filled by finding _____

sources. Sources should always be thoroughly cross-checked to _____ content

until you are satisfied you have _____ information.

A vast amount of information is accessible particularly online and assessing the

credibility and _____ of sources of that information is also critical – if a

source is _____ to you, it is vital to check the credentials of the_____ and/or organisations involved.

Word Bank

additional, people, accurate, information, reliability, gaps, unknown, verify

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The ability to find all the ***information*** needed when writing for media is critical.

Any information ***gaps*** need to be identified and filled by finding ***additional*** sources.

Sources should always be thoroughly cross-checked to ***verify*** content until you are satisfied you have ***accurate*** information.

A vast amount of information is accessible particularly online and assessing the credibility and ***reliability*** of sources of that information is also critical – if a source is ***unknown*** to you, it is vital to check the credentials of the ***people*** and/or organisations involved.

ANALYSE AVAILABLE DATA TO IDENTIFY NEEDS AND PERSPECTIVES OF TARGET USERS AND AUDIENCE

Before you write anything – from a comprehensive business report to a shopping list – think about who will read it. It might be one person or one million people but make sure you know who the audience is. That's step one when you're writing anything, because what you're writing needs to convey your message(s) in a way that engages the audience, makes sense to them and gets the desired response.

Identifying your audience is usually not difficult, and will be included on any writing brief. But knowing more about your audience – their needs and perspectives – often requires research. Understanding the general characteristics of any particular demographic in terms of age, socio-economic background, country of birth or any other criteria you apply is critical in effectively engaging and communicating with your audience.

You also need to have a firm grip on what it is about your audience you want to know – and this comes back to the purpose of your writing. A writer of general website copy is writing for a different audience from the writer of a series of radio advertisements. The content is different, and in either case, should reflect and align with the perceived needs and perspectives of the audience at which it is targeted.

So where do you find the data you need to better understand your audience? The Australian Bureau of Statistics is a good place to start. The ABS analyses huge volumes of data collected from the national census every five years, and from other sources.

Vast quantities of data are also contained in studies and surveys undertaken by federal, state and local government departments and authorities, many not-for-profits, think-tanks, peak bodies, professional organisations, trade unions and private corporations and businesses. Much of it is readily accessible online.

The process is:

- ☆ Identify your audience
- ☆ Identify what you want to know about your audience to better target your writing
- ☆ Find and use relevant sources to collect the information you need

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY TEN

In this activity, you are required to hone in further on the target audience you have identified for your project.

- ☆ Make notes about the specific information you would like to know about your audience that would assist you in writing your piece.
- ☆ Then suggest sources where you could find this information. Include human resources as well as text or multimedia resources here.
- ☆ Use the sources you've identified in the previous step to gather as much information as you can about your audience.

Present your findings to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The most important aspect of this activity is for students or trainees to specify what they would like to know about their audience; and to identify suitable sources for the information.

Some information sources (for example, studies and statistics available through commercial enterprises) may not be readily accessible.

Also students or trainees may identify real or hypothetical people who could provide information – without actually being able to approach them. However, plenty of ABS and other online material is accessible, so students or trainees should be able to put together something of an audience profile.
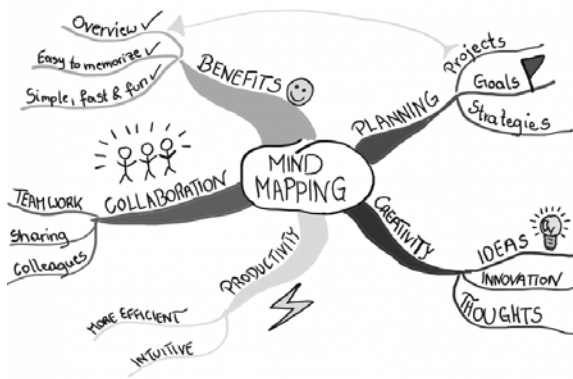
GENERATE A RANGE OF IDEAS RELEVANT TO CONTENT PURPOSE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

Planning effective written communication is vital. As we've seen, the process starts with identifying its purpose and the audience to which it is directed.

But very few people are able to then just sit down and write. Any written communication in business, community or government should be engaging and easy to comprehend by the targeted audience.

Once you've researched and gathered the information you need to fill out the required content, start getting ideas down. They don't have to come in a logical order – selecting the good ones and sorting them out can come later.

But they do have to be aligned to the purpose of your written communication, and resonate with the target audience. These are the two key guiding points as you draw all your information together and plan your piece.

Depending on the nature of what you are writing, there are different ways to collect your ideas. One is to make a list of headings and sub-headings that provide a framework enabling you to arrange your points sequentially and thoroughly cover all content.

Some writers find mind maps effective, which provide a more visual framework of main content points and ideas associated with them. Mind maps are useful for documenting brainstorming sessions.

Collaboration with colleagues and others enhances the range of useful ideas to select from, and provides other angles and perspectives you may not have thought about, but might consider worthwhile for inclusion in what you are writing.

**Learning
Activity**

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY ELEVEN

Time to brainstorm!

You've collected information from various sources for your project, you've established the purpose of your written piece, taken a closer examination of your target audience and gathered a range of information – now it is a case of getting down as many ideas as you can about your written piece. Central to this is knowing the purpose of your content and your audience – any ideas that don't align with the purpose or audience should be thrown out.

At this stage, your ideas do not have to be sequential or follow in a logical order, that comes next – your aim is to develop a pool of ideas from which you can pick and choose.

Develop some ideas based on your project and present them to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The aim of this activity is for students or trainees to continue their collection of material to assist with the writing of their project.

SAMPLE SAMPLE

EVALUATE AND SELECT MOST APPROPRIATE CONTENT IDEAS AND WRITING STYLES IN CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT PERSONNEL

When you are writing for media on behalf of an organisation, it is important to understand the organisation's requirements in relation to how written communication is presented and who is able to authorise its release and distribution.

So once you've got an outline for your written piece that brings together information and ideas from a range of sources, it is time to run it by one or more people within your organisation who are responsible for approving the finished document. There needs to be agreement on which content ideas are selected for inclusion, and which messages are delivered.

There also needs to be agreement on how the content is written. This is about writing style and the tone used. You need to be familiar with any organisational style guides covering written content, including its formatting and layout. Businesses and other organisations are generally sensitive about how they are perceived by their customers, their industry and the public at large.

Often this extends to having firm guidelines about certain terminology or phraseology that must or must not be used in external written communication.

We'll look more at tone in the next section, but it is something that varies considerably across different forms of written communication for media – from upbeat, lively and funny to professional, direct, personal, sombre and serious.

Choosing the right tone comes back again to the purpose of your written piece and the audience who'll be reading it. What tone will best convey to them what you want them to understand?

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWELVE

This activity is an extension of Activity Ten where you brainstormed and collected a range of ideas for the writing of your project. Now, it is time to evaluate and select the most appropriate content ideas for your needs and to think about the writing style you will use.

In point form, indicate which ideas you intend to include in your draft and make notes about the writing style you think will be most appropriate for the purpose of the content and its target audience.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The aim of this activity is for students or trainees to finalise their content ideas for the project and to determine the writing style they will employ.

Section Two

Draft Content

WRITE CONTENT FOR A RANGE OF MEDIA

SECTION TWO—DRAFT CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

When you draft a written piece, it must be structured in such a way that anyone reading it can follow the content and readily understand it. Ideas or points should be grouped together using paragraphs with topic sentences and organised in a sequential way so the flow is logical and easy to follow for the audience.

You need to also carefully check written work to ensure it complies with relevant laws, practices and ethics. Once written, it should be proofed to identify any errors or typos and to ensure it reads as you want it to.

It is also important to include captions and other information about media assets that will accompany your written piece, such as still or moving imagery.

An important health and safety consideration is to ensure your working space is ergonomically safe to avoid risks associated with extended use of keyboards and screens.

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

- ☆ Classifying, structuring and sequencing content so it is easy to read or navigate
- ☆ Drafting content using writing and communication principles
- ☆ Drafting content using writing techniques appropriate to content purpose
- ☆ Refining and redrafting content to meet creative requirements
- ☆ Checking content complies with laws and codes of practice relevant to broadcasting and publication
- ☆ Providing captions or descriptions for media assets as required
- ☆ Applying presentation techniques to enhance readability
- ☆ Proofreading content and conducting readability tests if appropriate
- ☆ Submitting final draft to relevant personnel for consideration and review, where appropriate
- ☆ Adopting safe ergonomic practices when using screens and keyboards for long periods of time

CLASSIFY, STRUCTURE AND SEQUENCE CONTENT SO IT IS EASY TO READ OR NAVIGATE

When you're sure of the content that will go in to what you are writing, it is time to think about how to classify it, or group relevant areas together, structure and sequence it to make reading and comprehension and navigation through the content, straightforward for the reader.

There are many instances where readers make their own choices about the sequence in which they navigate the totality of the information you are presenting. This is particularly so on websites, but can also be the case in longer hard copy and electronic documents that have many sections and appendices.

The key to making both reading and navigation easy is to classify and categorise it – that is put related topics and ideas together; structure it, or sort each topic or idea's points in order so they flow well; and sequence it – arrange it in a logical, easy-to-follow order.

People lose interest quickly when they try to read material they don't follow, so any content has to be written in such a way that there is no uncertainty on the part of the reader as to the logical order of your written piece.

Later in this section we will look at the use of paragraphs, which are used to keep ideas together and give them a natural flow within your written content. Be careful to keep your ideas and points sequential so the reader easily understands the flow of your content.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

You're ready to begin drafting the written piece for your project.

This activity involves planning the draft. In the last section you gathered, reviewed and selected content from relevant pre-existing text-based material, and generated other ideas, to determine what you will include.

Now, it's a case of taking those ideas and devising a sequence and structure that will make your written piece flow logically and make it easy for readers to comprehend, and navigate their way through.

How you represent and record the structure is up to you – whether it's done electronically on a spreadsheet or word document, making hard copy notes, using bits of paper on a magnetic board – or any other way that works for you – you need to compose a framework that clearly sets out the structure and order of your content ideas.

Present this to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This activity requires students or trainees to further organise their content ideas developed in Section One to create a framework for their written draft.

Students or trainees should be encouraged to think about this stage carefully. If there is a chronological aspect to what they are writing about, most would tend to choose a linear structure, but there may be more creative ways.

The most important thing is that regardless of the structure they opt for, it must be one that readers can follow easily.

Introduction

Body

Conclusion
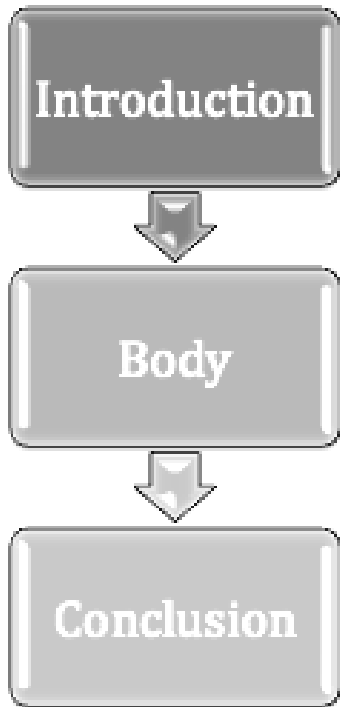
DRAFT CONTENT USING WRITING AND COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

AND

DRAFT CONTENT USING WRITING TECHNIQUES APPROPRIATE TO CONTENT PURPOSE

AND

REFINE AND REDRAFT CONTENT TO MEET CREATIVE REQUIREMENTS

(Over the next few pages we cover three 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

Different forms of written communication for media require a variety of lengths, formats and writing styles. A tweet will look very different from a product description on an advertisement and an online music review will look different again.

Any written piece should reflect some basic writing principles and all should reflect an understanding of the principles of communication.

Breaking points and ideas up into paragraphs, (or otherwise sectioning them, for example using a list of bullet points), is pivotal to the reader's ability to digest the information.

Each paragraph contains one idea and begins with a topic sentence, or a sentence that clearly makes the point of the paragraph clear. It is followed with supporting sentences that further elaborate on aspects of the main idea.

All but the briefest forms of written communication and sometimes even very short ones, should be structured to contain an introduction, main body and conclusion.

When you're drafting content also keep in mind the basic principles of communication – know your audience and purpose of communicating with them, understand what you want them to know and how best to engage them, while ensuring you always keep the message clear.

We keep coming back to it, but your content must be appropriately written to achieve its purpose – that is, to effectively communicate what you want to say to your target audience.

SAMPLE

Teacher/Trainer Manual

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Communicating exactly what you want to say comes from selecting the right content ideas. Effectively communicating it – engaging the reader so they absorb the message – is about writing technique – including style, tone and vocabulary.

At school you might have learned about four styles of writing:

- ☆ **_Expository or explanatory_** – serving the purpose of explaining or informing; facts not opinions
- ☆ **_Persuasive_** – attempting to convince an audience about a certain view; could include opinions, biases, justifications, beliefs and arguments
- ☆ **_Descriptive_** – painting a picture of people, things or places; might use similes and metaphors; doesn't try to persuade, just describe
- ☆ **_Narrative_** – communicating a story rather than straightforward information; could include characters and settings

All four styles are used when writing for a range of media.

Writing style in the context of business, media and communications is also about sentence and paragraph structure – in a good deal of business communication for example, the style is direct and succinct with minimal wastage of words.

Style is also about adhering to organisational requirements about length, vocabulary and terminology. Sometimes it is also about formatting text.

Tone gives writing a feel and mood. Feel is reflective of the attitude of the writer towards the reader and what is being written; mood refers to the emotion and response invoked in the reader.

There are many ways to describe tone. You can write in a personal tone, or impersonal; formal, informal; sympathetic; courteous; contemptuous; objective; sarcastic; gracious; witty….and so the list goes on.

The vocabulary you choose is crucial. It helps you:

- ☆ Address the content
- ☆ Achieve the tone you want
- ☆ Engage the target audience
- ☆ Keep your writing succinct and stick to the point

When planning to meet deadlines for written material, ensure you create enough time for you to review and refine your written piece.

Even the most experienced writers go through (sometimes multiple) drafting and redrafting processes with their content.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY TWO

This is a two part activity.

Part One

Prepare the first draft of your written piece, ensuring you:

- ☆ Use paragraphs to break up your ideas, with one main idea contained in each paragraph
- ☆ Use topic sentences to introduce your paragraphs
- ☆ Have a clear introduction, body and conclusion
- ☆ Write with the purpose of the content and the audience in mind
- ☆ Make an effort to engage your audience and deliver your message(s) clearly
- ☆ Use an appropriate writing style
- ☆ Choose vocabulary that conveys the appropriate tone for your piece

Present your draft to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

Part Two

As well as having your trainer/teacher review and comment on your draft, ask one or more others to read through it and offer feedback. They could be other class members, other friends or family – anyone who you think might have some constructive feedback to offer.

Once you have received any feedback from those who read through your draft, and your trainer/teacher has reviewed and commented on it – refine and redraft taking on board any constructive criticism you received. You might also be surprised at how many changes you feel you need to make second time around. Often looking at your own work with fresh eyes and with feedback from others in mind, gives you a slightly different take on it all.

Present your refined, redrafted piece to your trainer/teacher for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

Part One and Part Two represent the culmination of all preparatory work done on the project thus far. Ideally, the redrafting process will result in a product that is close to finished, with a final legal/ethical check and finishing off tasks to follow

CHECK CONTENT COMPLIES WITH LAWS AND CODES OF PRACTICE RELEVANT TO BROADCASTING AND PUBLICATION

A number of legal and ethical considerations need to be made when writing for different media.

In the previous unit we mentioned copyright and the importance of ensuring it is not breached. Copyright is automatic in Australia and applies to written (and other) material as soon as it is created. If you are unsure about copyright that might apply to non-original material you've used in creating a written piece, find out whether you need to obtain clearance or not – and if you can't find out, don't take the risk.

As mentioned in the previous section, content creators can use Creative Commons material, which carries a licence that authorises them to use other people's content copyright-free, although conditions may apply in some cases.

Defamation law protects individuals from having their reputation damaged by false statements made to third parties. Anyone who considers they have been defamed by published or broadcast material can sue a writer, publisher or broadcaster.

There are two categories of defamation:

☆ Libel refers to defamatory material in written or other permanent form, such as a video or audio recording.
☆ Slander refers to verbal defamation

The risk of writing anything defamatory is generally avoided by simply asking yourself is the content I'm writing true and can it be proved? If not, don't write it.

Under the law, individuals also have a right to privacy, which protects them from the unauthorised commercial use of their name or likeness. Anyone has the right to seek an injunction to prevent the publication or broadcast of their confidential information.

There are also industry codes of practice and ethics that apply to written material. These include:

☆ The Australian Press Council's two statements of general principles and specific standards relating to print and online publishing
☆ The Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) Journalist Code of Ethics
☆ The Australian Communications and Media Authority Codes of Practice

A suitable checklist to apply to all written material is:

☆ Are there any copyright clearance issues?
☆ Is all non-original work correctly referenced?
☆ Are all conditions of relevant Creative Commons licences met?
☆ Is everything true and can it be proved?
☆ Does it contain anything defamatory?
☆ Does it breach anyone's right to privacy?
☆ Does it comply with industry codes of practice and ethics?

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY THREE

Apply the following checklist to the final draft of your written project piece:

- ☆ Are there any copyright clearance issues?
- ☆ Is all non-original work correctly referenced?
- ☆ Are all conditions of relevant Creative Commons licences met?
- ☆ Is everything true and can it be proved?
- ☆ Does it contain anything defamatory?
- ☆ Does it breach anyone's right to privacy?
- ☆ Does it comply with industry codes of practice and ethics?

Your teacher or trainer may wish to sit down with you as you go through the above checklist.

Once you are satisfied that there are no copyright clearance issues, no breaches of defamation or privacy laws and that you have researched, prepared and written your piece in an ethical manner, you're just about there!

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This activity takes student or trainee through an important post-final draft check to ensure there are no legal or ethical issues with what they have written.

PROVIDE CAPTIONS OR DESCRIPTIONS FOR MEDIA ASSETS AS REQUIRED

AND

APPLY PRESENTATION TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE READABILITY

AND

PROOFREAD CONTENT AND CONDUCT READABILITY TESTS IF APPROPRIATE

AND

SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT TO RELEVANT PERSONNEL FOR CONSIDERATION AND REVIEW, WHERE APPROPRIATE

(Over the next few pages we cover four 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

As you approach completion of a final draft of a written piece, there are some important finishing details to attend to.

They are:

☆ **Providing captions** and other information (known as metadata) about media assets that might be included with your written piece, such as captions and reference information. If you have obtained copyright clearance or a licence to use material – be it contained within your written work or relating to assets associated with it, this should also be noted

☆ **Applying presentation techniques** to enhance readability. With text this could include formatting (font style, size, bold, italic, etc.), use of headings, sub-headings and bullet points, borders, colour, shading and highlighting.

☆ **Proofreading content** – a critical stage. Proofreading should not only be carried out immediately after a piece is written, but also after some time away from it. It is also helpful to have a 'fresh pair of eyes' go over your work – often someone else will pick something up that you missed. Feedback from others on the readability of your work is another check that can be extremely helpful and instructive.

☆ **Submitting your final draft** for review to those people within your organisation who need to approve it before it is sent. Given you have already sought their feedback during the preparation stages, and ensured that what you wrote aligns with the purpose of the content and its audience, much of the time their feedback is likely to require few or no minor changes.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY FOUR

Part of the requirement of the project for assessment is to include other media assets with your written piece.

Ensure that all metadata required is provided with whatever else you are submitting with your piece. This includes captions for images, any relevant photo, video or graphic credits, where you accessed imagery if it is not original, and running length of any video or animated graphics files.

Check with your trainer/teacher to ensure that all required additional material is covered.

Do a final proofread of your written piece and make any last changes required.

Submit it to your trainer/teacher for review and assessment.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

This is the point where students or trainees submit their final piece. While the next section calls for incorporation of feedback from relevant personnel where appropriate, trainers or teachers may or may not choose to require another submission if such changes are part of the assessment comments.

ADOPT SAFE ERGONOMIC PRACTICES WHEN USING SCREENS AND KEYBOARDS FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME

In collecting and organising content for broadcast or publication, you will be required to work at a computer for long periods of time. Doing so presents some challenges when it comes to the health of your body. Ergonomics – the study of how we interact with our working environment – points the way to the best way to use equipment for work that will minimise the chances of injury.

Correct chair height, adequate equipment spacing and good desk posture can help you stay comfortable.

Your chair should be able to be adjusted for height. When sitting, your knees should be level with your hips, and the seat of your chair should not press into the back of your knees. Your feet should rest flat on the ground, or resting on a footrest. Your backbone should be straight and the backrest supporting the lower back.

Adjust the keyboard so that your forearms are close to horizontal and your wrists are straight.

The monitor should be about one arms-length away, and the top of the monitor should be at eye level, or just below.

Avoid glare from light sources such as windows, lamps and lights, and adjust your workspace to avoid reflection of light from light sources such as windows, lights and lamps.

Change your posture frequently to minimise fatigue. Take short, frequent breaks in which you move around, and to mix up your tasks during the day. This encourages body movement and use of different muscle groups. Stretching your neck, shoulders, wrists, back and ankles is also recommended several times each working day.

Your employer is required provide you with an environment that is ergonomically safe. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance to create the right working space for you; this indicates that you are serious about doing a job well and avoiding injury.

Learning Activity

Research

LEARNING ACTIVITY FIVE

Using one or more suitable online sources – such as information from government workplace health and safety authorities, trade unions, employer associations or relevant professional organisations and peak bodies – put together a portfolio of information, guidelines and support services relating to the best ergonomic practice.

Present your portfolio to your teacher or trainer for review and discussion.

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

The assessment requirements for this unit of competency states:The aim of this activity is to provide students or trainees with a resource bank of useful information relating to ergonomics in the workplace – its effects, symptoms, strategies for management and sources of support.

Section Three

Finalise Content

WRITE CONTENT FOR A RANGE OF MEDIA

SECTION THREE—FINALISE CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Once you've prepared a final draft, there are some critical stages involved in finishing off the writing process.

Any further feedback from relevant people on the content you've written should be incorporated, if necessary. After you have submitted your written piece by the required deadline, it is also important to file and archive it so it can be readily accessed if necessary.

When it's all done, it is also instructive to undertake and evaluation and seek feedback from others on not only your written work, but the process you followed, to identify any areas that could be improved in the future.

SECTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this section you will learn information relating to:

- ☆ Incorporating feedback from relevant personnel into final content, where appropriate
- ☆ Submitting content by agreed deadline according to organisational procedures
- ☆ Saving and archiving content according to enterprise procedures
- ☆ Seeking feedback from relevant personnel on content and writing process and noting areas for improvement, where appropriate

INCORPORATE FEEDBACK FROM RELEVANT PERSONNEL INTO FINAL CONTENT, WHERE APPROPRIATE

AND

SUBMIT CONTENT BY AGREED DEADLINE ACCORDING TO ORGANISATIONAL PROCEDURES

AND

SAVE AND ARCHIVE CONTENT ACCORDING TO ENTERPRISE PROCEDURES

AND

SEEK FEEDBACK FROM RELEVANT PERSONNEL ON CONTENT AND WRITING PROCESS AND NOTE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT, WHERE APPROPRIATE

(Over the next few pages we cover four 'Performance Criteria' points at the same time to avoid repetition)

Your final draft has been reviewed by the relevant people in your organisation, and either ready for distribution, or close to it.
The first step is to incorporate feedback from those who have reviewed your written piece.

If you have been thorough in your preparation and drafting stages, this will more than likely be an uncomplicated process – ranging from fixing up typos or word omissions and the simple rearranging of sentences or sentence order, to the addition of further points or explanatory notes.

There may be times when discussion is required with those who have made annotations, additions and corrections to what you have written – you need to be clear about what changes they require and why.

Be aware also that writers sometimes have to be 'thick-skinned'.

A critical appraisal of your work can lead to disappointment that a reader has not interpreted your writing as you intended, but this is something that always leads to improvement in your written work – not just in relation to any one piece you've written but to your writing in a broader sense.

The more feedback you receive from people about different things you write, the better. It helps you build a general picture of how your audience responds to your work.

When your written piece is ready to submit, ensure it meets the deadline and is submitted according to organisational procedures. Copy in all relevant people and save files to appropriate server drives and/or other network/archive locations.

As we noted, feedback on a final draft is crucial in achieving an improved result on any written piece.

But as a writer, you should also work on continuous improvement – take every opportunity to reflect on the writing process, how you go about researching, collecting and referencing information, and composing what your write.
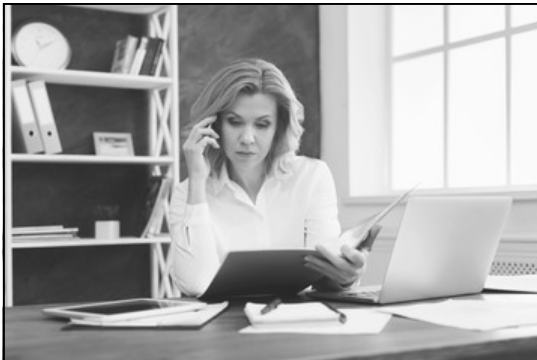
Seek feedback from relevant people not only on individual written pieces but the process as a whole – is your analysis of the audience sound; have you fulfilled the purpose of the written piece in all aspects; does your choice of vocabulary and tone reflect a thorough understanding of your audience?

Also, ask other writers how they go about their work – in what ways do they ensure their content aligns with its purpose and the target audience? It is a smart idea to read as much as you can too – both work-related material and other material – and always be on the lookout for new ideas and techniques that could be incorporated into your writing.

Learning Activity

Task

LEARNING ACTIVITY ONE

For this activity you need to have received your project back from your trainer or teacher. Note any feedback and, if relevant, incorporate that feedback into your finished written piece – even if assessment is complete and there is no requirement to resubmit.

In a real-life situation it would be at this stage that the final draft, with the final feedback incorporated, is delivered to the media outlet(s) who will publish it.

If your piece is to be actually published, ensure that it is saved and archived according to organisational procedures. If it is not to be published, still ensure you have an appropriately filed final version and a backup for it.

Finally, evaluate the process.

You will have received feedback from your trainer/teacher at various points as you developed your project – use these and your own reflections to make an appraisal of how you felt the process went. What things went well, and importantly, what improvements could be made for the future?

TEACHER/TRAINER GUIDANCE NOTES

In this final Section, the student or trainee would have needed to satisfied the following assessment requirements of this unit:

Evidence of the ability to:

  ☆ write media content that engages target user / audience and meets production deadlines
  ☆ apply principles of writing and communication in developing content for a range of purposes
  ☆ structure content and apply presentation techniques to enhance readability and navigation

As the teacher or trainer you will have to determine if the student or trainee has indeed successfully satisfied those assessment requirements and then additional assessment activities or tasks my need to be developed.

SELF ASSESSMENT

Self assessment is where you ask yourself certain questions to ensure you have understood what you have learned while reading this manual and completing the learning activities.

This unit requires you the student or trainee at the completion of your training to have a certain level of 'Required Knowledge' in which you would need to have acquired and in which you will be assessed on. This self assessment section reviews this required knowledge by way of questions and if you are able to say YES to all of them you can be confident your assessment will be satisfactory.

☆ This training unit had three sections each focussing on areas relating content writing for a range of media. After reviewing the information in Section One, are you confident that you understand and could:
1) Identify production requirements for content with relevant personnel
2) Identify purpose of content and publishing medium that may affect the way content will be written
3) Identify text-based content that may be incorporated and referenced, and organise copyright clearances as required
4) Cross-check with additional sources to find information where there are perceived gaps in text-based content
5) Analyse available data to identify needs and perspectives of target users and audience
6) Generate a range of ideas relevant to content purpose and target audience
7) Evaluate and select most appropriate content ideas and writing styles in consultation with relevant personnel

☆ After reviewing the information in Section Two, are you confident that you understand and could:
1) Classify, structure and sequence content so it is easy to read or navigate
2) Draft content using writing and communication principles
3) Draft content using writing techniques appropriate to content purpose
4) Refine and redraft content to meet creative requirements
5) Check content complies with laws and codes of practice relevant to broadcasting and publication
6) Provide captions or descriptions for media assets as required
7) Apply presentation techniques to enhance readability
8) Proofread content and conduct readability tests if appropriate
9) Submit final draft to relevant personnel for consideration and review, where appropriate
10) Adopt safe ergonomic practices when using screens and keyboards for long periods of time

☆ After reviewing the information in Section Three, are you confident that you understand and could:

1) Incorporate feedback from relevant personnel into final content, where appropriate
2) Submit content by agreed deadline according to organisational procedures
3) Save and archive content according to enterprise procedures
4) Seek feedback from relevant personnel on content and writing process and note areas for improvement, where appropriate

If there were any questions that you were unable to confidently say YES to, we encourage you to review the information again in this manual and if needed seek the assistance of your teacher or trainer.

NOTES