

Unit 03

Create a media product

ABOUT THIS UNIT

Media products have a range of different purposes, whether it is to advertise and promote a product or service, inform an audience of a cause or engage and entertain an audience. The aim of this unit is for you to develop knowledge and understanding of the production processes for producing print-based, audio-visual and audio media products. You will apply your learning gained in Units 1 and 2 to plan and produce a media product and complete planning materials to take them forward in the production and post-production stages of your intended media product. You will also plan, produce and edit original content for your intended product. By completing this unit, you will have the skills to create a proposal to meet a client brief, produce planning materials, create and manage original content for the product and apply editing techniques.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The topics, activities and suggested reading in this unit will help you to:

- 1 Be able to create a proposal with sample materials for an original media product to a client brief
- 2 Be able to plan and develop pre-production materials for an original media product to a client brief
- 3 Be able to create production materials for an original media product to a client brief
- 4 Be able to carry out post-production techniques and processes for an original media product to a client brief

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed through an assignment that has a series of tasks, that is set and marked by your tutor and externally moderated by OCR.

How will I be graded?

You will be graded using the following grading criteria, which are in the specification that is produced by OCR for the qualification.

Learning Outcome	Pass	Merit	Distinction
The learner will:	The assessment criteria which are the Pass requirements for this unit.	To achieve a Merit, the evidence must show that, in addition to the Pass criteria, the candidate is able to:	To achieve a Distinction, the evidence must show that, in addition to the Pass and Merit criteria, the candidate is able to:
1 Be able to create a proposal with sample materials for an original media product to a client brief	P1 Produce a proposal for the original media product to meet the client brief P2 Create sample materials to support the proposal	M1* Justify content, distribution and marketing methods identified for the planned production to meet a client brief <i>(*Synoptic assessment from Unit 1 Media products and audiences)</i>	
2 Be able to plan and develop pre-production materials for an original media product to a client brief	P3* Develop pre-production materials for an original media product <i>(*Synoptic assessment from Unit 2 Pre-production and planning)</i>	M2* Legal and ethical issues are identified and resolved for the planned production <i>(*Synoptic assessment from Unit 2 Pre-production and planning)</i>	
3 Be able to create production materials for an original media product to a client brief	P4 Create production materials to be used in the original media product	M3* Create production material that follows the codes and conventions of the chosen genre for the media product <i>(*Synoptic assessment from Unit 1 Media products and audiences)</i>	
4 Be able to carry out post-production techniques and processes for an original media product to a client brief	P5 Carry out post-production techniques and processes to produce a final original media product in line to the client brief	M4 Demonstrate how the exported media product meets the client brief	D1* Analyse how post-production techniques and processes create meaning in the media product to meet the client brief <i>(*Synoptic assessment from Unit 1 Media products and audiences)</i>

LO1 Be able to create a proposal with sample materials for an original media product to a client brief

P1 P2 M1

1.1 How to develop ideas

GETTING STARTED

(30 minutes)

Collect a range of media products in the categories of audio, audio-visual and print-based. Spend around 10 minutes reviewing each type and make notes on what you like about them. Suggestions would be:

- Audio products: jingles, talk radio show, advertisements
- Audio-visual products: film trailers, music video
- Print-based products: film posters, magazine covers, newspaper/magazine advertisements

You should consider the layout, colours, visual style, genre and what codes and conventions have been used. Refer to Unit 1 for more details.

Once an outline idea or concept has been created for an original media product this needs to be documented. A typical format for this is in the form of a proposal, which can be supplied to a client or just stored in the project file as a guide for the developers.

Proposal for an original media product

Type of proposal

The type of proposal will depend to an extent on what sort of media product is to be created. For example, you may produce a specification for a digital graphic or alternatively a treatment for an audio-visual product. Whatever type of proposal is to be produced, it should clearly show or define what is to be created.

Proposal

The proposal should cover the purpose of the media product together with details of the form, genre, content, target audience, resources required and what distribution/marketing methods will be used.

Purpose

The purpose of an original media product could be one or more of the following, with examples suggested for each.

To:

- **Inform** – a magazine article on local wildlife and attractions
- **Promote** – a print or video advertisement for a new film
- **Entertain** – a radio drama or film trailer
- **Educate** – a leaflet on how to do something

Whatever media product is to be created, the purpose should always be clear and for a defined target audience.

Form, genre and content of the media product

There are three possible types of media product for this unit. These are:

- Audio product
- Audio-visual product
- Print-based and graphics products

You will be able to select one of these for the production of your media product, following the process through from the initial proposal to pre- and post-production.

Audio products

An audio media product could be a:

- Radio drama – Created by writing an original script and then recording this in a studio
- Music track – By creating a digital track using music technology and software
- Talk show – Part of a radio broadcast with guests who are interviewed by the presenter
- Audio book – A story that is narrated and recorded
- Soundtrack – A combination of sounds and music that is used with a video or animation
- Podcast – On a specific topic such as photography or how to use a particular software application
- Radio advertisement – To promote a new product or service, combining speech, music and sound effects
- Original song – A recording of a musician or vocal artist

When describing the content of an audio product, consideration of the following should be included in the proposal:

- **Dialogue** – Who are the main characters and what do they say to each other? This will typically be defined using a **script**.
- **Music** – Will there be music in any part of the audio product? This might be in the foreground (for a musical performance) or background (for use

in an advertisement where the primary sound is the **voiceover**). The proposal will need to identify what music is required, its duration and any legal restrictions on its use.

- **Sound effects (SFX)** – Will any sound effects need to be recorded or sourced for use in the audio product? If so, how will they be created or where will they be sourced from?

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

Create a mind map with some ideas about what you would be interested to create for an audio media product. Would it be an advertisement, jingle, podcast or talk/music radio programme? Use the items from the preceding list of considerations to develop an outline for your ideas.

KEY TERMS

Dialogue – Speech between two or more characters in a script, story or scene.

Script – This is a written document for the sequence of a play, film or audio product that includes information on scene, location, action and any dialogue.

SFX – Sound effects which can be created and recorded independently before being imported into the audio or audio-visual product to enhance meaning.

Mise-en-scène – The way in which things are positioned and arranged in the scene for an audio-visual product. Roughly translated from a French term meaning to 'put into the scene', this encompasses everything – both natural and artificially placed objects – in order to create impact and meaning.

Genre – Media products are usually classified into categories and sub-categories. These categories are referred to as a product's genre. By categorising a product, its audience will have a set of expectations that they will look forward to being met.

GFX – Graphic effects, which can be created and added to the audio-visual product in the post-production editing.

Voiceover – Spoken words that are heard but from a person that is not one of the characters in the audio story or visual action, for example a narrator.

Audio-visual products

An audio-visual product could be a:

- Promotional video – For a company or organisation
- Trailer – For a new film or TV drama
- Advert – For a TV commercial break or a website promotion
- TV programme – A drama, soap, documentary, reality show, quiz
- Short film – For creative British film making, fiction and non-fiction
- Documentary – For TV or online use
- Product aimed at specific online content – For YouTube or other social media

When describing the content of an audio-visual product, consideration of the following should be included in the proposal:

- **Mise-en-scène** – How will this be organised, arranged and handled in the production? Key elements might be described, such as the setting, characters, costumes, objects and lighting. This could be supported using visualisation diagrams or artists' sketches.
- **Camerawork** – This includes camera viewpoints, angles, shot types, movement and number of cameras to be used.
- **Editing** – What editing processes and techniques will be used? For example, will there be any special effects such as green screen or chroma key? How will the recorded material be edited? For example, what non-linear video editing software will be used and how will the material be reviewed and checked for shot continuity, story flow, visual style and conventions of the **genre**?
- **Transitions** – What type of transitions will be used between scenes? For example, cut, dissolve, fade. At this level, a random mixture is not a good approach.
- **SFX, GFX** – Will there be any sound or graphic effects added to the audio-visual content? Examples would be special sound effects (such as explosions) or motion graphics.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

Create a mind map with some ideas about what you would be interested to create for an audio-visual media product. Would it be a music video, film trailer or product advertisement? Use the items from the preceding list of considerations to develop an outline for your ideas.

Print-based and graphics products

A print-based or digital graphics media product could be something from Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 Print-based and graphics products

Print-based	Digital image/graphics-based
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magazine (cover or internal page) Advertisement Film poster Leaflet Billboards Information pack DVD/Blu-Ray cover Newspaper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital content for multimedia Web pop-up Web banner Graphics for computer games



▲ **Figure 3.1** Magazine front covers

Magazines represent a large market for print graphics. In terms of content, there are a number of layout conventions that should be followed. There is also a range of terminology that you need to be familiar with:

- **Slug** – A working title or line of type with a short phrase or title that briefly describes the story or content.
- **Body copy** – The main text of an article.
- **Margins** – The blank spaces around the edges of the article(s) which are set so that the finished print product will be fit for purpose.
- **Masthead** – This can vary depending on where it is published. Typically, a title or name of the newspaper/magazine on the front cover (UK) or sometimes the publisher's details, rates and contact information on an inside page (US).
- **Pull quotes** – A short excerpt from the body copy that is used to highlight sections, usually enlarged to draw the reader's attention.

- **Interview** – A particular type of layout that is a transcription of a question and answer style verbal interview, with [name] headings for each of the people involved.
- **Review** – A type of layout used in magazines when commenting on a product, film or performance, for example.

The content for print-based and graphics products may also include reference to what images are to be used, which might be in a table or spreadsheet format. The proposal may also define what font styles are to be used, as well as headings, sub-headings and body copy.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

Create a mind map with some ideas about what you would be interested to create for a print-based or graphics product. Would it be a poster, leaflet, CD/Blu-ray cover, advertisement or a magazine front cover? Consider the purpose of the print or graphics-based products and what would be the essential components to achieve the intended result.

Target audience

The target audience must be considered and is a key part of any proposal to ensure the media product will be suitable. The target audience can be classified according to categories such as:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnic group
- Spending power
- Demographics

See Unit 1 for more information on target audience definitions and characteristics.

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

(15 minutes)

Search the web for 'Adidas case study pdf', which should find a document that describes how Adidas have planned their marketing strategies. The pdf leaflet describes how Adidas used innovative strategies together with sponsorship and choice of role models in order to attract young sports-minded people around the world.

Resources and personnel

Resources are primarily the equipment and software used to record, create and edit the media product, although this can be extended to include everything you will need. Depending on the media product to be created, consideration must also be given to props, media assets, personnel needed, and their job roles and responsibilities.

Assets are any media components that will be used in the product, such as:

- photographs, images and graphics
- video, motion graphics, logos and animations
- sounds, voiceovers and narration

Many media products will require a team, such as in video production, although this may not be necessary for print-based and graphics products, where you may be working alone. Whatever product is being created, the individual job roles must be clear if the project is to run smoothly. The proposal should identify what personnel and job roles are needed and allocate a name to each role. You should also be clear about what activities each job role includes. Each individual could then decide what resources they would need to fulfil that job role.

Table 3.2 shows examples of resources for different media products.

Table 3.2 Resources for different media products

Resources	Media product		
	Audio	Audio-visual	Print/graphics
Recording equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital audio recorder Microphones (e.g. dynamic, cardioid, shotgun) Headphones Boom, shock mount and wind deflector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital video camera Camera lenses Video mic Storage devices Batteries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital camera Camera lenses Tripod Graphics tablet
Editing equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer system (PC or Apple Mac) Tablet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer system (PC or Apple Mac) Tablet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer system (PC or Apple Mac) Tablet
Editing software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adobe Audition Logic Pro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adobe Premier Pro Final Cut Pro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adobe Photoshop Adobe Illustrator Quark
Props		As required by the scenes	As required by the scenes
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound recorder or engineer Sound editor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera operator Sound assistant Actors Video editor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographer Model Image or publishing editor

PAIRS ACTIVITY

(20 minutes)

Think about what type of media product you would like to make. Review what equipment and software you have available for each of the three different types of media product and what you want to create. Identify how you would use the equipment and whether anything would need to be sourced from elsewhere. Your tutor may be able to provide guidance on your choices.

Distribution and marketing methods

The purpose and intended use of the media product will form the basis of the requirements for distribution and marketing needs. The marketing methods will be influenced by the intended target audience so that the product has more opportunity to be seen by them. For example, social media may not be widely used by some age groups in which case alternative methods could be more effective. Having an online presence to promote a product is of little use if the target audience are not seeing the marketing material, whether in the form of a dedicated website or banner advertisements. Search results will also be a factor, with Google Ads, ad trackers and cookies performing important functions.

Maximum effectiveness can be achieved through cross-promotion of products with planning based around a detailed marketing strategy. Links between marketing methods are beneficial together with cross-promotion in different formats. For example, if you want to promote a new film then this could be achieved using channels such as social media, dedicated website, posters, TV and radio.

? THINK ABOUT IT

Case scenario

Westwood client brief

A new band, Westwood, have just completed their first album and have asked for your ideas on how it could be promoted. They are open to any form of media, whether radio, television or using online and print-based formats. The album is named 'Progress Way' and the musical genre is a mixture of electronic and hip-hop.

Draft some ideas and an outline proposal on how to promote the band and their new album.

Now THINK ABOUT the following:

- 1 What type of media product would you like to propose?
- 2 What content could be included?
- 3 What resources would you need?
- 4 Decide on the options for distribution and marketing of your media product to promote the new album.

Sample materials

Audio products

If the audio product has any dialogue (speech content) then a script will be an important pre-production document. The script could be supported by samples of audio clips which may include narration, voiceovers, sound effects, environmental sounds and music. In combination with a script this can give a realistic impression of what the final product is intended to be and sound like.

Audio-visual products

Audio-visual products can be illustrated using either a script or storyboard. Sometimes both of these will be created as pre-production documents.

The formatting and layout of a script is an important part of the creation if it is to be of use. Conventions have been established so that the people using the script can

easily and quickly locate the information that they need. A shooting script can also be created and used with audio-visual products.

For more on scripts, see Unit 2.

Print-based and graphics

When planning print-based products and other graphics, the planning can be supported using a range of pre-production documents. In the initial stages a mood board can be used to collect samples of similar or related products (as it can be with most media products). This then needs to be planned using some form of visualisation diagram, which can be a hand-drawn sketch or digitally created diagram to show what the intended product will look like. The visualisation diagram can be annotated to identify what fonts and colours will be used together with details of any graphics such as logos, and so on.

Refer to Unit 2 for further information on how to create visualisation diagrams and concept art.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

(20 minutes)

Collect samples of at least three media products in a chosen category of audio, audio-visual or print-based media. Suggestions would be:

- Audio products: jingles, talk radio show, advertisements
- Audio-visual products: film trailers, music video
- Print-based products: film posters, magazine covers, newspaper/magazine advertisements

Spend around 10 minutes reading/watching/listening to them and make some brief notes.

As a class, discuss what you like about them. You should consider the layout, colours, visual style, genre and what codes and conventions have been used.

KNOW IT

- 1 What genre of product do you intend to create?
- 2 What conventions are typically used in that genre?
- 3 Thinking of the form of the product, define the shape and structure of what is to be created.

L01 Assessment activity

Below is a suggested assessment activity that has been directly linked to the Pass and Merit Criteria in Learning Outcome 1 to help with assignment preparation and includes TOP Tips on how to achieve best results.

Scenario: You have been provided with a brief that requires an advertisement for a new 'adrenaline sports' digital channel and website. The activities can include extreme mountain biking, snowboarding, climbing and kayaking. A proposal is required to describe how this magazine can be promoted, in either an audio, audio-visual or print-based format.

Activity 1 Pass criterion P1

Select what format you would like to promote the product (audio, audio-visual or print-based). Draft a proposal for this media product, which could be in the form of a word-processed document or presentation. Develop your thoughts and ideas so that you can structure your proposal with suitable headings. These should include the purpose of the digital channel/website, form, genre, typical content, target audience, resources needed and what distribution/marketing methods you could utilise.

Activity 2 Pass criterion P2

Create sample materials to support your proposal document.

This will vary depending on what format you have chosen as follows:

- **Audio product:** Produce a draft of a script for a 20-second radio advert.
- **Audio-visual product:** Produce a storyboard for a 30-second TV advertisement.
- **Print-based or graphics product:** Produce a mood board for the adrenaline sports channel and a rough draft of visualised layouts for an advert that could be placed in a newspaper or magazine.

Activity 3 Merit criterion M1 (in addition to P1 and P2)

Your proposal will have identified the content together with any suggested distribution and marketing methods. Now you need to think about why you have chosen them and why they are suitable to promote the product. By explaining the reasons for your choices and decisions, you will be able to justify their use.

TOP TIPS

- ✓ Think carefully about how best to promote your original media product. Make sure your proposal is well structured and clearly shows your ideas in all the required areas.
- ✓ The proposal is best presented in document format although a presentation would be effective if you have the opportunity to deliver it in person. If it is to be a presentation, then it should be recorded.

L02 Be able to plan and develop pre-production materials for an original media product to a client brief P3 M2

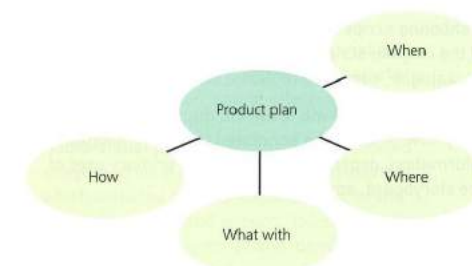
2.1 How to develop pre-production materials

This section is separated into the three different types of media product: audio, audio-visual and print-based/graphics.

GETTING STARTED

(5 minutes)

Create a mind map of thoughts and ideas about what you will need to plan. Start with who, what, why, when, where and how.



▲ Figure 3.2 Creating a mind map to start your planning

Audio

Pre-production materials for audio products should include the following:

- Written interpretation of the narrative
- Script, using script formatting and layout:
 - Location
 - Action
 - Sound effects – sounds that create an atmosphere (e.g. door slam, screeching tyres)
 - Dialogue – what characters are saying
 - Actors/voices – instructions on how characters should deliver dialogue (intonation) based on their character type and action taking place (e.g. 'SHOUTING', 'WHISPERS')

Refer to Unit 2 for further information on how to create a script.

GROUP ACTIVITY

(20 minutes)

Get together in a group of three to four and draft an outline script for a radio advert to advertise a product of your own choice. Think about how many characters will be in the advert, what they have to say and how they say it. If you have time, add some extra details about what sound effects and background music could also be used.

Audio-visual

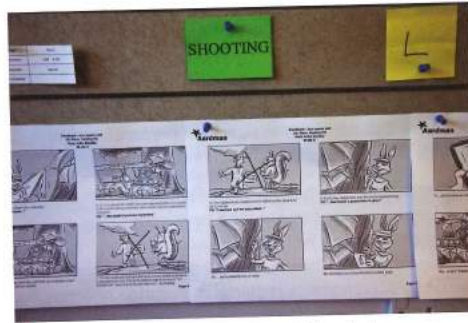
Pre-production materials for audio-visual products should include some form of project plan such as a Gantt chart, production schedules, shooting scripts, call sheets and storyboards.

A shooting script can be a marked-up or edited version of the original script and includes additional information on dialogue, camera directions, location, GFX and SFX.

A basic storyboard will illustrate the sequence or story flow. This can be annotated to feature additional information, depending on who is the primary user of the storyboard, and may include:

- Camerawork
- Transitions
- Consideration of *mise-en-scène*

Sometimes an animatic can be used. This uses storyboard sketches anchored with audio intended for the production.



▲ Figure 3.3 Storyboard for animated film development

Figure 3.3 shows a storyboard for animated film development.

Refer to Unit 2 for further information on how to create a script, shooting script and storyboard.

Print-based and graphics

Pre-production materials for print-based products and graphics can include:

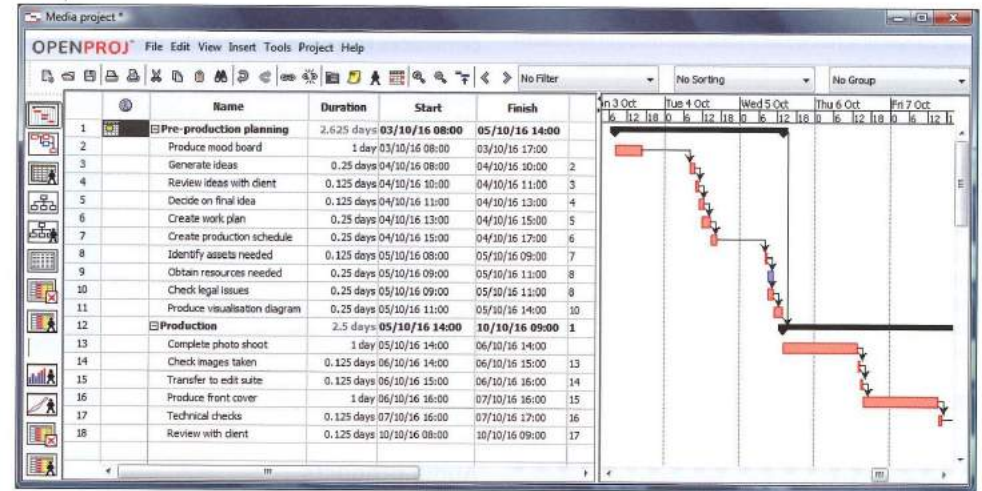
- An annotated visualisation diagram or sketched layout
- Mood boards to represent visual styles and themes intended in the final production
- A plan for any photographs (locations, model, composition)
- A plan for graphics (colour, shape)
- Identification of selected fonts/graphics/colours; these can all be shown on the visualisation diagram.

Refer to Unit 2 for further information on how to create visualisation diagrams and concept art.

In general, there are some common areas of pre-production planning regardless of what type of product is to be created. These can be broken down into sections for:

- What is to be produced (taking into account the target audience and client requirements) using a range of suitable pre-production documents
- A project plan/Gantt chart for its production
- Consideration of health and safety requirements
- Consideration of any legal and ethical issues

See Unit 2 for further information on planning considerations for a media product.



▲ Figure 3.4 Gantt chart for media product development

Timescales and milestones

These are typically illustrated using a Gantt chart, which is a breakdown of key activities to be carried out for the production, with milestone dates included up until the launch date of the product (see Figure 3.4). Dedicated software applications can be used to create these.

Production schedules

These are weekly plans for activities to be completed as part of the pre-production, production and post-production stages. Examples include call sheets for filming or taking photographs.

L02 Assessment activity

Below is a suggested assessment activity that has been directly linked to the Pass and Merit Criteria in Learning Outcome 2 to help with assignment preparation and includes TOP Tips on how to achieve best results.

Scenario: You have been provided with a brief to inform people about local attractions. This can be developed using a radio advert, an audio-visual clip for use on a website, or a print-based poster for window displays.

Activity 1 Pass criterion P3

Create the pre-production materials for this scenario. This will vary depending on what format you have chosen as follows:

KNOW IT

- 1 Identify three essential pre-production documents for your chosen type of media product.
- 2 What additional pre-production documents would help with generating ideas?
- 3 If planning on working in a group in the production stage, what additional information in the form of pre-production documents would you need to pass on to members of the production team?

- **Audio product:** Develop a detailed script for a 20-second radio advert, identifying characters, dialogue, intonation, sound effects and the use of any background music.
- **Audio-visual product:** Produce an annotated storyboard for a 30-second TV advertisement, which includes camera shots, angles, scene durations, action and speech. You should also produce a shooting script and identify any SFX and GFX that are to be used.
- **Print-based or graphics product:** Produce an annotated layout sketch of what the poster is intended to look like. The annotations should refer to the use of colours and fonts. Support this with a plan for what photographs and/or graphics are to be included and how they will be obtained.

In addition to the pre-production materials, you should also complete a risk assessment, site recce (if needed) and create a Gantt chart or shooting schedule for creating the media product.

Activity 2 Merit criterion M2 (in addition to P3)

Think about what legal and ethical issues are relevant to the media product that you are planning. List these and make sure they cover the type of product, content to be used, production activities, target audience and representation. You should take action to resolve any issues, so that the media product can be used without causing offence or legal challenge. As an example, you

may need to obtain model and property releases and permissions for anybody and anything that is used within your production. List any organisations that regulate the type of product you are producing and explain how they will affect its production.

TOP TIPS

- ✓ Ensure that your pre-production planning materials clearly show what is to be created and that they inform others involved in the production exactly what they need to do.
- ✓ Risk assessments and recces should use industry standard forms since you are working in a vocational/commercial context.



Audio-visual products

You will need to create an audio-visual product as planned in Learning Outcome 2, such as:

- Promotional video
- Trailer
- Advertisement
- TV programme
- Short film
- Online content
- Documentary

In this learning outcome, the production materials that you create will be in the form of a recorded range of video and audio. These will then become the assets that you edit in post-production to create an original audio-visual media product.

Techniques to be used will include the use and setting up of video cameras, tripods and sound recording equipment, together with applying a range of camera shots, angles and movement.

Print-based and graphics products

You will need to create a print- or graphics-based product as planned in Learning Outcome 2 (see also Table 3.1).

Note that the creation of billboards has some limitations if they are to be fit for purpose. If the resolution is not high enough for print purposes at the intended size, what you are creating is a mock-up rather than a finished product. A typical print resolution would be 300 dpi but this also depends on the printing process to be used. Some products can get away with less than this, such as a newspaper page or other low resolution print quality product, where 150–200 dpi is typically acceptable.

In this learning outcome, the production materials that you create will be in the form of a series of photographs and additional sourced images, graphics or body copy. These will then become the assets that you edit in post-production to create an original print-based or graphics media product.

3.2 Applying production techniques and methods

Use of planning materials

Before setting up any equipment for recording or capturing materials, all of the pre-production

planning should be reviewed. This is to make sure that what is going to be produced will be a good match for what is required. It is also important to make sure that people are in the right place at the right time and that action has been taken to minimise any hazards and risks.

Set-up of relevant equipment/software and methods/techniques for the production processes

Audio products

Setting up for recording can be based around digital audio recorders or audio software applications. These devices convert the sound into a digital file using an **analogue-to-digital converter (ADC)**. If using digital sound recorder hardware, then you will need to decide on a suitable type of microphone for what is being recorded and what the environment is like. Headphones should be used to monitor the quality of the recording and sound levels or **volume**, at all times. If recording on set or outdoors, always make a recording of any ambient sound, which can be used in post-production to remove unwanted audio. You will be able to change the **gain** or **amplitude** of any part of the audio in post-production editing.

You will need to decide on the properties of the audio recording and set up the equipment correctly to get the best results. Options may be available for both the **bit depth** and **sampling rate**.

KEY TERMS

Bit depth – A measure of the dynamic range in a digital audio file (from the loudest to quietest sound), determined by the recording equipment in terms of analogue-to-digital conversion (ADC); examples being 14 bit (with 16,384 levels) and 16 bit (with 65,536 levels).

Sampling rate – The frequency (how often) the audio level is measured when being digitally recorded using an ADC. For example, 44.1 kHz means 44,100 samples per second, which is standard audio CD quality.

LO3 Be able to create production materials for an original media product to a client brief P4 M3

In Learning Outcome 3 you will create/record the original production materials, which are then edited later as part of Learning Outcome 4, which is the post-production phase.

3.1 Use techniques to create a media product

GETTING STARTED

(5 minutes)

By now you will have chosen a type or form of media to work with in this unit. This introductory activity is to find out what equipment you have available to use and investigate the specification and main features. For example:

- If you have a DSLR camera, it could be used for either photographs or recording audio-visual material. Complete a web search on the make and model number of the DSLR.
- If you have a Canon 5D, a good approach would be to run a search on 'Canon 5D review'.

Make some notes or print off the key points so you know what the equipment is capable of.

Audio products

You will need to create an audio product as planned in Learning Outcome 2, such as:

- Radio drama
- Music talk show
- Audio book
- Soundtrack
- Podcast
- Radio advertisement
- Original song

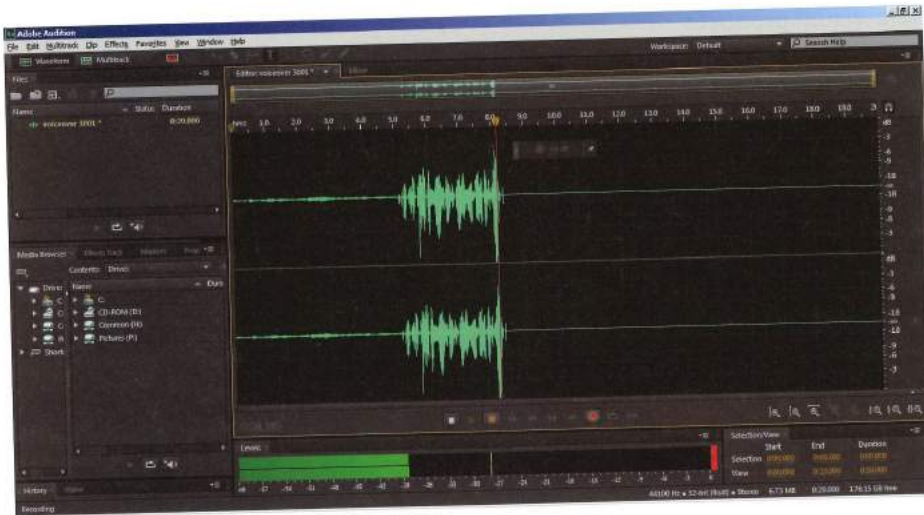
In this learning outcome, the **production materials** that you create will be in the form of a recorded range of audio. These will then become the assets that you edit in post-production to create an original audio media product. Techniques to be used will include the choice, use and setting up of microphones and recording equipment.

KEY TERMS

Production materials – The media components and assets that are recorded using equipment and resources. Examples are footage recorded with a video camera, sounds recorded with audio recording equipment and photographs taken with a digital camera.

Analogue-to-digital converter/conversion (ADC) – Used when recording analogue sounds into digital audio files. The reverse process is digital-to-analogue conversion (DAC) and is used when playing a digital audio file through speakers.

Volume/Gain/Amplitude – These all relate to the same thing, which is how loud the sound will be.



▲ Figure 3.5 Recording audio directly into Adobe Audition

Audio software can be set up for recording, as well as browsing and importing existing audio files. In this section we will briefly look at how to record audio directly using Adobe Audition (see Figure 3.5).

- In Waveform View, select 'New audio file' and look at the settings
- Check the recording level – choose 'Meter input' signal
- Maintain meter levels below 0dB (decibels)
- Click the red record button to start
- When complete, save the file

Mid-sentence pauses are to be avoided when recording a voiceover since it is difficult to edit these out in post-production. A better approach is to re-record the material. Do not worry if several takes are required before you obtain what you want.

KEY TERM

Decibel (dB) – A logarithmic measure of the sound level, whereby a 3dB gain will be double the original level. Used as a measure of loudness.

PAIRS ACTIVITY

(15 minutes)

Practise your skills in recording audio materials. Compare the results from both exercises in each example:

Record a voiceover. Your script could be: 'Hello, my name is _____ and today we are exploring the effects of background noise on sound recording.'

Record this same voiceover in two different locations:

- 1 In a sound recording studio or other quiet indoor location
- 2 Outdoors, with traffic and/or wind noise

Play back the results of your recorded material and make notes of any observations.

Audio-visual products

When recording your **raw footage**, you should aim to include a range of **camera shot** types, such as:

- Establishing or extreme wide shot (EWS)
- Wide shot (WS)
- Mid shot (or medium shot) (MS)

KEY TERMS

Raw footage – Video that is recorded directly using the camera.

Camera shots – Different types of framing or composition used in the video recording, examples being wide shot, mid shot or close-up.

- Close-up (CU)
- Extreme close-up (ECU)
- Over-the-shoulder shot (OSS)

Camera angles can be chosen, such as:

- Low angle
- Eye level
- High angle
- Aerial

Camera movement can also include pan, tilt, zoom and using a track and dolly.

Setting up of equipment for recording video will be based on using digital video cameras. This can include selecting video recording mode (for example, 720/1080 HD, PAL/NTSC) and frame rate. Decisions will need to be made about what locations will be used to film although this is also part of pre-production planning. However, when on set, changes can and often will need to be made. Before leaving a set, a review of the raw footage should be made in case there are any problems – you would not want to only find out about this when back in the edit studio. It is also good practice to log **rushes** as part of the review to identify which footage/audio is useable or not useable and why.

The raw footage will be recorded as original rushes so that they can be combined in post-production later on. Whether you are using a digital video camera or Mini DV, the process of recording is very similar. You will need to be aware of the recording time, which can be limited by the storage capacity of the digital camera or tape, in addition to the battery run time. It is always a good idea to take spares to a filming location.

You will also need a copy of the pre-production materials, which may include a script, storyboard, shooting schedule and call sheet. This will be used as a guide on what to record on each day. You must keep in mind the storyboard flow since scenes might not be recorded in sequence as shown in the storyboard. This is where shot continuity becomes an important aspect for any audio-visual product. An example would be that actors need to be wearing the same clothes in the same way when shooting successive scenes across several days, such as when moving from an outdoor location to an indoor set.

KEY TERMS

Camera angles – The angle of the camera when pointed at the subject for recording purposes. Examples would be low angle (looking up at the subject) or high angle (looking down at the subject).

Camera movement – Any form of camera operation such as panning the camera or zooming while recording. Also includes physical movement of the camera such as tracking (moving the camera while recording, to obtain a different viewpoint).

Rushes – A collection of raw footage, typically from one day's shoot.

Pixel dimensions – The number of pixels horizontally and vertically, which are multiplied together to give the number of megapixels. For example, an image that is 3508 × 2480 pixels is exactly A4 when printed at 300 dpi. This also applies to photographs and is a key part of the properties for any images created in software applications.

PAIRS ACTIVITY

(15 minutes)

Practise your skills in recording audio-visual materials by recording ten seconds of footage using a wide shot of your college. Pan the camera slowly from left to right during recording, using two different techniques:

- 1 Hand-held
- 2 With the camera mounted on a tripod

Play back the footage of your recorded material and make notes of any observations. Compare the results from both exercises.

Print-based and graphics

Taking photographs

The setting up of equipment will most likely be based around taking photographs. Further information on this topic can be found in Unit 8, which is all about digital photography. However, you may also want to source additional images and graphics for use in the print-based or graphics product.

Sourcing images, graphics and other assets

Searches for images and graphics need to ensure that what is found will be suitable for use. A prime example here is the **pixel dimensions** of any image that is found on the web, since many are relatively low and



▲ **Figure 3.6** Creating a new document in Adobe Photoshop using properties for print-based products

at 72 dpi. This means most are unsuitable for use in a print-based product since the image quality will be very low, resulting in blurry or pixelated images. Bear in mind that a print product will typically require 300 dpi, which means 300 pixels for every inch of printed image. Therefore, a 10-inch-wide image will need 3000 pixels.

If creating graphics for web or multimedia product use, then these will not need as high a resolution and typically 72 dpi is used. Given that display monitors are rarely more than 1920 pixels wide, more typical dimensions are in the region of 600–1000 pixels, which do not fill the web page or display.

Some print-based or graphic products can be created directly within the software application. An example would be the creation of an original logo, which is drawn in Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator. The first step here is to create a new document with the correct image properties (see Figure 3.6).

KEY TERMS

DPI resolution – The number of dots per inch, which determines how the total number of pixels in the image can be used. For example, print graphics typically need 300 dpi, whereas web or multimedia display graphics need only 72 dpi.

Body copy – The words used in the text of an article, leaflet, web page or other document.

Obtaining logos and other house styled assets

If creating leaflets or posters for a specific client or product, you may have to follow guidelines based on

the organisation's 'house style', which maintains their brand image or corporate identity. In these situations, you should be supplied with a copy of any logos and other graphics to be used.

Writing body copy

The client requirements may define the look of any **body copy** in terms of font style and size to be used, which may be included in the specification that is supplied by the client. However, these may be applied in post-production and at this stage just a formatted document should suffice. The content, length and writing style will need to be clear and reviewed when producing the body copy. Use a word processor and save your work using version control as you update it. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are important when creating body copy, so use a spell checker and have the work proofread before sending it through to post-production.

PAIRS ACTIVITY

(15 minutes)

Practise your skills in taking photographs indoors. Using a hand-held camera, make a note of what shutter speed is being used. Aim to experiment with shutter speeds of:

- 1/8th second
- 1/30th second
- 1/125th second

Review the results of your photographic material and make notes of any observations.

Ensure safe working practices are followed

See Unit 2 for information on risk assessments and safe working practices.

Ensure codes and conventions related to the chosen media product and genre are adhered to

Refer to Unit 1 for codes and conventions of media texts.

L03 Assessment activity

Below is a suggested assessment activity that has been directly linked to the Pass and Merit Criteria in Learning Outcome 3 to help with assignment preparation and includes TOP Tips on how to achieve best results.

Scenario: You have been asked to produce some original materials for use in an advertisement for a drinks or confectionery campaign. For this, you could use a fizzy drink can or bottle and a snack bar or packet of crisps. These items would be the props.

Activity 1 Pass criterion P4

As appropriate to the type or form of media product chosen:

- **Audio:** Record the sound of the drinks can or bottle being opened. Be careful not to shake it too hard beforehand, and make sure it is opened in a safe place away from carpets or electrical equipment (part of your risk assessment). If using a snack bar or crisps, it could be 'snapping' the bar in half or the 'crunch' of the crisps. You can also record a voiceover using a scripted element that describes the drinks/snacks. Source some suitable background sounds such as music to accompany the recorded sounds.
- **Audio-visual:** Think about *mise-en-scène* and what placement of the product within a background will be like. Use a close-up shot on the drink/snack and a mid shot of somebody opening it. Use a tripod if one is available and some camera movement such as a tilt shot from the drink/snack up to the person's face.
- **Print-based or graphics product:** Take a series of photographs of the drink/snack on its own and also being held by somebody. Make sure the background

KNOW IT

- 1 How would you check that the sound levels are suitable when recording audio at an outdoor location?
- 2 List three types of camera shot that you might use when recording an interview between two people.
- 3 How many pixels would you need in an image for it to be printed at A3 dimensions?

does not have any distractions or you will be creating more work in post-production where these will have to be edited out.

For any type of media product, store all of your materials in a suitable location using appropriate file names and formats. Make sure that you keep separate records of the processes and activities for creating the production materials that go into creating any final product later on.

Activity 2 Merit criterion M3 (in addition to P4)

Think about what the codes and conventions will be for the chosen genre of the media product. To start with, research similar advertisements for drinks and confectionery items to identify approaches. Product close-ups and showing the product in a positive way so that a consumer is enjoying the drink or snack would be some typical key elements. Make some notes on what you would want to reproduce and how these were achieved.

TOP TIPS

- ✓ For audio products, minimising background noise and maintaining a consistent audio volume are important areas to get right. If necessary, re-record the materials.
- ✓ Remember that a successful audio-visual product is likely to use a range of camera shots, angles and movement, but keep the camera steady.
- ✓ Photographic quality cannot be added later in post-production image editing software. It is a much better approach to take a set of good photographs in the first place rather than have to spend hours editing to still only end up with a relatively low image quality.

LO4 Be able to carry out post-production techniques and processes for an original media product to a client brief **P5 M4 D1**

4.1 Post-production processes

GETTING STARTED

(10 minutes)

Look at or listen to a media product from your chosen media type. Make some notes about the structure and how effectively the elements work together. Examples of media products would be:

- Audio: a section of radio drama or advertisements from commercial radio stations
- Audio-visual: a music video or film trailer from YouTube
- Print-based or graphics product: film posters from different genres, or page layouts and advertisements from magazines

Having created and stored your production materials, the next stage is to edit these in **post-production** in order to create the media product. This will include testing and checking the final work together with additional techniques to add emphasis and meaning within the product. The main processes and techniques for each of the three media product types are described in this section.

KEY TERM

Post-production – Editing of materials within a software application in order to create the final product.



▲ Figure 3.7 Editing audio files in Adobe Audition

Audio products

Step 1: The intention here is to conduct an initial review of the recorded audio based on the suitability of use for the intended production. Reference should be made to the original client brief and requirements. Consideration must be given to both the strengths and weaknesses together with any areas for improvement. If major problems are found with the audio that has been recorded, then it may be necessary to re-record the audio material. Problems can include recording level (volume) being too low, distortion or excessive background noise such as from wind, traffic or incorrect microphone use.

Using Adobe Audition

The initial tasks are:

- Import audio clips into the workspace. You can just drag and drop these into the files window from either Mac Finder or Windows Explorer. Note that the files are not moved from their original storage location – just imported for editing purposes
- You can also use the Adobe Audition media browser to locate your audio files. Audition can 'auto play' the files as part of browsing to check the content.

Step 2: When a range of suitable audio material has been reviewed, accepted and imported, the next stage is to begin the editing of the speech, sound effects and music to create a product that meets the brief (see Figure 3.7).

Depending on the product that is to be created, your workflow may require each audio file to be edited separately and then stored in a suitable file format. The basic steps would be to:

- Cut the audio tracks to a specific length
- Adjust the volume/gain levels
- Apply 'healing' tools as required, for example to reduce distortion or background noise
- Save/export the file

The audio materials can then be mixed to create the audio product. Additional tools and techniques may be used to:

- Position the different audio materials in different tracks along the timeline
- Fade in/fade out and mix individual tracks

- Adjust time and **pitch** of audio material to improve the **tone** or tonal quality (see Figure 3.8)

KEY TERMS

Pitch – How high or low a note is, typically describing musical notes.

Tone – The quality of sound or balance of different frequencies, which is characterised by a fundamental tone that may be mixed with harmonics and overtones to produce the overall sound.

Step 3: Once you have a basic audio product, the next step is to apply audio effects to enhance meaning. Examples of how to create this can be by changing the volume of different sound elements or by adding effects such as an echo (see Figure 3.9).

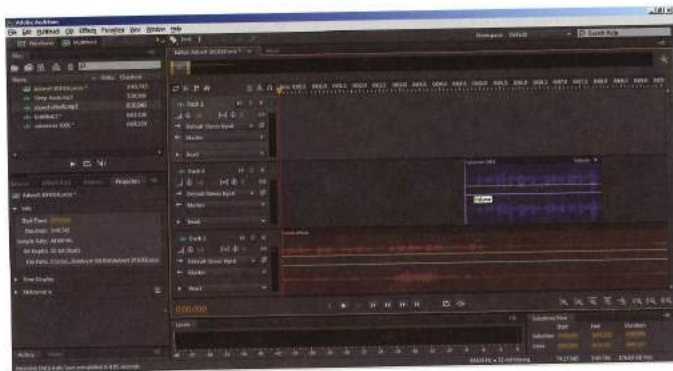


▲ Figure 3.8 Adjusting the time and pitch using the autocorrect feature



▲ Figure 3.9 Changing the volume or gain of a section of audio

► **Figure 3.10**
Multitrack audio editing



It is worth noting that you can also use the spectral display to reduce volume levels of background noise that have very different frequency characteristics compared to the content of the audio that is wanted (see Figure 3.10).

Step 4: The audio product created will then need to be exported for different uses and platforms. Depending on what software application is used, you may need to save your work in a proprietary format (specific to the software) and export this in an appropriate file format for the intended use, as illustrated in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 File formats for use with audio products

File format/ extension	Properties
mp3	Compressed/small file sizes/good for distribution purposes.
wav	Uncompressed/high quality/Windows.
aiff	Uncompressed/high quality/Mac.

Audio-visual products

Note that Adobe Audition (see previous section on creating audio products) also integrates with Adobe Premiere Pro, which is especially useful when creating music videos. Your audio-visual product could potentially use both of these applications.

Step 1: The intention here is to conduct an initial review of the recorded footage and audio based on suitability of use for the intended production. Reference should be made to the original client brief and requirements. Consideration must be given to both the strengths and weaknesses together with any areas for improvement. If major problems are found with the video footage or audio that has been recorded, then it may be necessary to re-record the material.

In Figures 3.11–3.13, Final Cut Pro is being used to create an audio-visual promotional video for a resort in Lapland. In general, when starting the software, the first step is to define the settings and name for the project (see Figure 3.11).



▲ **Figure 3.11** Final Cut Pro – setting up the new project workspace

► **Figure 3.12** Arranging the audio-visual clips on the timeline



Step 2: When a range of suitable audio-visual material has been reviewed and accepted, the next stage is to produce edit decision lists that determine what editing decisions will be applied to the usable unedited footage outlined from logging the rushes.

Step 3: Using the audio-visual material that has been imported into the editing software, the next step is to produce an off-line edit, which entails arranging useable footage into the timeline to produce a rough edit of the intended product (see Figure 3.12). Note that no visual or audio effects are to be added to the off-line edit.

Step 4: Following the creation of the off-line edit, apply visual and audio effects to enhance meaning (see Figure 3.13). Examples of visual effects can include colour filters and **transitions**, whereas audio effects can include changing the volume in different parts (editing the gain) and applying echo.

Tools and techniques that could be used:

- Add titles, captions and credits
- Add special effects, for example **chroma key**
- Add transitions
- Add/edit audio tracks
- Add **motion graphics**

KEY TERMS

Transitions – The way in which one video clip merges with the next. Examples would be fade to black or cross-fade.

Chroma key – A special effects technique for layering two images or video streams together. The subject is filmed on a blue or green screen. During post-production the background is replaced.

Motion graphics – Animated moving graphic effects which are added to the audio-visual product. A spinning logo would be a simple example and is widely used in film production for the opening credits.

► **Figure 3.13** Adding effects in Final Cut Pro (shown on the right-hand side)



Step 5: The audio-visual product created will then need to be exported for different uses and platforms. Whatever software application is used, you may need to save your work in a proprietary format as a project file (specific to the software), render the finished audio-visual product and then export this in appropriate file formats, as illustrated in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4 File formats for use with audio-visual products

File format	Properties
mpg	Although older formats, MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 are widely supported and well established, for both broadcast and computer use.
mp4	MPEG-4 is a good and widely used format which is based on the older QuickTime format. Also known as H.264 or MPEG-4 Part 10 Advanced Video Coding [AVC] it is very popular and flexible, offering highly compressed files for web streaming as well as very high quality options for HD use.
mov	Originally developed by Apple and now using H.264 compression for high quality and smaller file sizes. Widely used in Canon and Nikon cameras as the video file format.
avi	A well-established format that is still used on the web but tends to save as quite large files. Not a popular choice for new media work since more efficient formats are now available.
flv	A type of H.264 compression recognised as Flash Video. Developed popularity for web use but is now being replaced with f4v.

Print-based and graphics products

Step 1: The intention here is to conduct an initial review of the photographs, sourced images/graphics and body copy based on their suitability of use for the intended production. Reference should be made to the original client brief and requirements. Consideration must be given to both the strengths and weaknesses together with any areas for improvement. If major problems are found with the photographs or sourced images, graphics or body copy then it may be necessary to obtain new or alternative material.

Step 2: When the range of graphical images and body copy has been reviewed and confirmed to be suitable then the graphics creation process can be started. Version controls should be implemented, whereby you are saving drafts of work regularly to back up your progress. The initial step is to edit the copy and images together. Techniques can include cropping, scaling, adding captions and overlapping visual elements to create the basic product that meets the brief.

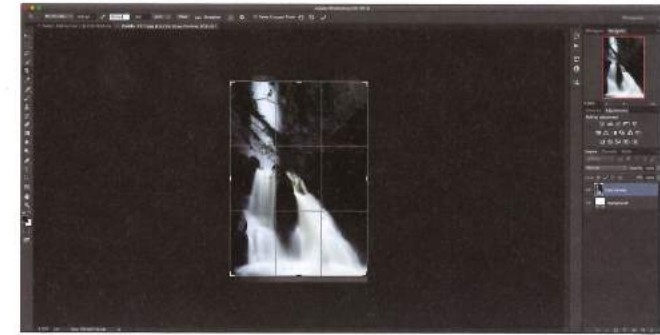
Editing text and images

Note that it may be necessary to edit these separately before creating the actual final product. In general, this is required when the properties of the original assets are not technically compatible with the intended print-based or graphics product. Some examples would be very different pixel dimensions, resolution or working colour space.

Within reason, the images can be re-sampled to be more technically appropriate for what is being produced. This means changing the pixel dimensions and resolution with the 'image size' menu option (see Figure 3.14).



▲ **Figure 3.14** Viewing and changing the image properties in Adobe Photoshop



▲ **Figure 3.15** Setting the crop dimensions and properties in the options bar

Move and scale

When scaling an image or graphic, do not be tempted to change the aspect ratio since this will distort the image either horizontally or vertically. It is better to crop the image to the correct size/layout. If you are going to scale this using the mouse, hold down the 'shift' key so that the aspect ratio is not changed.

Using the crop tool

Rather than using a freehand crop, you can select exactly what you want by first setting the fields in the options bar. In Figure 3.15 above, the image is required to be printed at two inches wide by three inches high in the final product. Since it is for print purposes, the resolution has been set to 300 dpi.

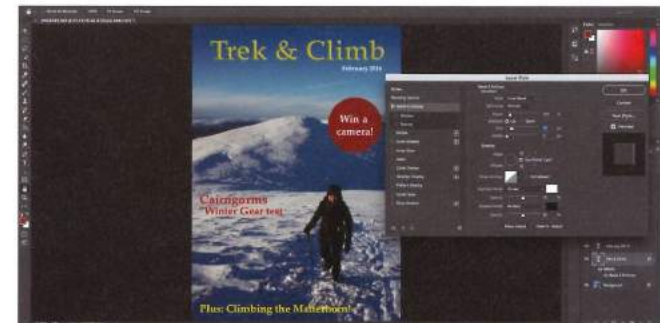
Type (body copy)

The type tool is used to add text or body copy to an image in Adobe Photoshop. This can be copied and

pasted in. The options bar is then used to modify the font type, size and colour. Titles can be typed in directly such as for a magazine front cover or leaflet heading.

The graphic will be assembled using layers in Photoshop. Each different image, asset or text/type box is created on a different layer. The final graphic is viewed from above so anything on the top layer can mask anything below it. Keep this in mind when creating the graphic, and drag/drop the layers around if needed.

Step 3: The basic editing will begin to create meaning within the print or graphics product, which can be enhanced by applying visual effects. Tools and techniques can include the use of filters, gradients and lighting effects. Layer styles are used to apply visual effects to headings, for example (see Figure 3.16). A typical use is to create 3D effects so that titles and headings stand out on the page.



▲ **Figure 3.16** Adding a layer style to a heading

Step 4: Having created the print or graphics products, the final step is to save and export these in suitable formats for different uses and platforms. A master file must be stored in a format used by the software, such as .psd for Adobe Photoshop. Depending on the intended use, this may then need to be exported using different image properties [pixel dimensions and dpi resolution] (see Figure 3.17) together with differing file formats as illustrated in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5 File formats for use with print-based and graphics products

File format/ extension	Properties
psd	Native file format for Adobe Photoshop.
ai	Native file format for Adobe Illustrator.
pdf	Image and document format for distribution and use in print production. Not editable once created, so an original master file will be needed.
jpg	Widely supported image file format, providing lossy compression, which can vary depending on the quality settings used.
png	Good quality image file format, often used for web graphics as an alternative to GIF. Supports full range of colours and transparency.
tiff	High quality image file format but very large file sizes.
gif	Only suitable for web graphics; does not support a wide range of colours.
eps	An older format that is still occasionally used in print production.



▲ **Figure 3.17** Changing the image properties as part of exporting a copy for web use

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

(20 minutes)

Think about and write down all the different possible areas where your media product might be used. Would you need to save and export your work in multiple formats for cross-platform distribution? For example, might you want a high-quality version for print or broadcast use in addition to a low resolution version for use on a web page? Make a list of possible uses and what formats would be most appropriate.

Analyse how post-production techniques and processes enhance meaning in the final product

See Unit 1 for more information on how meaning is created in media products.

KNOW IT

- 1 What workflow or sequence of steps would you follow when creating a jingle for radio use?
- 2 Why might you have multiple versions of a print-based product in different file formats?
- 3 Give an example of how meaning can be developed using lighting techniques in an audio-visual product.

L04 Assessment activity

Below is a suggested assessment activity that has been directly linked to the Pass, Merit and Distinction Criteria in Learning Outcome 4 to help with assignment preparation and includes TOP Tips on how to achieve best results.

Scenario: As for Learning Outcome 3, you have been asked to produce some original materials for use in an advertisement for a drinks or confectionery campaign. In this section, you will be editing the materials in post-production in order to create the final product.

Activity 1 Pass criterion P5

Import the materials into the software application for post-production editing. For audio and audio-visual products, assemble them onto the timeline and make sure the total duration meets the requirement for 30 seconds [or an alternative duration that is defined by your client]. The tolerance on this should be +/- 5 seconds in this example.

Keep a production log or diary of what post-production editing techniques you use, since it is not always possible to see these explicitly in the final work. Examples of tools and techniques to be used may include cropping, cutting, adjusting properties, applying filters, transitions and adjusting volume.

Activity 2 Merit criterion M4 (in addition to P5)

Review your final product and re-read the assignment brief. Produce a report that compares what was asked for with what you have produced. Note that it is important

for the final product to meet the brief in order to meet this criterion. If you have decided to make something different because of personal interests, you will not be able to meet the criteria as this is an important part of working in a vocational context for a client.

Activity 3 Distinction criterion D1 (in addition to P5 and M4)

Using your knowledge and understanding of how meaning is created, you now need to analyse how the application and use of post-production techniques and processes created meaning in the final media product. Think about which elements help to create meaning and why these were successful within the chosen genre of your work. You should make comparisons and reference to the codes and conventions in order to support this analysis. Remember you can present the media product to your client/focus group in order to obtain feedback at various stages of production. This feedback may also help your analysis of the final product.

TOP TIPS

- ✓ Ensure that you have exported your work in a format that can be used on a different computer platform.
- ✓ Keep records and notes of any tools and techniques used in the post-production editing since these cannot be just implied in the final work.
- ✓ Double check and re-read the original brief – make sure all aspects have been met. If not, consider re-working your media product.
- ✓ Be clear about how meaning can be created and itemise what you have done in order to achieve this.

Read about it

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