Topic: Production task preparation

Aims for this topic of work

By the end of this package of work you will:

- Have an understanding of the stages of production.

- Consider the controls and constraints that may influence your production.

- Begin working through the stages of your own production process.

Before you begin

Read through the explanation of all stages and take note of the important section about **controls and constraints**, such as access to equipment, locations, cast and crew; available time; access to editing suites and tools.

The Stages of production

The production process can be divided into different stages according to the various tasks that need to be completed at each stage.

1. Development

This is the stage where the initial idea or concept is worked into a 'makeable' media work. To develop your idea/concept, you may wish to create a brainstorm of your thinking or an inspiration 'wall' where you gather all of the media examples that have inspired you or that you would like to emulate. This is an important part of the creative process and particularly helpful when you are working with a team.

Activity

Write a 200-word treatment or pitch for your production. You should include an overview of your story and what you are intending it to look like. It might help if you imagine you are trying to secure finance for your production and the person who reads your pitch decides if you will get the money or not.

2. Pre-production

Once you have a clear idea of what your media work will be, you need to create a step-by-step plan for how you are going to make it a reality. Two of the most common documents used at this stage are a script/screenplay and a storyboard. It's important to note – some media works do not have a great deal of dialogue but they still use a script/screenplay as a 'roadmap' of what will happen when, who is involved and how it will look and sound. If there is absolutely **no** dialogue then maybe a filming schedule would be better to produce.

Activity

Write a 200-word treatment complete a detailed script/screenplay or storyboard for your production. Blank versions of these documents have not been included in this package of work because the media form you have chosen to create will determine what it will look like. For example, the script for a podcast will look very different to the storyboard for a short horror film in terms of what detail is included and where on the sheet. Investigate some of the examples you can find online for your chosen media form and use those as guides to create your own documents.

3. Production

The period in the production process where the creation of the media work happens. This period is heavily reliant on the documents produced in the pre-production stage to ensure everyone involved knows exactly what their role is and what the media work will look like.

> **Activity**
>
> Begin the production of your media work.

4. Post-production

The period between production and the final product being ready for an audience. This stage is dominated by editing and includes a great deal of decision making. For example, when making a short horror film, music, sound effects, non-diegetic sound, visual special effects and graphics are all finalised at this stage. Editing choices can be impacted by the type of media work you were hoping to create, the expectations of the audience you are making it for (and if you are planning on meeting or challenging these), and the task requirements set by your teacher.

> **Activity**
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> Create an **edit-log** to keep track of the creative decisions you have made during the editing process, including a brief explanation of why you chose to do what you did. This can be especially helpful when working with a team, as it serves as a record of your decision making. The format of the log is dependent on the type of media work you are using, so create your own according to your needs.

Controls and constraints

Every media work is produced under controls and constraints. These are the forces that can affect the way a media work is produced. The course glossary provided by SCSA states that controls and constraints are **"…formal and/or informal elements that influence and limit what the producer of a media work can and cannot include in a production. These elements may include political, technical, legal (including classification, regulations, censorship), ethical, editorial, financial, genre, audience, community expectations and time considerations."**
(see document 1.2)

Although some of the controls and constraints relate only to professional media, many relate to your personal production. You have a legal and ethical requirement to keep your film "classroom appropriate". This means it should be below an M 15+ rating, should not show inappropriate images of other minors or contain inappropriate images for minors. There may be limitations to where you can film/record/shoot or at what times of day. We can all agree that **no assignment** gives a group of underage students a good enough reason to be in a public space late at night without adequate adult supervision! You need to stay safe and really think about what this means.

The current production context (COVID-19) means that you might be even more restricted than in the past. Sometimes, when we are the most restricted, we can become our most creative selves. It's time to think outside the box! How can you change your ideas to compensate for the current social conditions we are experiencing? Can you change the idea/script/story, or can you change the method of producing it? Can you use online and social media platforms to tell the same story?