

L3 Lead Examiner Report 1901

January 2019

**L3 Qualification in Creative
Digital Media Production**

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What is a grade boundary?

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

Setting grade boundaries

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

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

Variations in external assessments

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

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:

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Unit 5: Specialist Subject Investigation (31672H).

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	10	21	35	50

Introduction

Unit 5: Specialist Subject Investigation is mandatory for the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Creative Digital Media Production. Learners are provided with a Set Task Brief (Part A) five weeks before the assessment period directing them to conduct research into a specialist subject topic. They are required to focus on a contemporary specialist media issue or debate detailed in the Set Task Brief, and use this as a starting point to undertake investigations into it using a range of primary and secondary research methods and techniques. This preparatory stage includes 12 hours independent preparation and 6 hours undertaken in monitored conditions. The assessment period includes the preparatory stage prior to a two-hour period of supervised assessment where learners will respond to the activities and stimulus material provided in part B.

There are two assessment opportunities each year and May 2018 was the first external assessment opportunity for this unit. The January 2019 stimulus material required learners to research conduct research into the piracy of digital media in a specific media sector, and its impact on the production and consumption in that sector.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Learners responded well to the focus of the stimulus material. While learner performance was relatively consistent across the five activities, learners often responded more effectively to questions 1, 2 and 3 which required them to explain research methods and techniques used and conclusions drawn than they did in questions 4 and 5 which required learners to use the findings of research to make logical arguments relating to future trends. Though the unit specification and question paper directed learners to contextualise their findings for a specific media sector, many learners did not clearly focus their own research on an individual sector but discussed the application of findings across a number of sectors.

Primary research conducted by learners was generally purposeful and relevant, but in many cases lacked consideration of the validity of the information being obtained, e.g. reference to suitability of sample sizes and demographics. Higher performing learners demonstrated a clear purpose and focus to the research they had undertaken.

Individual Questions

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

Activity 1 – Analyse the significance of digital media piracy to a specific media sector with reference to the issues/debates mentioned in the statement:

“This is a problem threatening jobs and livelihoods within the media industry. Effective measures must be put in place to tackle this issue.”

You should refer to your own research and the research carried out in the stimulus material, making reference to the validity of the sources used.

For this activity, higher performing learners focused clearly on the statement, using the research to support a well-reasoned response. However, many learners simply provided a discussion of digital media piracy and an overview of the research they had conducted without a focus on the specific statement. In some cases, this meant that learners provided a lengthy answer but much of the material they included was more relevant to later activities in which learners were asked to discuss their own research. This sometimes led to learners having to duplicate information in the responses.

Less developed responses often simply summarised the information which had been provided in the stimulus material, and identified key themes within it, but provided little in terms of interpretation of the data or discussion of the media debates it related to the statement provided in the activity.

The higher performing learners typically presented a detailed and specific response to the statement with points well supported by reference to the stimulus material and/or their own research, demonstrating a clear understanding of the relationship between the research and the statement. Learners at this level would also typically make judgements about the validity of data, eg that it was outdated, or was from a reputable source, though these often still lacked in depth consideration.

The following response gained 14 marks out of 15. It clearly discusses the significance of the topic with relation to the impact on jobs as referred to in the statement provided. Comparison is made between different elements of the stimulus material and the learner’s own research, referring to the sources and the validity of the material.

You must complete ALL activities.

You will need to refer to your research notes completed in **Part A** and the stimulus material.

Please do not write answers outside the spaces provided. You may request additional pages if required.

Activity 1

Analyse the significance of the piracy of digital media to a specific media sector with reference to the issues/debates mentioned in the statement:

'Digital media piracy is a problem affecting jobs and livelihoods in the media industry. Effective measures are needed to stop this piracy.'

You should refer to your own research and the research carried out in the stimulus material, making reference to the validity of the sources used.

(15)

- What is Piracy, People need money, less money less jobs
- Correlation between Piracy & lost revenue
- How significant is this impact
- What measures are there already
- evaluate their effectiveness
- conclusion of significance of Piracy.

Piracy is the act of accessing, using or distributing media content through unofficial sources, which gives the producers less or no income. To effectively analyse the significance of piracy in relation to jobs & livelihoods, we must first understand the extent of piracy's impact.

The stimulus material states that 25% of film's are consumed illegally. This data was collected from 2015, meaning the data is

contemporary & therefore applicable (valid) to our modern world. If 25% of films are pirated, it might be a fair statement to say that film producers lose 25% revenue, however, according to my secondary research ~~those who consumed~~ ^{both} piracy is more prevalent in ~~for~~ countries with lower capita per person [7], strongly implying that it is only people who couldn't afford films who are pirating anyway. This study had 3,500 participants^[7], making the data very reliable.

So far we have no clear answer as to the significance of piracy in affecting jobs/livelihood. So let's try a new angle: according to Marquez, I (2018), movie supply has not decreased since the era of significant internet piracy in 2007^[53], this strongly implies that piracy ~~does~~ has not affected producers—that people are still being paid to produce ~~jobs~~ movies, however he goes on to add that piracy adds subtle distortions to film production—producers are less likely to try out new, unique content in favor of tried and true methods & genres. This was supported by a study they conducted in which they found films produced in countries with lots of piracy won less awards compared to countries with less piracy.^[5]

The following response gained 3 marks out of 15. The response summarises the secondary research the learner conducted and demonstrates an understanding of the topic in relation to a specific media sector. However, the response has little interpretation of these findings and does not relate them to the statement provided. The response does not refer to the validity of the sources as required by the activity.

Activity 1

Analyse the significance of the piracy of digital media to a specific media sector with reference to the issues/debates mentioned in the statement:

'Digital media piracy is a problem affecting jobs and livelihoods in the media industry. Effective measures are needed to stop this piracy.'

You should refer to your own research and the research carried out in the stimulus material, making reference to the validity of the sources used.

(15)

In the gaming industry piracy is an exceedingly common practice. Wes Fenton, from PC Gamer, held a survey in August 2016 that indicated that, of the 50,742 people that answered, 90% of PC gamers have pirated at least one game ~~thirty~~ ^{times}. This survey provided a lot of information on the ~~the~~ piracy of games including the fact that 35% of PC gamers ~~still~~ actively pirate games regularly. ~~Another study from~~ When ~~these~~ these results are combined with the fact that piracy sites make an average of over \$330,000 a year ~~of from ad revenue~~ ~~at one~~ advertisement alone (Ted Johnson, Variety), the impact of piracy is visible in its ~~still~~ and it is ~~extremely~~ massive.

Activity 2 – Justify your choice of primary research that you used to investigate the key areas of the set task topic within a specific media sector.

For this activity, less developed responses described the activities learners would undertake, but without a clearly defined reason for undertaking them either in respect of the specific research question they intended to answer or in terms of why specific methods were chosen. More developed responses defined a clear reason for their research, eg 'to understand why people pirate and what measures would deter them from doing so.'

The selection of primary research methods was generally predictable, e.g. a questionnaire and focus group, and learners typically identified basic generic benefits of the methods used, eg 'a focus group allowed me to get more information about peoples' opinions. In most cases little thought was given to sample sizes or the demographics of individuals selected as the research sample. The most developed responses clearly detailed the research methods used and the reasons for choosing them, often including information such as the types of questions used in surveys and why they had used them.

The following response gained 13 marks out of 15. It clearly identifies the relationship between the research to be undertaken and the stimulus material, and provides a clear rationale and evaluation of the methods to be used.

Activity 2

Justify the choice of primary research that you used to investigate the key areas of the set task topic within a specific media sector.

(15)

For my primary research, I conducted both a questionnaire and a focus group. A questionnaire provides great quantitative data & an insight into patterns within demographics, which gives me great data about people's consumption & piracy habits, such as 35% have pirated a movie [1]. However, a questionnaire has weaknesses; as they are filled out by participants, participants may lie, as they might not want to admit to pirating films. This can lessen the validity of ~~the~~ my results.

A focus group is fantastic for gathering qualitative data, such as general opinions & insights about piracy. This has helped me better understand the public's opinion on piracy and gave me ideas for what areas to research next. ~~However~~ I made sure everyone in my focus group felt relaxed and had a chance to speak, which encouraged everyone to be honest, therefore my results are likely quite valid. ~~the~~ However, I only had 5 participants, ~~all~~ each of a similar demographic (students), so my data gathered from my focus group is not reliable, nor ~~applicable~~ representative of other demographics.

In my questionnaire I first asked for personal demographic questions. This helps me put the other data into context, and would allow me to spot ~~any answers~~ ^{patterns} if there were any (such as girls being more likely to pirate than boys). I found:

- Equal gender split in participants ^[1]
- 80% aged 16-18 ^[1]
- 65% unemployed ^[1]

Finding out their employment status was particularly relevant to the set topic as a common ~~debate~~ argument made is that "Pirates wouldn't buy / be able to afford the films anyway". So finding out if they have a source of income allows me to make arguments & conclusions on this aspect. This also gives me back-back-up evidence to ~~another~~ piece of secondary research I found Ma et al (2014) ~~claim~~ suggesting ~~only~~ people with a lower income are more likely to pirate ^[1].

I then asked if they pirate, and if they can identify the legal repercussions for piracy (75% couldn't). ~~Thus~~ This gives me supporting evidence that a government spending for better education would likely be effective at reducing piracy, ~~as 24%~~ ^{as 24%} of ~~infringers~~ would likely stop pirating as that's a lot of people who don't fully understand why they shouldn't pirate.

For my focus group, I put an emphasis on understanding why they pirated, as this was not covered in my questionnaire.

The following response gained 6 marks out of 15. The response describes the methods used and with basic consideration of the reasons for using these methods and the relationship of the learner research to the stimulus material. Some of the information provided discussed the results of the research which was more relevant to Activity 3.

Activity 2

Justify the choice of primary research that you used to investigate the key areas of the set task topic within a specific media sector.

(15)

To conduct my primary research I used google forms. This enabled me to reach out to a wider audience ^{as} ~~where~~ I could send it via email. The survey was kept short in order to ~~to~~ get as many responses back. This consisted of 10 questions ranging from age to how pirating affects you. The 8 responses I got back were expected with 60% of respondents saying they ~~didn't~~ haven't pirated anything online. However 90% think that pirating does not affect you. I also asked if ^{they} people would wait for a film to come out on DVD or illegally download it. The split was 50% 50%. The ^{respondents} ~~disproportionate~~ gave reasons ~~being~~; "it's cheaper and more convenient". Out of the people that would wait they said that the companies should get the money, also ^{the more} being better quality on a bigger screen. 70% also said that pirating is not beneficial towards the company. To improve my ~~8~~ results I would ask more people and ask more in depth questions, this will result in better findings which would support my argument stronger.

Activity 3 – Explain the conclusions you have drawn from your research and evaluate how these support/challenge the findings of the stimulus material.

For this activity, less developed responses typically summarised learner findings with a brief conclusion but this was often skewed by the limited nature of the research undertaken, eg 'I found out that most people who pirate are aged 16-19.' The research was clearly related to topic within the stimulus material but learners at this level did not typically comment how their own findings supported or challenged the findings of the stimulus material; if any comments of this kind were made they were limited to simple generic statements such as 'my findings agree with the stimulus material that...'

Higher performing learners provided detailed information of the information collected, including both statistics and quotes. Learners at this level referred to both primary and secondary sources in detail. They drew clear and logical conclusions from this research and made frequent, direct and logical comparisons between their conclusions and those of the stimulus material. The most developed responses often included citations within their responses or, where they did not, made detailed reference to the specific element of research that supported their conclusions.

Some learners referred to the validity of their own findings; although this wasn't specifically required by the question this is an element which appears within the mark scheme and was therefore rewarded positively.

The following response gained 15 marks out of 15. The response uses quotes and statistics drawn from the learner's own research to develop effective chains of reasoning showing the extent to which the learner research supports/challenges the findings of the stimulus material. Although the response focuses mainly on the learner's secondary research findings in nonetheless demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between the learner's own research and the stimulus material.

Activity 3

Explain the conclusions you have drawn from your research and evaluate how these support/challenge the findings of the stimulus material.

(15)

Overall, I think that my research shows a significant increase in piracy. According to Business Insider, "streaming websites made up 73.7% of 78.5 billion visits to access pirated film and TV content last year (2015)" (Elder, 2016). This shows that online users are beginning to become more frequent with the amount that they watch online. This supports the stimulus material as 49% of users consume illegally because it's free. A reason for this may be because "box office growth was down to a rise in cinema ticket prices and inflation." (Follows, 2018). Also, I think that my research supports the material because it correlates with my findings that music is the most affected media sector when it comes to piracy. The stimulus shows that just ~~to~~ over 25% of users illegally consume music in comparison to the 25% who consume film. According to MISO

music is the second most regularly consumed pirated content with "73.9 billion visits and film with 53.2 billion visits (MUSO, 2017)

This may be because music is more easily accessible in comparison to film.

There are many converters sites which allow YouTube videos to be converted into MP3 formats. Resulting in users converting and downloading their favourite songs onto their devices for free. The reason why many people feel the need to do this

could be because "34.9% claimed they couldn't find their preferred media content on existing subscription services or channels."

(Digital Music News, 2018) The problem is although consumers are ~~et~~ aware that streaming paid content for free is absolutely illegal, ~~that~~ they only pirate "media content to circumvent that problem."

(Digital Music News, 2018) This shows that individuals are justifying committing a crime to suit their own desires.

Another conclusion that I have found is that "the older one gets, the less likely they are to pirate and the less they are likely to take." This supports the stimulus

as it states that 63% of those accessing digital media illegally were aged 12-35. When asked this question, respondents said that young people don't care about the consequences which might be why this demographic are declared as the most likely to pirate.

The following response gained 5 marks out of 15. The response makes appropriate reference to the conclusions of the learner's own research and makes relevant comments about how research supports/challenges conclusions. However, there is no explanation of how the learner's research led to the conclusions stated.

Activity 3

Explain the conclusions you have drawn from your research and evaluate how these support/challenge the findings of the stimulus material.

(15)

From my research I found that people decide to stream pirated films because they were free. This supports the stimulus material as the stimulus material said it's cheaper. To me this suggests that the consumer feels that the cost of film is too high.

From my research I found that the consumers don't feel that enough is being done to combat film piracy. However this challenges findings on the stimulus material which states that in total \$8.6 million has been provided to combat it. I think the consumers don't see it because they are using it to punish people instead of preventing it.

From my research I found that 84% of people admitted to illegally streaming films before. This once again goes against the stimulus material which says 25% have illegally streamed content. This could be because their response pool could have been larger than mine or their respondents were lying.

Activity 4 – What changes would you anticipate to future media consumption in your specific media sector in response to the research findings in the stimulus material? You should refer to your own research to support your suggestions.

For this activity, learners at the Pass boundary often began the response with phrase like 'In my opinion...' and went on to give a prediction that could be logically derived from the stimulus material, but without developed chains of reasoning to support this. A typical example would contain statement such as 'In my opinion piracy will continue to grow unless stronger laws are put in place.'

More developed responses used specific and diverse elements from both their own research and the stimulus material to support a logical argument for the changes they anticipated. For example, rather than just using past performance to predict future changes, they would draw upon research from a number of sources, often including their own secondary research, to provide a detailed argument supporting their conclusions. For example, learners on a games pathway may make a supported argument to demonstrate that free to play games with in game purchases had been effective at reducing piracy, the instances and popularity of such games has increased and that this would therefore become the primary model for games consumption.

The following response gained 10 marks out of 10. The response makes sustained reference to research sources to develop effective chains of reasoning to explain the anticipated changes to future media consumption.

Activity 4

What changes would you anticipate to future media consumption in your specific media sector in response to the research findings in the stimulus material?

You should refer to your own research to support your suggestions.

(10)

I would definitely expect the film industry to slowly begin to stop producing new films. This is because production costs may be more expensive than profits earning which will result in a loss for the company. Due to this film directors may decide that it is only profitable to produce films that are guaranteed to make money. Two examples of this are sequels to shows or popular film franchises such as Marvel.

"Digital TV Research suggests the amount of revenue lost to piracy has skyrocketed from US\$6.7 billion in 2010 to nearly US\$31.8 billion last year. The figure will hit nearly US\$52 billion in 2022." (DTVE Reporter, 2017)

Because of this the film industry may think that to prevent such a huge loss from happening, it's probably wiser for them to start producing less films each year. However, "If piracy reduces the number of films made, the economic effects will be felt in filmmaking countries across the

world." (Tramer, 2017) This would effectively have an impact on camera crew, actresses/actors, promotion & marketing crew's income because their jobs will no longer be so demanding.

It's unfortunate that this is a possibility but "39% say that knowing the impact of piracy has no effect on the amount of pirated video content they want to watch." (Barker, 2019) This shows that many consumers misunderstand the severity of piracy amongst the media sector.

I anticipate that the government will continue to crack down on this issue by developing new ideas/strategies regarding how to stop individuals from pirating. From their white paper, the sector deal have set out measures which could "include proactive steps to detect and remove illegal content." (Crown, 2018) This would be effective as the "30% of Britons" who are "watching movies illegally online." (Lodderhose, 2014) will no longer be able to access sites that encourage this form of illegal activity.

The following response gained 3 marks out of 10. Although the response relates to the topic of the stimulus material it makes only very superficial reference to the research undertaken. Though limited chains of reasoning are evident, these are not supported by appropriate reference to research sources.

Activity 4

What changes would you anticipate to future media consumption in your specific media sector in response to the research findings in the stimulus material?

You should refer to your own research to support your suggestions.

(10)

In the future I believe that games will continue on the trajectory that they are on now. ~~of becoming~~ By this I mean that more games will use the free-to-play model as it negates piracy as a problem. The model solves piracy for developers as ~~the~~ the game is free ~~to~~ and all money is made from microtransactions within the game. This also allows ~~for~~ developers to make more money off from their game by adding small new things to the game, regularly that can be bought individually.

Activity 5 – Explain what further research could be conducted into this topic and how this would help to gain a greater understanding of the current impact of digital piracy on media consumption in your specific sector.

For this activity, lower performing learners typically described a number of additional research activities, often referring to what they themselves could have done differently, eg 'I could have given more questionnaires to different age groups to find out older people's opinions'. Where they referred to professional research, responses followed a similar format, eg. 'Research could be done in different countries to see what piracy is like there.' Few learners at this level described additional topics which could be researched, and where they did suggestions were typically vague, eg 'more research could be done about people's opinions on piracy.'

Several learners missed the point of the question and gave instead suggestions for measures that could be put in place to combat piracy.

The best performing learners made logical arguments which follow on from their previous responses to support the reason for further research into a specific topic, eg further research into whether the rise of Netflix and similar streaming services has impacted on piracy, and whether reducing the price of such services could further reduce piracy.

They would go on to give a detailed explanation of the specific nature of the way in which such research that could be conducted.

The following response gained 9 marks out of 10. The response follows on from the learner's previous discussions of the reasons for piracy to provide a justified rationale for future research.

Activity 5

Explain what further research could be conducted into this topic and how this would help to gain a greater understanding of the current impact of the piracy of digital media on media consumption in your specific sector.

(10)

I believe further research needs to be conducted into the effectiveness of current piracy deterrents (including education). I believe this will help us better understand
~~I believe further reso~~

I believe we need to conduct more research on the psychology behind piracy in the moment that it occurs - we know people pirate because it's cheap, convenient, etc. But we have very little research into what's going on in the infringers mind right before they pirate - Did they forget about the legal repercussions? Did the complex legal sources of content stress them out? I believe better understanding this psychology will help us better evaluate our current standards & practices - Maybe we can ~~great~~ create more effective deterrents to reduce the impact of piracy. Maybe we will be able to better differentiate between what pirates can be influenced to stop pirating & what pirates will pirate regardless.

It would also help us understand — therefore help us better understand how much of the impact of piracy is unavoidable & how much of the impact can be negated.

Another worthwhile area to research would be the effect of social ~~factor~~ influences on piracy e.g. is someone more likely to pirate a movie if their friends do it? This would help us better understand the ~~causes~~ root causes of piracy — and how much of the impact is caused by cultural factors (e.g. if everyone pirates why shouldn't you), which can bring about new ways to try and prevent & reduce piracy e.g. trying to shift public opinion on piracy.

The following response gained 2 marks out of 10. The response provides basic and generic suggestions for further research without providing an appropriate rationale in support of these suggestions.

Activity 5

Explain what further research could be conducted into this topic and how this would help to gain a greater understanding of the current impact of the piracy of digital media on media consumption in your specific sector.

(10)

If I was going to look into the ~~foot~~ piracy more, then I would talk to individual developers and find out what they believe ~~needs~~ to be done. It would be interesting to see the stances different companies take based on their size and how much it affects them personally. I would also look into how much monetary damage it does to the gaming giants such as Blizzard, EA Electronic Arts, Ubisoft, etc.

The following response gained 0 marks out of 10. The response does not refer to further research but instead to measures which could be put in place to combat piracy.

Activity 5

Explain what further research could be conducted into this topic and how this would help to gain a greater understanding of the current impact of the piracy of digital media on media consumption in your specific sector.

(10)

Further research could be conducted by having tougher restrictions and internet scans to check for illegal sites. Having more scans would enable companies to create more films and franchises that we will watch. There could be a harder chance of getting hold of a copy of the film where people can duplicate it and make their own profit.

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, learners should:

- Respond clearly and specifically to the statement given in Activity 1
- Where required by the question ensure that their responses show consideration of the validity of their own research, methods and techniques, and/or those used in the stimulus material, eg whether information is current, appropriateness of samples sizes and demographics, etc.
- Clearly identify the purpose and focus of their own research
- Clearly justify the research methods they have used
- Refer clearly and specifically to all research sources used
- Make clear comparisons between their own research and the stimulus material to demonstrate how their own research supports/challenges the findings of the stimulus material.
- Clearly justify all conclusions made with logical chains of reasoning and reference to the research undertaken.

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