

Digital Media

Getting Ready for Cambridge Technicals

The Cambridge Technical in Digital Media is a vocational qualification, so the emphasis is on being able to do something following a recognised process to perform that task. As a result, much of the course will require you to think about processes and practice these with the various pieces of software. In this Transition Guide you'll find some information about the structure of the course and equipment you may want to get hold of.

Course Structure.

This technicals course involves you studying 8 units. 6 of them are coursework based and will be marked by your teacher. The other two are traditional exams, one taken in January of each year.

Two coursework units are compulsory, as are the two exams. You then choose an interactive media or audio-visual pathway for the remaining four units. The units, a brief description and their relative weighting is provided below.

Compulsory Units

Name: Media Products and Audiences	When: January Yr12	Weighting: 1.5/9
This is the first examined unit in which you will learn about how we classify media products and audiences and what elements of media products are adjusted to make them more suitable for a given audience or purpose.		
Name: Create a Media Product	When: Term 1 Yr 12	Weighting: 1/9
A coursework unit in which you choose from a range of different media products and have to develop a proposal, plan the finished product, do the asset creation and edit the finished version.		
Name: Advertising Media	When Term 2 Yr12	Weighting: 1/9
Another coursework unit where you will design and make two different products for the same advertising campaign. For example, you might choose to make a video and a print advert.		
Name: Pre-production and Planning	When: January Yr 13	Weighting: 1.5/9
The second exam in which you will express your knowledge of how different planning and pre-production techniques and documents are used to support the successful development of a media product.		

Pathway 1: Audio-Visual

Name: Audio Visual Promo	When: Term 3 Yr 12	Weighting: 1/9
Plan and make a promotional video for a local event – such as a music festival.		
Name: Creating and Using Sound	When: Term 1 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Investigate how professional sound engineers produce sound effects for TV, film and radio and then design and create your own sound effects to meet a brief.		
Name: TV & Short Film	When: Term 2 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Make a short film or TV programme about a topic that you will be given in the form of a professional media brief.		
Name: Radio Production	When: Term 2 & 3 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Investigate the elements that make up a successful radio programmes and make an excerpt from a fictional radio show to demonstrate your ability to implement these ideas.		

Pathway 2: Interactive

Name: Interactive Media	When: Term 3 Yr 12	Weighting: 1/9
You are to make an interactive product, such as a website or video where the audience will not be passive.		
Name: Photography	When: Term 1 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Learn how to use a camera effectively, plan and take arrange of photos to meet a brief and then use editing tools to enhance your pictures.		
Name: Comics and Graphic Novels	When: Term 2 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Look at the techniques used to make comics and graphic novels and then plan and make one of your own.		
Name: Animation	When: Term 2 & 3 Yr 13	Weighting: 1/9
Consider what makes a good animation and then plan and make your own to meet a brief.		

Everything you do on this course counts towards your final grade – right from the very first day in September of Year 12. You need to meet deadlines and act effectively and quickly on feedback. Failing to keep up will have a significant impact on your overall grade.

Equipment

Hardware

While not essential, many pupils choose to use their own laptops for this course. You are also welcome to use your computer for producing the written assignments if you wish. Some students like to get hold of a camera for the photography and filming parts of the course.

There is no expectation that you will supply your own equipment, we will provide exercise books and/or paper if you prefer to work this way. All the computers in the school have access to video, image and sound editing software as well as the basic productivity software for producing reports. The school also has cameras and related equipment that we are happy to loan to students for completing their coursework.

Software

Report Writing Software

There are lots of free word processors available for you to use. Spend some time investigating the tool that you like most and getting to know how it works.

If you have a Windows computer you can install Microsoft Office under the school's licence. You will need to logon to RM Unify – rmunify.com – using your school email and the same password you use to logon to the computers at school (pupils joining the school in Year 12 will need to wait until after 1st September for this to be activated). Once you've installed Office it will ask you to configure the licence – again, logon with your school email address and password.

Reports can just as effectively be written in school on the computers available in lessons and in Private Study.

Knowledge

If you did L2 Media we like you to have achieved at least a L2 Pass before you start the L3 course. The key thing that you need as a Media student is the drive to see a long term project through to its conclusion, and to not give up when things get a bit tricky. A creative flair is very useful but much of this course is about the process and using the software. Creativity can be emulated from other sources, but an awareness of the quality of your own ideas and how practical they are to execute is key. Look at media products critically and think how the effects were achieved. Try to re-produce some of these with the software you have available.

Above all

BE CURIOUS

If you're serious about taking your Digital Media studies to A' Level you need to be actively curious about it. Just turning up to lessons might get you a mediocre grade, being interested and exploring beyond the curriculum will be the difference that gets you a top grade. Being willing to put in significant numbers of extra hours outside of the lessons will be the key differentiator.

We want you to challenge us in lessons. Ask us to justify the statements we're making and push us until you understand.