BACKGROUND INFORMATION
2011 was the final year of accreditation for the Media Study Design 2003–2011. Comments in this report refer to the School-assessed Task described in this document. For 2012 teachers should refer to the Media Study Design 2012–2016 which describes the revised scope of the School-assessed Task.

The School-assessed Task has three components. They relate to:
- Unit 3 Outcome 2
- Unit 3 Outcome 3
- Unit 4 Outcome 1.

UNIT 3
Media Production Skills
Unit 3 Outcome 2
Use a range of technical equipment, applications and media processes to present ideas, achieve effects and explore aesthetic qualities in production design plan specification areas appropriate to a media form.

Nature of task
Two production exercises with accompanying documentation that demonstrate a range of media skills relevant to production design plan specifications appropriate to the media form/s identified in Unit 3 Area of Study 3 ‘Media production design’.

In completing their production exercises students will demonstrate knowledge and skills that they will use in their media design plan and production but should not undertake planning or production activities that will later be assessed as part of their media design plan or media production.

Scope of task
Students will undertake two production exercises. The exercises should be designed to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills in such areas as media design planning processes, the use of technical equipment and applications and the exploration of aesthetic and/or structural qualities of media products.

It is not envisaged that for this outcome students will undertake a complete production, rather that the exercises will allow students to demonstrate Area of Study 2 knowledge and skills.

Production exercises should include:
- Exploration/s of production design plan specifications appropriate to media product/s.
- Investigation/s of the capacities of technical equipment, applications and/or media processes appropriate to a media product.
- Evidence of the operation of technical equipment, use of applications and/or application of media processes to develop skills in areas identified in the production design plan specifications.
- Exploration/s of aesthetic and/or structural qualities and/or characteristics of media products.
Production exercises would normally be undertaken in the medium in which students plan to undertake their media production; however, this is not necessarily the case. As a result of completing his or her production exercises a student may choose to work in another medium. In this case the student may not have time to develop production skills in the new medium and may be disadvantaged; he or she should be advised of this.

Production exercises should be clearly differentiated from the teaching and learning phase of this area of study and from the media design plan (Unit 3 Outcome 3) and media production (Unit 4 Outcome 1). Production exercises should be clearly differentiated from each other. Production exercises together with accompanying documentation should be retained by the school and assessed as part of the School-assessed Task. They are subject to external review.

The documentation accompanying each production exercise should include:

**Intention**
1. A description of the intention/s of the exercise, for example, aesthetics and/or structural capacities and/or characteristics of a media product to be explored; technical equipment to be operated, applications used and/or media processes to be applied to develop particular skills to present specific ideas and/or achieve particular effects.

**Specifications**
2. A description of the media production design plan specification/s to be explored and/or investigated in the exercise in order to present ideas and/or achieve particular effects; for example, the use of lighting to achieve a particular genre effect, the use of particular typography in a print production, the use of a particular sequence in multimedia product to develop the ordering of information appropriate to a designated purpose.

**Realisation**
3. An explanation of how the completed exercise realises the stated intention/s of the exercise. The explanation should outline the extent to which the intention/s were realised. The production exercises may be thematically linked, content related or alternatively unconnected in their themes or content.

Note that while the same production plan specification/s may be included in both production exercises, the focus of each exercise should be different production plan specification/s. The length and/or duration of each production exercise should allow students to demonstrate skills relevant to the identified media production design plan specification/s. Extended or extensive media productions should not be completed as part of the production exercises. Examples of the production exercises that could be undertaken include:

- a storyboard, plan, script, rough, navigation plan, flowchart or treatment that establish ideas and/or concepts
- an exercise in editing, for example editing a sequence of shots and/or sound to achieve a required intention for a particular audience or combining music and sound effects to establish a location
- an exercise in recording sound, for example resolving a given sound problem with available equipment
- an exercise in lighting, for example lighting in space for a specific intention, which is recorded
- arranging the composition within a frame to achieve a particular style, which is filmed or photographed
- organising the layout of a page using typography and/or images
- processing of negatives or film in the darkroom to suit a specific intention
- planning a multimedia presentation or product with reference to design plan specifications
- an exercise which compares the use of filters to convey a specific intention or style
- an exercise that demonstrates the advantages and disadvantages of two or more techniques or processes
- planning, photographing or recording an activity (such as moving from one place to another) within a set number of shot types and/or camera angles.

Production exercises should be numbered ‘Production exercise 1’ and ‘Production exercise 2’ respectively.

Media Production Design
Unit 3 Outcome 3
Prepare a media production design plan incorporating the specifications appropriate for the chosen media product.

Nature of task
A media production design plan prepared for one of the media forms identified in Unit 3 Area of Study 3 Media production design. The plan should be related to a media product to be completed in Unit 4 and include specifications as identified in Unit 3 Area of Study 3 Media production design.

Scope of task
A production design plan for a specific media product, including:
- written planning documentation detailing audience and intention and including, for example treatment, script, interview questions
- visual representations, for example rough, storyboard, navigation plan, flowchart, mock-up.

The media production design plan should be commenced and completed in Unit 3.

The written planning document and visual representations in combination should clearly establish the audience and intention of the media production to be undertaken in Unit 4 and make reference to those specifications appropriate to the media production to be undertaken.

The completion of the media product in Unit 4 involves systematically working through (with modifications where necessary) the production design plan. The written planning document and visual representations in combination should clearly establish the idea and concept of the media production to be undertaken and make reference to each of the specifications appropriate to the media production to be undertaken. Forms in which this documentation may be undertaken may include the following, as appropriate:
- script with accompanying visual representations such as drawings and/or photographs
- treatment with supporting visual representations such as drawings and/or photographs
- storyboard with annotations relevant to the specifications
- rough with a commentary that outlines production considerations
- treatment and a navigation plan with annotations relevant to the specifications
- script and flow chart with annotations relevant to the specifications
- script, flow chart and mock-up with annotations relevant to the specifications
- script, rough and navigation plan with annotations relevant to the specifications
- script and storyboard with annotations relevant to the specifications.
The idea and concept of the media production in the written planning document and visual representations should be clearly established and communicated in the order of its intended realisation. This should be done progressively throughout the documentation and may involve:

- numbering, dating and/or commenting on specific stages of work from the initial concept to its completion
- annotation and explanation of ideas, concepts and solutions.

The media production design plan should:

- be for one of the media forms identified in Unit 3 Area of Study 3 ‘Media production design’ as identified on page 24 of the Media VCE Study Design
- be for a media product to be completed in Unit 4
- include specifications as identified in Unit 3 Area of Study 3 ‘Media production design’ as identified in the Media VCE Study Design pages 25–27.

**Media Process**

**Unit 4 Outcome 1**

Produce a media product for an identified audience from the media production design plan prepared by the student in Unit 3.

**Nature of task**

A media product including audio, visual and/or text components as appropriate.

**Scope of task**

**Product duration and/or length**

- an audiovisual and/or video or film sequence or sequences; for example, a short narrative, documentary or experimental film, an extended advertisement or series of advertisements or a segment or segments for inclusion into a magazine or current affairs type program, a music video clip 4–10 minutes including titles and/or credits sequences
- an animation in any form; for example, clay animation, digital animation, stop motion animation, drawn or cell animation 30 seconds – 5 minutes including titles and/or credits sequences
- a radio or audio sequence or sequences; for example, a soundscape, narrative, documentary, opinionative or experimental sequence, sequences or program 4–10 minutes including titles and/or credits sequences
- a photographic presentation, sequence or series of images; for example, a sequence of images for display in a gallery, a photographic essay, a series of images that explore a theme or idea, a photomontage, a series of images designed to illustrate a book or an advertising sequence a minimum of 10 original or source images and/or negatives which may be presented as finished work/s numbering up to 15 in total. Negatives should be processed by the student. Digital images should be photographed and/or scanned, manipulated and printed by the student
- a print production; for example, a magazine or newspaper, a booklet, series of posters, catalogue, magazine or newspaper insert 8–12 pages or layouts print layouts should be printed by the student
- a multimedia production; for example, a webpage, CD-ROM, interactive CD or DV - a product that takes approximately 10 minutes to explore or navigate
- a product that crosses the boundaries between the media forms described above; for example, a video production with an animated titles sequence, a series of photographs or images with text, a webpage including video and/or audio sequences a product that is consistent with one of the product durations and/or lengths identified earlier.
The production of the media product should be undertaken individually. However, the implementation of the production design plan may, in some audio and audiovisual productions, require the collaboration of others to realise the student’s intentions as developed in the media production design plan. Group production work and group media production design plans are not appropriate.

The production ranges for the different media forms indicate the production length considered appropriate to undertake while meeting the criteria for the award of grades.

The upper limit of the range is the maximum that will be considered for assessment.

While students may incorporate pre-existing material in media productions, the use of such material may detract from the student’s capacity to develop an individual and/or distinctive product and may not allow a student the opportunity to fully demonstrate management and organisational skills. Therefore, students need to be aware of the implications of including such material in their work.

Schools and teachers should be familiar with the relevant conditions and restrictions of the Copyright Act 1968 (Cwlth) in relation to the use of professionally produced music, sounds and images in student productions.

Variations to the plan made during its implementation should be documented and attached to the media production design plan as submitted for Outcome 3 in Unit 3. Documentation may include brief notes on the plan including linear notes on the plan itself, post-it note attachments and/or brief point form annotations. Variations should be clearly differentiated from the original plan.

**Comments:**
The quality of student media productions continued to improve in 2011. Students generally demonstrated a sound grasp of media technologies, applications and processes and were able to apply these with assuredness in the completion of tasks that demonstrated a good understanding of the media form in which they were working and the possibilities and limitations of the equipment whilst working within the scope of task designated in the study design.

It was clear from the works presented for review that those students whose work for Unit 3 Outcome 2, Media production skills was designed to develop skills to inform the proposed production performed better than those whose work did not make such progression. This outcome is an opportunity for students to focus their learning on the precise needs of their production. Students who presented clearly ordered production exercises were better able to understand the purpose of these exercises, to see their skills develop with relevance to their production, and to understand and articulate what they had learned during the process.

Reviewers were pleased to note that students worked to their strengths and that the best works were often designed to be under the maximum scope of task thereby enabling control of all aspects of the production process to produce works that were tight, expressive and relevant to the intention and audience.

Better works saw students demonstrating a sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of the audience for which they were working in both their design plan and the completed production. A strong grasp of audience experience, expectations and the proposed impact of the production at the design stage informed productions on many levels by providing evidence on which students could make design, production and postproduction decisions.
In some design plans there continued to be an unnecessary emphasis on what many students termed ‘influences’ in the form of pages of unreferenced images, lists of fonts and examples of production techniques with little or no relevance to the intended production. In addition some design plans continue to favour decorative elements at the expense of content. Everything included in the design plan should inform the proposed production and should be focussed on that purpose. Students should be made familiar with the key knowledge and skills related to Unit 3, Outcome 3 in order to develop greater attention to the features of their plan that will contribute to the satisfactory achievement of this outcome at the highest level. Images and other inclusions should be clearly referenced to the proposed production.

For audio-visual productions students are increasingly employing creative solutions to the design and implementation of soundtracks. Whilst students are permitted to use copyrighted material in productions created for assessment purposes it is clear that many students are intending a wider audience for their works such as school events, short film festivals and competitions and online publication where copyright clearance is required. Students are creating or commissioning original music, using music released under Creative Commons LICencing or approaching local musicians for permission to use copyrighted material. Such an approach is to be commended, media works created for a real life audience usually demonstrate greater attention to detail.

One issue that continues to impact on print media productions is the outsourcing of printing to stores or bureaus. The Media Study Design 2003–2011 is specific in its instruction that ‘Print layouts should be printed by the student’ (page 24). The revised Study Design 2012–2016 states that ‘Digital images and print productions should be photographed and/or scanned, manipulated and printed by the student on the equipment available to them at the school’ (page 26). Students cannot be assessed for work that they have not completed. It is not acceptable for students to plan for or to outsource printing. When designing their productions students should be directed to investigate the possibilities and limitations of the equipment available to them and to plan a production that is appropriate for this equipment. The Media Study Design emphasises both media production design and the media production process, of which printing is a part. One way to promote the research and testing required to print at the highest quality possible is to focus on this aspect of media production during Unit 3, Outcome 2, Media production skills.

Attention to issues of occupational health and safety for cast and crew have become a feature of media productions with students demonstrating knowledge of media codes and conventions to creatively suggest actions and consequences rather than videotaping potentially dangerous situations. As a result productions are more authentic and thus stronger because the audience is required to construct meaning.

One aspect of photographic productions that needs greater attention is the mounting and presentation of works. Decisions about how a product should be presented are informed by matters including its intended impact on the specified audience, the consumption context and the resources available to the student. It is clear that for some students consideration of the presentation of their productions has been an afterthought rather than part of the design process. An investigation of the possibilities and limitations of different forms of presentation and the development of skills in mounting images could form part of Unit 3, Outcome 2, Media production skills.

There has been some improvement in the effective use of the Media production design plan during the production process but much progress on this aspect of Unit 4, Outcome 1 will be required for the outcome in the newly accredited Media Study Design 2011–2016. Teachers should note the relevant dot points in the key knowledge and skills that require students to organise and record information to support the production process. Statements of achievement, evaluations, etc., are not required and are not assessable. Students should be
encouraged to use their design plan as a working document and make notes as appropriate throughout the production and postproduction process. Students should not revise, reprint or decorate their design plan. The design plan submitted for assessment in Unit 3 is the one that will be assessed.

Over the course of the Media Study Design 2003–2011 reviewers have been pleased to note students’ increasing control over the media design and production process. The assuredness with which students use media equipment is due only in small part to the development of media technologies. It is clear that under the expert guidance of their teachers students are able to draw upon their own experiences and understanding of how the media operates in their productions. Teachers are to be commended for their dedication and commitment to the ever changing nature of this subject.

There are a number of small but significant changes to the scope of task for the School-assessed task in the revised Study Design 2011–2016 which are intended to build upon the developments of the past eight years and, recognising changes in technology and the design, production, dissemination and consumption of media products, facilitate greater relevance, authenticity and sophistication in VCE Media productions. The journey continues.