



D201 SPB 0906

SUPPORT NOTES FOR TEACHERS

10 October 2006

Introduction

These notes should be read in conjunction with the Moderators' Report for D201 which offers feedback on the most recent moderation series.

Before tackling the SPB, students should have acquired the appropriate ICT skills, knowledge and understanding as specified in the 'What You Need To Learn' and 'ICT skills' sections of the Unit 1 specification. They should be familiar with the format of a range of on screen and paper-based publications.

The D201 SPB 0906 is valid for moderation in May and December 2007 and in May and December 2008.



Section 1 Using the SPB

Access and Navigation

The SPB is a complete, integrated digital publication and is intended to be accessed on-screen. Although it may be useful to print off sections for reference purposes, students may be disadvantaged if they do not work from the interactive on-screen brief.


Although the links in the navigation bar are roughly in sequence, students should be reminded that one task often depends on one or more other tasks and they should make use of the interactive nature of the brief.

Where more than one page relates to a main task (such as the eportfolio), they appear as a submenu from the main link.


The symbol  at the top of each page allows students to print the page. A new feature is indicated by the symbol  which allows students to listen to the contents of the page. This feature will be activated once the query period is over.

Mark Alerts



Indicated by the symbol , each Mark Alert is a series of questions with tick boxes. Clicking the symbol opens another web page and students may tick the questions onscreen or print the list and complete on paper. Students should check that they can check off each item to help them ensure that they have met the requirements and that their work is fit for purpose.

Helpful hints


In addition to Mark Alert checklists, the SPB features short hints and tips denoted by the symbol . The symbol appears at the end of the sentence or paragraph to which the hint relates. Clicking on the symbol opens a popup window in the top left area of the screen. The window must be closed by the student. Those using Internet Explorer can also view the hints by rolling over the symbol.


Section 2 What, where, who?

What evidence is required?

Students do not need to submit evidence of everything they do during their work on the project.

The symbol  indicates a task to be done.

The symbol  indicates a stage where evidence must be saved for the eportfolio. There is also a summary document attached to the eportfolio page.

Students should not be tempted to omit tasks which are not preceded by the  symbol as they are crucial to success. A good example is an instruction to test a publication. The evidence will be in the form of a publication which is fit for purpose so we do not require explicit evidence of the testing itself but omission of this step could be disastrous!

It is not necessary for students to write long commentaries explaining how they achieved each task.

Students must ensure that they present the publications as clearly as possible, remembering that moderators will view all evidence on screen and will not be expected to print paper-based publications. However, the centre assessor may wish to include comments relating to the effectiveness of such documents in their record sheets.

The Moderator's Toolkit

There is no longer a list of acceptable file formats. This has been replaced by a Moderator's Toolkit which specifies the readers and players that all moderators will have available. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that their eportfolio only includes files which can be read using the toolkit. Please draw attention to the fact that Excel (.xls) files are now acceptable but that Access files (.mdb) are not. The Moderator's Toolkit is published on the DiDA micro-site. It will be updated when necessary.

Please note that the Moderator's Toolkit will be used for all SPBs, including those released in September 2005.

What additional resources are provided?

There are a number of files provided with the SPB, accessed via links within the brief. Where a task requires use of a file, for example the data items list for the database, students should save a copy to their user area before continuing.

Where does the work have to be carried out?

Work on the publications themselves must be carried out within the controlled environment and the teacher must be able to authenticate each student's complete eportfolio with confidence.

However, there is much that can be done away from the controlled environment. Acceptable activities include:

- reviewing and updating the plan - this will change the focus of the plan for the students and they are more likely to view it as an ongoing process rather than a one off task.
- commenting on progress - what is going well, what is not going so well - this could be a separate column on the plan or a separate document such a project log and will assist with the final evaluation.
- researching appropriate sources of information related to the scenario and publications, keeping records of where information was found and how it could be used.
- carrying out data collection
- initial design of publications and feedback from others on these designs
- prototyping of own or others' products - gathering feedback from test users so that publications can be improved where appropriate
- reviewing final publications and the eportfolio

Who can help?

Although students must work independently at level 2, this does not mean that they are on their own!

Test users should be asked to try out and comment on publications under development and this should be viewed as an ongoing process. Students should not wait until publications are complete when they will be unable to take advantage of any suggestions for improvements.

There is no doubt that students who take careful account of feedback from reliable test users improve their chances of higher marks. Test users can be peers, teachers or other adults who can offer constructive feedback.

Reviewers comment on final publications and the eportfolio, and these comments will be used in the final review. It is often helpful to gather reviewers' feedback as publications are completed but students must take care to record the feedback for later use. Reviewers should also be asked to comment on the student's work on the project as a whole.

Time should be allocated on the plan for gathering and responding to test user feedback and for gathering reviewer feedback. Students should check when suitable test users and reviewers are available for comment before including them in the plan.

Section 3 Tackling the SPB

The Scenario

This project is based on the Five a Day campaign currently promoted by health and government organisations. Students should explore the suggested websites and others to gather the information they need.

Students must prepare an Information Pack for a “test buddy”. This person must be from the target audience, that is, a student aged 9 or over. It does not necessarily have to be someone of a similar age to the student. Information from the Reality Check feeds into the choice of database searches and from there into the makeover cards. Snack Attack is a series of digital posters for a limited age group (9-11).

Planning

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that students must start out with a workable plan which gives them a clear overview of timings and objectives and allows them to monitor their progress during the project. Teachers should give as much guidance as necessary to achieve this. Although this may affect the marks for strand (a), benefits can be expected throughout the rest of the project. The following two paragraphs, extracted from the Principal Moderator’s Report, underline the importance of this:

To help them manage the project and meet the deadline, candidates need a workable, up-front plan that identifies the main tasks, breaks them down where appropriate into more manageable sub-tasks, puts them in a logical order and divides up the available time between them, differentiating between work to be completed in class and work to be done elsewhere.

The plan is meant to be an evolving document that is in constant use during the project and - as such - provides a comprehensive project history.

Most candidates were able to produce an initial plan that listed main tasks in a logical order and allocated time to each task. Most provided some evidence - albeit often limited - of their use of the plan to track progress through the project. However, many candidates failed to achieve high marks in this strand because they did not allocate sensible amounts of time to tasks and/or did not provide sufficient evidence of monitoring. Where candidates indicated on the plan that a task had taken either longer or less time than expected, they rarely adjusted the timings of subsequent tasks accordingly.

As students are reading the SPB, they may find it helpful to write notes on what is required to help them understand what the objectives of the SPB are and what they are required to do. From these notes they will be able to generate their plan. Remind them that if it takes time, it should be in the plan.

There is much that students can do outside of the controlled environment - for example, planning, research, design and prototyping. This should be built into their project plans. One possibility would be to create two columns, one for class work and one for homework.

We would expect students to give an indication of time for sub-tasks. They will need to estimate this in order to calculate time needed for main tasks and it is often an adjustment of some sub-tasks that needs to be carried out to stay on track. If students are giving times as lessons, eg, 1 lesson, they must indicate somewhere on their plans how long lessons are.

Students should discuss their initial plans with their teacher and check that they have selected appropriate tasks for completion as homework. These tasks should be clearly shown on the plan. Teachers should offer feedback at this stage that will enable the student to formulate a workable plan, bearing in mind that it is perfectly acceptable to make adjustments later.

We recommend that students identify interim checkpoints on their plan when they will discuss progress-to-date with their teacher and make any adjustments that are necessary.

The eportfolio checklist indicates that an initial plan should be included as well as a final plan. Interim plans should only be submitted if they are really needed for clarification. A comments column is a very good way of indicating decisions and changes made. Students might also consider using text boxes or a separate project diary or log.

Research

Students should carry out research that is likely to produce useful information and should not feel compelled to investigate further just for the sake of it. If they follow the brief and ensure that their publications are fit for audience and purpose, they will have gathered and selected sufficient relevant information.

They will need to use secondary sources to find out more about the topic. The use of colour groups is one method used to categorise fruit and vegetables. It is not an exact science and students should simply take care to select information from valid sources.

A number of images are required for the publications and some of these may be acquired from primary sources.

Students should be quite clear about the need to acknowledge sources they use, both primary and secondary. Where appropriate they should acknowledge sources within the publications and should provide evidence to show which sources they have used and why, what information they have selected from their chosen sources, where they have used it and why it is appropriate.

Students should take particular care to indicate use of primary sources in order to gain credit for this.

We do not require the information itself stored separately or descriptions of how the students obtained it.

Monitoring

This section suggests that students keep a project diary or log where they record progress, problems and actions as they go along. This is optional but many students find this method helpful when it comes to writing commentaries and the project review. Alternatively, students may prefer to use the project plan for this purpose.

The project review

Students are reminded at every stage to gather evidence of feedback and problems for the project review. As noted on the 'Keeping Track' page, a document such as a project diary or log will aid this process.

Students should aim to produce a detailed evaluation of all aspects of the project listed in the review notes document (now linked from the review page), avoiding long narratives of what they did and how they did it, and making two or more specific and valid suggestions for improvement.

Five a Day Database

There is more guidance than previously on how to create the database - remind students to use the hints and mark alerts.

Teachers (or students) should not attempt to analyse the data set in detail prior to students creating the database. Students should be working independently to create a structure based upon the information given in the data items list. It is up to them to apply simple validation where they think it is appropriate. They may end up with differing results. They should comment on the results of their validation in their eportfolio.

Students should not attempt to identify and remove invalid data before importing the data set. There is a danger of a disproportionate amount of time being spent on attempting to find the 'right answer' at the expense of quality data handling and presentation.

Units used depend on the item, it may be necessary to explain the occurrence of spears in this field!

Students should use their research to identify data for new records, avoiding duplication. They are not required to create a data entry form but may do so if they wish.

Reality Check

The Reality Check requires each student to collect and analyse their own data and that of their test buddy.

Time saved on data collection compared to conducting a survey should be spent on the design and use of the Reality Check.

The data must include details of fruit and vegetables eaten, including colour groups, as specified in the brief but students need to carefully consider what other questions they should ask. They should decide what information they would like the Reality Check to provide and then ensure that they collect the necessary data to perform the analysis.

The data collection form must be printed for completion over a week by the student and their test buddy.

The Reality Check Analysis

Students must use spreadsheet software to create the Reality Check. However, this should be designed with target users in mind. It should have a user-friendly interface using appropriate formatting to disguise the spreadsheet and tools such as cell protection to prevent the user changing anything other than the variables.

The example given is relatively simple and students should aim to produce a product capable of more in-depth analysis and production of useful information. Students should be advised not to simply use the example as a template and change the text and values.

Complex analysis is about not taking the data at face value, but thinking about what it tells you and acting upon the information it supplies. This may involve comparisons and reasoned judgements as well as the use of formulae. We are definitely not looking for evidence of use of complex formulae for its own sake.

We expect students to use information generated by the Reality Check to inform/justify their choice of materials for the Information Pack and to ensure that those materials are fit for audience and purpose.

If the Reality Check spreadsheet can be viewed (and tested) using the Excel viewer (one of the applications listed in the Moderator's Toolkit), students do not need to submit further evidence of formulae etc. They can also assume that users of the Reality Check will have access to the Excel viewer.

Students using spreadsheet file formats that cannot be read using the Excel viewer or another application listed in the Moderator's Toolkit must ensure that they provide sufficient evidence of the value and formula views and of formatting and protection features used using acceptable file formats.

Evidence of testing of the spreadsheet is not required, but students should be aware that moderators will be looking at their use of spreadsheet tools to generate an appropriate product.

Students also need to take account of the fact that the results will be printed for inclusion in the Information Pack. See next page.

Section 4 The Publications

General

The publications required are an Information Pack and a set of digital posters.

Students should take careful note of the requirements for each publication - number of pages/screens, content, etc - as well as the audience and purpose.

Students are free to make use of software features such as wizards. However, they should be clear that wizards are intended to help them, not do the job for them. They should customise the output from wizards to ensure that publications are fit for purpose. For example, titles, column headings, layout.

Students should not underestimate the importance of accuracy and should remember that credit is not given for demonstration of skills but rather for producing publications that meet the requirements of the brief and are suitable for the intended audience and purpose.

Prototyping and testing is essential, involving suitable test users. Where members of the target audience are not available, other test users should be selected for their ability to offer constructive feedback.

THE INFORMATION PACK

Students should be clear that the audience for this pack is their test buddy. All the components, including the pack folder should be designed with this in mind. Feedback from the test buddy should be sought and taken account of at every stage.

Eat me, Drink me

Students must extract the required information by running searches on their database.

The results of the database searches form part of the pack. These can be produced using any appropriate software, ie they do not necessarily have to be database reports. The important thing is that the outcome is fit for purpose - the searches are appropriate and the results are presented clearly, including the information listed in the brief. They can be folded to fit in the pack. For the eportfolio, the searches and results must be presented in an acceptable file format.

Food Makeover Cards

These must use items that appear in the database results for the test buddy. The idea is to encourage the test buddy to eat more of the selected items by suggesting ways of preparing them. Students will need to find or invent the makeover recipes.

Students who take time to design the cards before creating them are likely to produce higher quality publications.

Students might consider preparing the items themselves by using the recipes. They could then take photographs for the makeover cards.

Reality Check Results

Students must ensure that the selected area of the spreadsheet presents the information clearly. This could be achieved using formatted spreadsheet output, perhaps using 'print area', or by importing the selected area into another document.

Pack folder

This task does not require advanced graphics skills. Students should apply the skills required for unit 1 to produce an appealing design including visual links with the contents. They may find it helpful to fold the net into a blank folder for use in the design process.

The final design must be to scale. Only the front cover and inside flap need to be designed, the other surfaces can be a plain colour. Students should note the requirement to include visual links with the pack content. Although students are not required to create the folder, they may wish to do so, if only on paper.

Students may use any suitable software for this task.

SNACK ATTACK

This series of digital posters should be designed to work on a large screen. Each poster should include suitable images and text and follow the outline for static areas that are identical on all four posters. Students may, if they wish, include animation.

The audience is limited to 9-11 year olds.

The storyboard may be produced electronically or on paper, in which case it must be scanned in to create a digital file. Students must follow the given outline to ensure that the required areas remain static as the posters change in sequence.

Storyboards should be sufficiently detailed to clarify ideas, allow constructive feedback and facilitate implementation. It may help to look at the SPBs for D202/D102 for examples.

Students may use any suitable software to create the posters - for example: web authoring software or presentation software. They should be free to make independent choices about the software they will use.

Section 5: The eportfolio

The maximum size for the eportfolio has been increased to 20 MB for this SPB. Students must ensure that their eportfolios conform to the technical specification and can be viewed using only the Moderator's Toolkit.

The eportfolio must be viewable in any common browser. Any suitable software may be used to construct the eportfolio - specialised web authoring software is not essential. However, students should be discouraged from using Powerpoint or other presentation software for this purpose. Those who do so must convert the eportfolio to html. The Powerpoint viewer in the Moderator's Toolkit is there to allow moderators to view evidence files within the eportfolio. Students should be encouraged to test their eportfolios in more than one browser

Students should ensure that they provide working links to all the specified items of evidence even when the eportfolio is transferred from the network. One possibility would be to allow students access to a standalone computer for testing purpose. If this only has the Moderator's Toolkit installed then students will also be able to check that their eportfolio conforms to the technical specification.

There must be an easily recognisable home/index page giving key information including: candidate name and number, centre name and number, unit name and number and date.

Students should allocate sufficient time to the design of the eportfolio, aiming for consistency of presentation and good layout using colour schemes that are conducive to on-screen viewing.

Students should aim to produce detailed commentaries contextualising the evidence.

There is no need to include evidence of testing the eportfolio. It should be possible to infer that testing has occurred and to judge its effectiveness by the quality of the product.

There is a link to an eportfolio checklist which includes most, if not all, of the items that students should include. Additional items should only be added if these are necessary for assessment to be effective.