



D203 SPB 0906

SUPPORT NOTES FOR TEACHERS

14 November 2006

Introduction

These notes should be read in conjunction with the Moderators' Report for D203 which offers feedback on the most recent moderation series.

Updates since the previous issue are indicated by a vertical line in the margin.

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 3 specification.

The D203 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 product. It is not, however, necessary for students to write long commentaries explaining how they achieved each task.

Students must ensure that they present the products as clearly as possible. Moderators will view eportfolios 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. It will be updated when necessary.

Legal requirements

Students must not include any elements for which they do not have permission and should also bear in mind that whilst the eportfolio is produced for education purposes, the individual products each have an audience and purpose. Even if permission can be gained for study/educational purposes, would it be acceptable bearing in mind the intended purpose e.g. display in a public place, distribution to individuals? Students should be aware that if they do not fully comply with legal requirements they restrict their marks as they are not demonstrating good awareness of audience and purpose.

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.

Where does the work have to be carried out?

Work on the products 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 candidates 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 and will assist with the final review
- researching appropriate sources of information related to the scenario and products, keeping records of where information was found and how it could be used
- initial design documents for the products and feedback from others on these designs
- prototyping of own, or others' products - gathering feedback from test users so that products can be improved where appropriate
- reviewing final products 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 products under development and this should be viewed as an ongoing process. Students should not wait until products 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 products and the eportfolio, and these comments will be used in the final review. It is often helpful to gather reviewers' feedback as products 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

Come to the Fair! is designed to produce a range of products which are all linked by a common theme. It is important that students read the whole SPB before they start to produce any of the individual products.

Students need to be clear about the audience and purpose for each product. They should explore the examples given at various places in the SPB and other relevant sources before starting work on the design of individual products.

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 a lesson is.

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.

Elements

In producing the products, students will use elements from both primary and secondary sources. As the products are related, some of the elements may be used in more than one product.

Students should be quite clear about the need to acknowledge sources they use, both primary and secondary. They must use their elements table to acknowledge all sources and provide detailed information as listed in the brief.

Students will need to indicate how they have prepared elements for use in their products. For each element this might be achieved by annotation of the original or final version or by a commentary. However, we do not require a narrative description of the process itself.

The websites listed in the SPB allow students to use elements provided the terms and conditions are followed. The students must check what the conditions of use for each element are and obtain permission for use where necessary or acknowledge copyright.

To optimise file sizes, students should ensure that their images are not saved at a resolution that is too high (big file sizes) nor too low (pixelated images).

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.

Section 4 The Products

General

The graphic products required are a flyer, 2 banners, a wristband, a CD case and cover and a digital poster which are visually linked to the theme of Come to the Fair!

Students are required to show the development of a design from initial ideas to finished product and, although it is not necessary to include actual designs for each product, students should include enough evidence to show the progression of their designs starting with any research they did and how this may have influenced their designs. They should also show how testing, acting on feedback and refining their designs influenced the finished product. Student who only include the finished products in their eportfolios will limit their marks.

Logo

The logo is used on all the products and students should check the requirements for each product before they design the logo to make sure that it will work in all situations, for example it must work in one colour on the wristband.

Students should be encouraged to produce initial designs for more than one logo and they should keep a record of feedback so they have evidence of why the final design was chosen.

Annotation of the completed design should indicate how the logo meets the design brief, eg how each aspect of the design appeals to the target audience, what message it gives, why the colours are suitable etc.

Students should be clear that the logo must be scaleable without losing detail and they should test their logo to make sure this is the case, see page 106 of the specification.

Flyer

The flyer must be A5 and printed on both sides. Students should produce designs for both sides of the flyer and it should be clear that the finished flyer is the correct size.

The best way to check that the flyer meets all the criteria is to print it (on both sides if possible but this is not essential) and get feedback from a member of the target audience. Students should record this process in a suitable place in their eportfolio, such as in the review or on the flyer page.

Students can produce a map of any relevant area provided they include all the necessary information. Students should make use of their graphics skills to produce their own maps. If they choose not to, they should be aware of copyright implications.

Banners

It is important that the designs for the banners are scale drawings and that the scale and dimensions are shown on the drawing.

The design on each banner should be different but there must be some aspect of the design common to both banners so that they work as a pair.

The image that represents the fair can be a drawing, a photograph, or any other kind of image but students should use this opportunity to demonstrate their ability to use graphical tools. Students should be discouraged from simply adding an unedited existing image to the banners.

The representation of the banners can be done in a variety of ways, for example correctly sized banners could be added to a photograph of a school or college entrance. It is not necessary to make full size banners although this can be done if the facilities are available.

Wristband

Students should look at real wristbands or images of wristbands before they design their logo, wristbands are narrow and that fact should be taken into account in the design. Students should also check that the logo design is still visible when it is embossed in a single colour on the wristband. Many graphics software packages have facilities to emboss images.

Students can produce a representation of their wristband by taking a photograph of a paper band or by manipulating an image of an existing wristband.

CD Case and Cover

There is no specification for the content of the CD - it is up to the student to decide what it might include if this affects the design of the cover.

Students can design a traditionally shaped CD case or they can choose another shape as long as it can hold a CD (for example, a circle or clamshell). The design can be actual size or to scale. Students do not have to show the CD in place but they could include an image showing how it will fit if they feel it will help.

The cover for the CD must fit inside the case and must include a visual link, such as an element or style, to the digital poster. Students should indicate what this link is in the annotated design for the cover.

Students may use any suitable method to produce the representation. This may involve producing a mock up of the case and cover which can be photographed or it may be generated by manipulating an image of an existing CD case.

Digital poster

There is no specified size for the digital poster but it should work on a large screen. Students should indicate what size screen the poster is intended for.

If possible, students should be encouraged to test that their posters will work at the intended size by asking the target audience to view from a suitable distance.

The poster design must include at least two images from primary sources, it is not acceptable to use photographs or images taken from the internet or other secondary sources. The primary images used should be saved as thumbnails and annotated to show how they have been created and manipulated to make them suitable for the poster.

Section 5: The eportfolio

The maximum size for the eportfolio has been increased to 25 MB for this SPB. Students must ensure that their eportfolios conform to the technical specification.

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.

Students should try to create an eportfolio that is a graphic product in itself, incorporating graphic elements where appropriate. They should, however, avoid inappropriate elements which are not relevant to the audience and purpose.

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. They should introduce evidence with helpful comments.

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.