
Unit Specification

iUHB310 – Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques

Unit reference number: K/617/8093

Level: 3

Guided Learning (GL) hours: 121

Overview

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of advanced cutting skills and techniques in order to create personalised and individual haircuts for clients.

The ability to combine and adapt a variety of different cutting techniques, which includes precision cutting and texturising to create a variety of different styles, is required in this unit.

Learners will need to maintain a high level of health, safety and hygiene throughout the unit. Additionally, learners must reflect the Hairdressing Industry in their personal appearance and demonstrate effective communication skills.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

LO1 Be able to cut hair using a combination of techniques

LO2 Understand how health and safety policies and procedures affect creative cutting services

LO3 Understand the factors that may influence creative cutting services

LO4 Understand the tools, equipment, products and techniques used for creative cutting services

Unit content

LO1 Be able to cut hair using a combination of techniques

Prepare for creative hair cutting services

Taught content to include

- Preparation of learners should include:
 - Personal image, ensuring industry standards of dress
 - Clean and hygienic appearance, e.g. avoidance of overpowering odours – tobacco, heavy perfume/aftershave
 - Good communication and listening skills
 - Correct posture with weight evenly balanced
 - Correct personal protective equipment worn
- Preparation of the working area to include:
 - Chair and work area to be clean before the client arrives
 - Chair positioned correctly including height
 - Adequate work area to allow safe use of electrical equipment, e.g. if using a hand held dryer to dry and/or style the hair after cutting
 - Products on display to be clean of dust and hair
 - Tools and equipment to be clean and sterilised
 - Electrical equipment to be visually checked before use, e.g. for centres within the United Kingdom portable appliance testing (PAT) may be required when using electrical equipment
 - All tools and equipment to be positioned for ease of use
- Preparation of the client to include:
 - Clean protective garments for the client
 - Visual checks of client's scalp for signs of cuts, sores, abrasions or infections; check the hair for infestations and suitability of service
 - Removal of obstructive jewellery
 - Check client record card (where appropriate) for previous services and client history
 - Check all appropriate tests have been undertaken (if required) e.g. a porosity test to determine possible amount of hair to be cut

Apply safe and hygienic methods of working throughout services

Taught content to include

- Ensuring there is sufficient stock, which is used appropriately to minimise the wastage of products
- Ensuring products, tools and equipment are correctly handled, stored, clean, readily available and all hygienic precautions are followed to minimise the risk of damage or cross-infection
- Cleansing/sterilising tools and equipment
- Working safely throughout the service to minimise risk, harm or injury to self or others
- Ensuring own good posture is maintained throughout the service
- Ensuring the client maintains the correct posture and comfort throughout the service to avoid a hazard or a risk when cutting the hair, e.g. a risk of cutting the clients skin nape area if head is not tilted forward on shorter hairstyles
- Ensuring manufacturers' instructions are followed and used safely when using products e.g. ensuring the correct amount of finishing product is applied when used to enhance the style
- Ensuring that waste is disposed of hygienically and appropriately
- Minimising the risk of harm or injury to themselves and others when using electrical equipment
- Ensuring the scalp is protected when using direct heat e.g. a wand is used close to the scalp
- Ensuring hygienic working practices throughout the service including own personal hygiene, e.g. eliminating offensive body odour or strong smell of tobacco
- Making effective use of their working time, e.g. allowing sufficient time for a creative haircut
- Removing hair cuttings from the client's skin promptly to prevent discomfort or irritation to the client
- Clearing away/sweeping the hair from working area to prevent accidents by slipping on the hair
- Disposing of hair cuttings appropriately into correct receptacle

Consult with clients to confirm the desired look

Taught content to include

- Undertaking appropriate tests and recording outcomes to include:
 - Elasticity test
 - Porosity test
 - Density Test
- Assessing the hair conditions for contra-indications and suitability for cutting services to include:
 - Hair classification
 - Hair characteristics
 - Hair elasticity, porosity, texture, condition, growth patterns and hair length
- Assessing the scalp condition to assess for contra-indications and the suitability of the cutting service to include:
 - Cuts, sores and abrasions
- Consulting and confirming with the client before cutting commences to agree the chosen creative cut and style, desired look and expected finished result
- Explaining each stage of the cutting service to the client
- Agreeing products, process and possible equipment to be used
- Checking throughout the service to meet the client's needs
- Using visual aids where appropriate, e.g. photos (style book), internet search for images of the creative cutting style effects

Confirm with clients the desired effect

Taught content to include

- Discussing client's needs and requirements
- Discussing limitations or adaptations that may be required, e.g. the need to use a styling product to enhance the finished creative cut effect
- The importance of informing the client of the likely cost, duration and expected outcome of the service

Carry out a suitable questioning process with the client for the service

Taught content to include

- Understanding what the client wants and their expectations of the chosen creative cut and finished style
- Ensure the amount of hair to be cut is agreed with the client
- Consulting with the client to ensure they understand the process
- Ask questions so as to provide the opportunity for the client to ask questions of their own
- Checking that the client is comfortable
- Gain information on how they maintain their hair, lifestyle and commitment to the creative cut style
- To ensure the client's expectations are met
- The legal significance of client questioning and the recording of client's responses to questioning

Select suitable products, tools and equipment for creatively cutting hair

Taught content to include

- Products to include:
 - Water spray – keeps hair damp during the haircut
 - Detangling solution – used to help detangle and prevent knotting during the haircut where appropriate
- Tools to include:
 - Scissors – used to remove length and bulk from the hair. Creates blunt, textured and/or tapered ends to the hair
 - Razors – used to remove bulk and length from the hair, creates textured and tapered effects throughout the hair length and ends
 - Combs – small tooth comb used to control the hair when cutting. Wider tooth comb used to detangle hair and tail combs may be used to aid sectioning the hair
 - Sectioning clips/clamps – used to keep accurate cutting lines by keeping uncut hair out of the way
 - Clippers – used to cut hair very short quickly. Different grades are used to adapt length. Can be used for undercutting techniques
- Equipment to include:
 - Mirror – used to show the client the sides and back of the haircut or to confirm required length to be cut
 - Cutting gown, cutting collar/cape – used to protect the client's clothes and the neck area from hair cuttings
 - Neck brush – used to remove unwanted hair cuttings from around the client
 - Hand held hairdryer – used to dry, style or remove excess moisture from the hair after hair cutting

Carry out creative hair cutting services

Taught content to include

- Consult with the client to confirm the look agreed at consultation prior to and during cutting
- Ensure the client, is positioned correctly and at the right height and is adjusted when necessary e.g. when cutting the nape area the client's head should be tilted forward
- Ensure own posture is correct for the service, e.g. weight evenly balanced
- Sectioning the hair, working methodically
- Compare hair preparation methods suitable to achieve the desired creative cutting style, to include cutting hair wet or dry or both
 - Cutting hair wet
 - Hair wet with water spray – quicker for the client but hair may not be clean, may not be evenly wet
 - Pre-shampooed and conditioned hair – clean hair to cut, hair fully returns to alpha-keratin
 - Advantages of cutting hair wet – supports cleaner section making, hair easier to control, greater accuracy for creative and precision cutting, able to see hair in natural state (curls, waves), guide lines more visible, greater choice of cutting tools (e.g. scissors, razor); able to complete and style the hair
 - Disadvantages of cutting hair wet – hair growth patterns less obvious, takes longer to complete the appointment from start to finish
 - Cutting hair dry
 - Easier to texturise and remove bulk from the hair especially abundant, curly or coarse hair types – this can also be achieved to finish the creative haircut after it has been shampooed and styled straight
 - May be used for quick maintenance of the creative haircut, e.g. tidying up hairline shapes in between full creative haircut appointment
 - Advantages of cutting hair dry – quick, easier to see natural hair movement and fall, accurately assess actual hair length
 - Disadvantages of cutting hair dry – hair may not be clean, less accurate sections, less control, more static, harder to comb, may not able to provide a full creative haircut assessment of the finished style
- Choose the most appropriate methods of cutting hair depending upon the hair type, classification and characteristics as identified during consultation
- Cutting methods and techniques
 - Club cutting
 - Creates a blunt end to hair, used for precision cutting, retains hair bulk and weight, used for both curly and straight hair types
 - Freehand
 - Cutting hair with no tension without holding the hair with the hand, fingers or tools
 - Scissor over comb
 - Hair supported by comb when cut with scissors. Produces a soft-layered effect. Often used for very short styles cut into nape/sides, shortens to less than finger depth, cut to head shape/size or when blending layers

- Clipper over comb (if used)
 - Hair supported by comb when cut with clippers. Produces a soft-layered effect. Often used for very short styles cut into nape/sides, shortens the hair close to the scalp, cut to head shape/size or when blending layers
- Precision cutting
 - Creating a straight, solid edge with dramatic angles, e.g. classic bob with no graduation
- Texturising effects may include:
 - Point cutting or chipping into the lengths of the hair to remove bulk at a 90 degree angle. Can be used to remove bulk and increase volume in thicker hair. This technique is a harsher variant of the slithering technique and will lead to more noticeable results but should only be used sparingly. It can be used to create a long wispy effect in hair, to chip, take a section of hair and hold it up parallel to the scalp. Use scissors to chip little chunks away from the mid-lengths of the hair
 - Slicing and slithering to the mid lengths and ends to create texture and movement. A texturising technique best used on thicker hair, it can thin out some of the excess bulk and add volume where it is needed. To use the slithering technique to thin out thicker hair, take sections of the hair and use scissors to slither it by gently sliding the blades out from the mid-lengths of the hair towards the ends. A light grip on the handles of the scissors is used to achieve this effect and with little pressure on the blades
 - Twist cutting, sections of hair are twisted tightly and cut with scissors to texturize the hair, creating evenly thinned hair
- Classic cutting styles modified and combined may include:
 - Uniform layer – hair is held at 90 degrees. No weight line. Hair cut to any length, long, medium, short, above or below the shoulders angles
 - Long graduation – hair held at a range of over 90 degrees, depending the degree of graduation required. Can produce short internal layers and longer external layers
 - Short graduation – hair held at 45 degree angles. Usually produces long internal layers, shorter external layers
 - One length – hair held at 0 degree angle ideal for creative styles where hair length is above or below the shoulders
 - Graduated Bob – hair is taken at a 45 degree angle from the nape, which continues over the entire head taking vertical or horizontal sections ensuring all hair is over-directed to the first 45 degree angle section
- Emerging cutting styles
 - Asymmetric cut, this can be subtle or dramatic depending on how short one area of the haircut is. Combine short graduation with either uniform layer (for the longer area) or long graduation
 - Disconnecting, part of the haircut is not connected, e.g. undercutting using clippers
- Haircut is personalised by
 - Working with natural fall of hair
 - Texturising

Problems and solutions that may occur during a creative cutting service

Taught content to include

Problem	Possible solution/resolution
Contra-indication found	Do not begin the service or, if started, stop service. Encourage client to rebook, provide appropriate advice for treatment or referral for the contra-indication.
Client changes mind about the amount of hair cut off	Prevent happening by effective communication, consultation and use of visual resources before the haircut begins. During the haircut, reassure client and confirm approval of cut hair length by explaining the haircut progression. Agree solution.
Cut own skin	Stop immediately and clean wound, apply pressure to stop bleeding, cover wound with plaster.
Cut client's skin	Stop immediately, provide sterile cloth to client to hold against the cut skin, provide plaster for client to apply. Stylist to wash hands to remove blood from own skin. If applying plaster to the client's cut the stylist should wear gloves.
Sides uneven on finished cut	Check chair height and client's posture. Ensure client sits straight in seat, visually check the length of each side using fingers as guide and the mirror to level cut.
Hair will not lie correctly around growth pattern	The hair in growth pattern may require extra length to weigh it down or cut shorter to remove the problem.

Apply correct techniques during services

Taught content to include

- Working with the natural fall/movement of the hair, including hair partings
- Weight distribution of the hair to ensure the expected creative cut shape can be achieved
- Adapting cutting methods where needed to take into account any specific hair growth patterns, e.g. double crown
- Using the correct cutting method(s) for hair type and classification
- Using the correct cutting method(s) to achieve the desired creative cut, e.g. using both razor and scissor techniques on coarse thick hair
- Using correct sectioning, e.g. when preparing hair for asymmetrical creative haircut correct sectioning will ensure a balanced finished effect
- Holding the hair with the correct tension, e.g. when using a slicing cutting method through the front hairline tension on the hair may not be required
- Using correct angles when cutting, e.g. ensure the contours of the face and head are in proportion to angle of the hair being creatively cut

Provide clients with advice and recommendations on the service(s) provided and the products available

Taught content to include

- Provide aftercare advice regarding the service including potential costs of further creative cutting services
- The needs and requirements of the client for future services, e.g. guidance timing of when to return to the salon for upkeep of the creative cutting services
- Discussing limitations, for example a specific growth pattern, e.g. cow lick fringe – may inhibit a chosen haircut, or may require the client to dry the hair in a specific way to achieve results
- To provide longevity of the haircutting service and help the client achieve the required result at home
- Discuss client's needs, requirements and lifestyle to provide further advice and guidance on use of home care products, e.g. a client who has had a creative haircut and added colour to enhance the style may require specific shampoo and conditioning products
- Discussing client's needs and requirements for future services. As an example the need to grow a certain part of the hair for developing a new style, or a colour and/or lightening service to enhance a creative haircut
- The importance of ensuring the client feels valued and that the service was specifically tailored to their individual needs
- Other services, offers or promotions, for example discount incentives tailored to the service when using a salon loyalty card
- Reputation and walking advertisement for the salon

LO2 Understand how health and safety policies and procedures affect creative cutting services

The responsibilities for health and safety in own role

Taught content to include

- Relevant legislation for consultation, client care, confidentiality and consumer/retail, for the country the qualification is taken, which includes: General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), consumer rights, health and safety, equality. Health and safety regulations for the country where the qualification is taken, examples within the United Kingdom would include:
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
 - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
 - Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations
 - Electricity at Work Regulations
 - Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
 - The Consumer Protection Act
 - The Trade Descriptions Act
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)
 - Salon insurance requirements, employers liability, public liability, professional indemnity
- Responsibilities for health and safety to include:
 - The reasons why all staff working in the salon have a responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others
 - The salon safety regulations to ensure their actions do not put others at risk, which includes all staff, clients and visitors
- Additional factors will include:
 - The reasons why it is important to accurately describe the features and benefits of products and services
 - The reasons and importance for gaining client consent
 - The maintenance of the salon environment including:
 - The comfort of the salon
 - Cleanliness of the salon to prevent cross-infection via direct or indirect contact
 - Provisions and use of workplace equipment – using only products, tools and equipment that are fit for purpose
 - Reasons for personal protective equipment (PPE), e.g. using protective gowns/cutting capes/collars for clients when creatively cutting the hair
 - Making visual checks on all electrical equipment and reporting faults/isolating power, e.g. when using hand held hairdryer used to remove excess moisture or style the finished creative cut
 - Ensuring manufacturers' instructions are always followed when using products and equipment that are used associated to the creative cutting service
 - Responsibilities of reporting certain work-related incidents or accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to a senior staff member

- Ensuring the public are protected from the manufacture of supplied unsafe goods or misleading price indications
- Prevent a false trade description of any goods that are supplied or offering to supply any goods to which a false trade description has been applied, or false statement about the provision of any service
- Ensure that all personal client data records remain safe and confidential
- Update client records following services
- Disposing of waste and hair cuttings correctly

The potential hazards and possible risks that may occur in the workplace and affect services

Taught content to include

- The importance of ensuring that products that might be used for creatively cutting hair services are stored, handled and used in accordance to salon policy, local bylaws and manufacturers' instructions
- The potential hazards and risks associated with not completing appropriate tests on the client and the hair, e.g. undertaking an elasticity test – over processed/chemically damaged hair may require different tension when creatively cutting to prevent overstretching the hair
- Hazards – anything that has the potential to cause harm, e.g. hair cuttings on the floor
- Risks – a chance, high or low, that harm caused by the hazard may occur, e.g. potential for self, client or others to slip on the cuttings
- Working safely throughout the service, an example may include ensuring there is adequate room around the client and no obstruction to the safe use of scissors
- Risk of electric shock when using electrical equipment to enhance the service, to include potential hazards of trailing wires
- Ensuring use and maintenance of any equipment is monitored, e.g. checking the temperature settings on electrical hand-held equipment to ensure the right temperature setting is selected for the hair type
- Ensuring the client is comfortable and free from harm throughout the service, e.g. removing jewellery that may obstruct the use of tools and equipment when creatively cutting the hair
- Disposing of waste appropriately to minimise risk of cross-infection and ensure there is no unnecessary risk to the environment, e.g. ensure clean protective garments are freshly laundered for every client
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), or legislation relevant to the country, including handling and storage of all products, tools and equipment
- The course of action to be taken when accidentally cutting own or client's skin
 - Cut own skin – stop immediately, clean wound, apply pressure to stop bleeding and cover with a plaster
 - Cut client's skin – stop immediately, provide sterile cloth to client to hold against the cut skin, provide plaster for client to apply. Stylist to wash hands to remove blood from own skin, stylist to wear gloves if applying plaster to client cut
- The importance of ensuring a thorough visual check of the hair and scalp is performed prior to the service to prevent cross infection, e.g. ensuring the scalp is not tender when combing hair for sectioning prior to cutting
- Fire – the salon's policy in the outcome of a fire and where the assembly point is
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), including handling and storage of products e.g. keeping some products away from direct sunlight

The safe and hygienic working methods and practices that must be followed throughout the services

Taught content to include

- Use of clean towels, gowns and protective garments for all clients
- The importance of providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for both client and stylist, e.g. prevention of cuttings irritating client's skin
- Use of clean and sterile tools equipment for all clients
- Sectioning hair appropriately for the cutting service, e.g. to avoid hair falling into client's eyes
- Organisation of working area, e.g. storing tools safely especially scissors and razors; positioning the client at correct height
- Avoid trailing wires and spillages from products on the floor, e.g. if using a water spray ensure any spillage is wiped up immediately; if using a hand held hair dryer ensure the wires do not cause a hazard
- Avoidance from hair cuttings on the floor
- The need to store sharp objects safely, e.g. return scissors to closed case after use

Contact dermatitis and how it can be prevented

Taught content to include

- Recognising contact dermatitis symptoms
- Contact dermatitis is a rash caused by the skin reacting to a substance it has come into contact with e.g. chemicals. Symptoms can be varied and include:
 - Skin redness
 - Extreme itching
 - Oozing or blisters, may make skin swell
 - Skin that appears darkened or hard/leathery to touch that may become dry or flaky
 - Sensitive to products and sunlight
- How to avoid contracting and preventing measures which may include:
 - Wearing gloves (recommended) when shampooing hair prior to creative haircutting services
 - Rinsing and drying hands thoroughly
 - Use of moisturisers or barrier creams
- Following Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations when using sprays to enhance finished creative cut style
- Following and adhering to manufacturers' instructions when using products to enhance the creative cut finished style

LO3 Understand the factors that may influence creative cutting services

Factors that may influence the services provided

Taught content to include

- Hair classification

Hair classifications table			
Type 1: Straight hair	1A - Fine/thin	1B - Medium	1C - Coarse
	Straight	Straight with volume	Straight difficult hair
Type 2: Wavy hair	2A - Fine/thin	2B - Medium	2C - Coarse
	'S' pattern	Frizzy 'S' pattern	Very frizzy 'S' pattern
Type 3: Curly hair	3A - Fine/thin	3B - Medium	3C - Coarse
	Soft curl	Loose curl	Tight curl
Type 4: Very curly hair	4A - Fine/thin	4B - Medium	4C - Coarse
	Tight coiled curl pattern	'Z' pattern and spring curl	Tight 'Z' pattern

- The factors that must be taken into account when undertaking creative cutting services to include:
 - Density – this is defined as the number of hairs on the scalp and will affect the choice of tools, cutting method(s) and possible products used and the time of the service
 - Texture – the circumference of an individual strand of hair. Hair can be fine, medium or coarse. Coarse hair has the largest circumference, and fine hair the smallest. Texture may affect the porosity of the hair and some styles may need adapting according to the required creative cut
 - Porosity – this relates to the condition of the cuticle. Porosity levels are caused by both chemical and physical damage. Cuticles which are raised and feel rough, and may tangle when haircutting, are known as porous and will absorb water and products more easily and unevenly when applying finishing products after cutting the hair
 - Elasticity – this relates to the condition of the cortex layer of the hair. Elasticity levels are affected by how the hair is treated and the condition it is in. Hair should stretch and return to its normal size, this indicates the hair is in good condition hair and no damage to the cortex. If hair stretches and snaps or does not return to its original length this indicates internal damage to the cortex. Clients may require shorter hair length styles to improve the overall elasticity and condition of the hair
 - Growth patterns – this relates to the direction the hair grows from the scalp and may influence the desired finish. Selecting the correct cutting techniques may help overcome a difficult growth pattern to enhance the creative cutting style
 - Head and face shape and size – this relates to the overall shape and size of the client's head and includes any specific features. When creatively cutting hair, it is important to ensure that the client has a style which suits their overall appearance
 - Lifestyle – this is about the client's everyday activities and working patterns e.g. it is important the client can manage the chosen haircut
 - Hair length – this will affect the general condition of the hair e.g. cutting the hair may improve the overall hair condition

Dealing with influencing factors

Taught content to include

- Hair classifications and characteristics may influence the creative cutting methods, and techniques employed. These factors may also affect the possible desired style, to include:
 - Growth patterns – ensuring the hair growth pattern has been accounted for prior to cutting, e.g. the hair may need extra length to weigh it down, or be cut shorter to remedy the issue
 - Density – the amount of hair on the scalp will usually influence the cutting method used, e.g. hair that is fine in appearance may require club cutting to help give an overall thicker appearance
 - Density test – Take a square inch sized area to assess how tightly packed the follicles and strands of hairs are. When testing the density of the hair, 3-4 different areas of the hair on the scalp should be assessed. Low density hair will be spaced out allowing the scalp to be seen (if more than 60% of the scalp can be seen then the hair has low density). High density hair will be tightly packed with minimal scalp to be seen (if less than 20% of the scalp can be seen then the hair has high density)
 - Texture – as an example, coarse straight hair may require different cutting techniques e.g. razor cutting or texturising around the hairline for a softer finish
 - Porosity – this will influence the overall expected hair cut finish. When the hair is porous a cut will help improve the overall appearance and improve the hair's ability to accept other services
 - Porosity test – external strength of cuticle – take a few strands of hair slide down towards the scalp using one finger and one thumb. The more resistance felt, the more porous the hair
 - Elasticity – cutting may help to improve the overall condition of the hair if there is signs of damage. An elasticity test may be required to ensure the desired outcome is possible
 - Elasticity test – internal strength of cortex. On wet hair, take individual strand of hair from 3-4 areas of the head – if hair is dry then dampen thoroughly. Hold one single hair securely and pull it – if the hair stretches and return to its original length without breaking – it has normal elasticity. If hair breaks or fails to return to its original length it has low or no elasticity
 - Head and face shape and size – as an example, a client with a long face may not require height on the crown or a client with a high forehead may be best suited to a longer fringe effect haircut
 - Lifestyle – will influence the longevity or suitability of a finished creative cut style, e.g. more maintenance may be required and the client's work/lifestyle may not permit regular visits to the salon
 - Hair length – the expectations of the client about either the amount of hair to be removed or the expected creative cut style can be influenced by the hair length in order to achieve a realistic outcome

Contra-indications and how they affect the creative cutting services

Taught content to include

- Contra-indications to creative cutting services to include, bacterial, viral or fungal infections. Contagious conditions to include:
 - Bacterial infection examples:
 - Impetigo – begins as blisters that itch, then fill with a yellowish-brown fluid, that once rupture becomes a flat crust
 - Folliculitis – infection of the hair follicle, causes bumps with pus. May be painful, itchy, sore or swollen
 - Viral infection examples:
 - Herpes simplex, a raised red blister full of fluid. It will usually be painful and tender to the touch
 - Warts, small, fleshy, grainy bumps usually flesh-coloured, white, pink or tan. Rough to the touch and can be sprinkled with black pinpoints, which are small, clotted blood vessels
 - Fungal infection examples:
 - Ringworm – depends where it appears but may be red, itchy, scaly, or raised patches that develop blisters or begin to ooze. Patches that may be redder on the outside edges creating a 'ring' effect
 - Infestation/parasites examples:
 - Head lice – are tiny grey/brown insects. Head lice cling to hairs but stay close to the scalp which they feed off. Head lice lay eggs which hatch after 7 to 10 days. It takes about 7 to 10 days for a newly hatched louse to grow into an adult and start to lay eggs known as nits. Nits are the empty yellow-white eggshells which are left when the lice hatch. Nits look like dandruff but stick strongly to hair
 - Scabies – itchy skin condition causing a rash which may cause tiny blisters or sores where mites have burrowed into the skin
- Hair defects, contra-indication examples:
 - Trichorrhexis nodosa – hair which breaks easily. Symptoms can include patches of hair loss or extremely short hair that appears not to grow. The hair shaft has thickened or thinned areas or has excessively split ends with discolouration
- History of previous allergic reaction e.g. especially with shampoo or finishing products used when creatively cutting hair
- Conditions which may be contra-indicated, prevent or restrict the creative cutting service
 - Scalp sensitivity – an inflamed, sore and red scalp may limit the service as the scalp may be too tender for sectioning or the tension required to creatively cut the hair
 - Sebaceous cyst – lump on top or under scalp/head
 - Psoriasis – dry silvery scales of skin
 - Contact dermatitis – dry, red, sore, itchy and may be weeping
 - Recent scar/tissue injury, may be tender when using combs or when finishing the creative cut
 - Hair loss, possible after hair extension removal, medication, stress or trauma (alopecia), use tools and equipment carefully to avoid damage to hair or skin

- The course of action to be taken if contra-indications are suspected, to include:
 - Not to offer diagnosis
 - Which conditions need reporting and when
 - Who to report to and where to record the findings
 - Referral for medical attention or advice

The importance of preventing cross-infection and cross-infestation

Taught content to include

- How to avoid cross-contamination, cross-infection or infestation, e.g. the use of correct sterilising and disinfecting methods for all tools and equipment
- Ensuring the client's scalp and hair are checked prior to the creative cutting service
- Avoidance of cross-contamination, e.g. using unclean tools or protective garments from one client could contaminate the next clients' skin, hair or scalp
- Ensuring the professional salon image is maintained, e.g. reputation and possible legal challenges

LO4 Understand the tools, equipment, products and techniques used for creative cutting services

The importance of preparing the hair prior to cutting

Taught content to include

- Removing tangles/knots and assess overall condition
- Checking for piercings or jewellery that may inhibit the service
- The importance of checking hair when dry for:
 - Contra-indications/signs of infections/infestations
 - Hair growth patterns/natural fall of the hair
 - Hair and scalp
 - Influencing factors
 - Prior to shampooing if cutting hair wet to remove dirt/debris, product build-up
- The importance of checking hair when wet/shampooed for:
 - Natural movement
 - Direction in which the hair lies
 - Elasticity of the hair

The effects of cutting tools, equipment and products available and the maintenance

Taught content to include

- Tools to include:
 - Scissors
 - Used to remove length and bulk, creates blunt, textured and/or tapered ends to the hair
 - Maintain by removing loose hair, wipe clean, sterilise, store in appropriate pouch, and sharpened if required, only use for cutting hair
 - Razors
 - Used to remove bulk from coarse or thick hair or to add texture or taper the ends of the hair
 - Maintain by disposing of blade in sharps box or approved appropriate dispenser. Avoid touching the blade
 - Thinning scissors
 - Thinning scissors can help to blend haircuts or reduce bulk from thicker coarse hair. The scissors possess a number of teeth that allow them to cut some, but not all strands of hair and the effect is to thin out the hair
 - Maintain by removing loose hair, wipe clean, sterilise and store in appropriate pouch, only use for cutting hair
 - Multi-purpose/cutting comb(s)
 - Used to detangle hair, support hair when cutting, create sections, control the hair when cutting
 - Maintain by cleaning combs of hair clippings, wash and dry or place in sterilising solution, store in clean receptacle/area

- Sectioning clips
 - Used to keep hair out of the way when sectioning hair for accurate and precise cutting lines. Maintain by cleaning sectioning clips of hair clippings, wash and dry or place in sterilising solution, store in clean receptacle/area
- Equipment to include:
 - Gown/protective cutting cape
 - Used to protect the client and their clothes from hair cuttings
 - Maintain by washing and drying after every use
 - Cutting collar/cape
 - Used to protect neck area from hair clippings
 - Maintain by wiping clean, store at work station or clean trolley
 - Back mirror
 - Used to show client the sides and back of their hair – may be used during consultation to discuss possible finished hair length or creative style effect
 - Maintain by cleaning for smear free reflection, store at workstation
 - Neck brush
 - Soft brush that removes excess hair from client’s neck, and shoulders
 - Maintain by washing in warm soapy water, rinse and dry thoroughly
 - Hand held dryer
 - Used to dry or remove excess moisture after creative cutting or to create a finished style
 - Maintain as per manufacturers’ instructions, ensure air filter is cleaned regularly
- Products to include:
 - Water spray
 - Use to keep hair damp during the haircut
 - Maintain by refreshing water
 - Detangling solution
 - Used to prevent knotting during the haircut
 - Maintain by ensuring product bottle is clean after use, replaced in storage

Assessment requirements

Learners must complete all assessment requirements related to this unit:

1. Service portfolio
2. Synoptic practical assessment

1. Service portfolio

Learners must produce a service portfolio which is required to be completed under the supervision of a lecturer who must monitor the quality of the services performed throughout the learners' training

The performance of learning outcome 1 must be demonstrated as part of all technical observations and will be recorded on **at least 6 occasions**. The creative cutting techniques should be conducted on a range of new and existing clients and include: club cutting, freehand cutting, scissor over comb, precision cutting, and texturising effects on both wet and dry hair.

The learner is required to complete a style collection. This style collection must be presented in a hard copy format (not digital) and must include different types of creative cut finishes; i.e. classic cutting styles modified, emerging cutting styles and personalised for the client to include: uniform layer; long graduation, short graduation, one length, graduated bob, asymmetric and disconnecting styles. The style collection will be internally marked and must be available to view by the external examiner during the practical examination.

The service portfolio must be completed and marked prior to the learner completing the synoptic practical examination.

2. Synoptic practical examination

This unit forms part of the synoptic practical examination which will be externally set by the awarding organisation and examined and marked by an external examiner. The synoptic practical examination will take place at the end of the period of learning.

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v1.0	02/09/2019	First published	Head of Qualifications and Processing
v2.0	05/03/2020	Clarified content on Density Test	Product and Regulation Manager
v3.0	23/06/2026	Rebranding	Development Administrator