A-LEVEL
MEDIA STUDIES
7572/2

MEDIA TWO

Mark scheme

v1.0

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

When deciding upon a mark in the level, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives and be careful not to over or under reward a particular skill.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
01		Assessment objectives – AO2 1 Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media studies to analyse media products through the use of academic theories (9 marks)	9

Level	Mark range	Description
3	7–9	• Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of feminist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis is detailed and critically engages with nuanced aspects of male gaze and post-feminism in the advert. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
2	4–6	• Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source though this may, in places, be more descriptive than analytical. • Satisfactory, generally accurate use of feminist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of male gaze and post-feminism in the advert – answers in this band may not attempt to consider all the ideas. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
1	1–3	• Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Minimal, if any, use of feminist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis contains multiple inaccuracies or irrelevant points and is almost always descriptive. • Minimal, if any, use of subject specific terminology
0	0	• Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

This question assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of representation to analyse media products, particularly focusing on feminism.

In the analysis of the advert for the television series, Empire, students are expected to apply the key feminist ideas of the male gaze and post feminism to the product. Both of these ideas address the changing representation of gender in the media.

Answers in the higher bands are likely to deal critically with the ideas in the question whereas answers in the lower bands are likely to only offer examples from the product.

The content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all of the points listed.

In their analysis students should consider:
- how feminism and post-feminism has sought to analyse media representations in terms of inequalities between gender
- the theory of the male gaze argues that that representations position audiences as male
- the male gaze results in images of women as passive objects
- post-feminism focuses on issues of empowerment and independence which may have been misunderstood or side-lined by feminist approaches
- post-feminist analysis tends to see possibilities for independence through consumer culture, fashion, sexuality.

In their analysis of the Empire advert, students may discuss:
- the woman as object of the male gaze, coded for sexuality and valued for her appearance (the revealing dress to show parts of her body)
- that the female character refuses the male gaze, looking directly at the viewer, challenging assumptions about objectification
- the female character can be read through post-feminist theories – she is a powerful woman, taking on male characteristics. The image has regal connotations of hierarchy and power
- she is a personification of post-feminist theories of power – women no longer need to challenge patriarchal structures but compete within them
- ideas of intersectionality could also be included here – representation of a powerful, black woman.

The representation of the male character could also be considered:
- situated behind the woman, the male character takes on a position of subservience
- no evidence of the male character taking up the spectator's gaze and transferring it to the woman (as in the male gaze).

Accept any other valid analytical responses. Answers must link to the feminist ideas in the question.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
02		Assessment Objectives – AO1 1b, AO2 2 and AO2 3 Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (10 marks) Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to: • evaluate academic theories (10 marks) • make judgements and draw conclusions (5 marks)	25

Level	Mark range	Description
5	21–25	• Excellent understanding of the theoretical framework of media that is demonstrated through critical engagement with the nuanced aspects of the claims and how audiences respond. • Excellent, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate cultivation theory's claims. • Evaluation is insightful, thorough and critically informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of cultivation theory's claims are perceptive and fully supported with detailed reference to specific aspects of the set television products. • Consistent highly appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	16–20	• Good understanding of the theoretical framework of media that is demonstrated through some engagement with the nuanced aspects of the claims and how audiences respond. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate cultivation theory's claims. • Evaluation is logical and informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of cultivation theory's claims are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the set television products. • Frequent appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
3	11–15	• Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework of media that is demonstrated through engagement with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of the claims and how audiences respond. • Satisfactory, generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate cultivation theory's claims. • Evaluation is reasonable and straightforward, although there may be a tendency to apply rather than evaluate cultivation theory's claims. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of cultivation theory's claim are sensible and supported with some appropriate reference to relevant aspects of the set television products. • Generally appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.

2	6–10	• Basic understanding of the theoretical framework of media that is demonstrated through engagement with more straightforward aspects of the claims and how audiences respond, this is likely to be limited. • Basic application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate cultivation theory's claims though there is likely to be a lack of clarity or relevance. • There may be a tendency to simply describe features of the set product rather than evaluate the theory. • Judgements and conclusions are not developed and only partially supported by reference to the set television products. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
1	1–5	• Minimal, if any, understanding of the theoretical framework of media that engages with minimal aspects of the claims or only focuses on how media products shape response in a simple way. • Minimal, if any application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate cultivation theory's claims. • Evaluation is absent and description is minimal. • Judgements and conclusions drawn are superficial, generalised and lacking supporting evidence from the set television products • Minimal use of subject specific terminology throughout.
0	0	• Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

This is an extended response question. In order to achieve the highest marks, a response must construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning, which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

This question assesses understanding of theories of audience, specifically cultivation theory, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):
- the interrelationship between media technologies and patterns of consumption and response
- how audiences interpret the media, including how they may interpret the same media in different ways
- how audiences use media in different ways, reflecting demographic factors as well as aspects of identity and cultural capital
- the way in which different audience interpretations reflect social, cultural and historical circumstances.

The following suggests a range of possible responses. Answers are not expected to cover all the points and credit should be given to alternative, valid answers.

The key areas that students would be expected to refer to in evaluating the validity of cultivation theory include:
- the idea television is responsible for shaping, or 'cultivating' viewers' conceptions of social reality

- that the combined effect of massive television exposure by viewers over time subtly shapes the perception of social reality for individuals and, ultimately, for our culture as a whole
- the media cultivates attitudes and values which are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, a way of binding the culture together
- concept of mainstreaming – the idea that the media cultivates middle-of-the- road political perspectives
- concepts of 'first order' and second order effects
- distinctions between heavy and light viewers
- concept of resonance - the intensified effect on the audience when what people see on television is what they have experienced in life.

In considering the validity of these claims, responses are like to focus on the following arguments:
- cultivation theory is a more valid way of looking at the long term effects of the media on society, beyond the claims of the effects debates
- the cumulative aspect of the theory places it in a wider social context of viewership that other theories might
- there are issues around the unknowable nature of audience response – may reference some of the social research done by the original theorists of cultivation theory
- changing media landscape and changing patterns of audience consumption need to be taken into account in evaluating the validity
- assumes a great deal of power for the media in shaping attitudes, which might not be justified.

In evaluating the validity of the theory through reference to the television CSPs, students might consider:
- the use of the thriller genre as representing violence as a normal part of society, something you may be likely to encounter (mean world syndrome)
- evidence of both mainstreaming in simple conflicts between good and evil, but also a more complex and ambiguous representation of society
- the progressive representations in the CSPs (of gender in particular) may be a more positive view of mainstreaming that that usually associated with the concept of mainstreaming
- the reliance on violence against women, which is central to many of the CSPs, could be argued to cultivate particular attitudes in society
- the extreme nature of the plots means that viewers are unlikely to experience resonance.
- the CSPs combine extreme situations with more realist approaches which may well resonate and affect viewers
- the TV CSPs are consumed in a very different media landscape to that of the original theory – is it possible to have TV drama as the dominant source of information?
- distinction between light and heavy viewers and their differing responses – consider target audience for each series.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
03		Assessment objectives – AO2 1 and AO2 3 Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products, including in relation to their contexts (15 marks) Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)	25

Level	Mark range	Description
5	21–25	• Excellent analysis of the products that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the economic and political contexts on media products. • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the online, social and participatory products. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant and detailed analysis of specific aspects of the products and precise links to the specified contexts. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	16–20	• Good analysis of the products that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of the influence of economic and political contexts on the products. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the online, social and participatory products. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by appropriate analysis of relevant aspects of the products and clear links to the specified contexts. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	11–15	• Satisfactory analysis of the products that is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of the influence of the economic and political contexts on the products. • Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the online, social and participatory products. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are reasonable and supported by some analysis of relevant aspects of the products and with some links to the specified contexts. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology.

2	6–10	• Basic analysis of the products that is undeveloped and tends towards description of the influence of economic and political contexts on the products.
		• Basic application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the online, social and participatory products.
		• Basic judgements and conclusions that are only partially supported by reference to the products. Few links to contexts that may not always be relevant or are undeveloped.
		• Little appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
1	1–5	• Minimal analysis that contains multiple inaccuracies or irrelevant points and is almost always descriptive.
		• Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the online, social and participatory products.
		• Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples.
		• Minimal, if any, use of subject specific terminology.
0	0	• Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

This question assesses students' ability to analyse online, social and participatory media products in relation to their contexts and the extent to which those contexts are reflected in media products.

Answers are likely to refer to:
- how developing technologies affect media language
- the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies
- processes of production, distribution and circulation by organisations, groups and individuals in a global context
- the specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation
- the relationship of recent technological change and media production, distribution and circulation
- the significance of patterns of ownership and control, including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification
- the significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding, to media industries and their products
- the impact of digitally convergent media platforms on media production, distribution and circulation, including individual producers
- the role of regulation in global production, distribution and circulation.

This question requires students to engage with the way in which media products reflect the political and economic contexts of their production.

There is no requirement to argue that media products reflect the political and economic contexts of their production (although that would be a valid response); students might equally argue they only do to a certain extent or that they do not reflect the political and economic contexts of their production at all. Various conclusions are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through analysis of the set products.

The following suggests a range of possible responses. Answers are not expected to cover all the points and credit should be given to alternative, valid answers. The points below could be used as evidence to either support or contradict the assertion in the question, depending upon the validity of the arguments made.

Points which support the assertion:
- Teen Vogue is characteristic of the economic organisation of media industries – part of a multi-media, global conglomerate
- Teen Vogue has global brand recognition, an aim for contemporary media industries.
- both online products reflect the decline of print products
- developments in technology have shaped the design and consumption of both products.
- multiple opportunities for the collecting of data of the audience suggest that the two websites reflect economic contexts
- the content of Teen Vogue reflects political contexts in its coverage of contemporary US politics (outspoken criticism of Trump etc)
- the definition of reflecting political contexts would also include the representation of femininity in Teen Vogue and whether that could also be read as conservative – focus on fashion, beauty, celebrity etc
- The Voice covers political and economic issues as they affect their target audience - discrimination, institutional racism, economic inequality etc. – in a way not apparent in other news media
- it could be argued that the Voice is also reflective of these contexts through a much more main stream coverage of celebrity culture, fashion and sport.
- points which challenge the assertion
- distinction between the dominance of conglomerates and independent institutions.
- The Voice is unusual as it is still owned by an independent company, it has very limited multi-media presence
- The Voice is aimed at a niche audiences in a period of global media targeting
- Teen Vogue has explicitly political content which challenges dominant ideologies
- the products have remained free to access, an increasingly rare position in contemporary media.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
04		Assessment objectives – AO1 1a, AO1 1b and AO2 3 Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (5 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (10 marks) Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)	25

Level	Mark range	Description
5	21–25	• Excellent and accurate knowledge of relationship between producers, audiences and representations. • Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate explanation of how representation can be used to target audiences. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples from the set products. • Consistent highly appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	16–20	• Good, accurate knowledge of relationship between producers, audiences and representations. • Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate explanation of how representation can be used to target audiences. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples. • Frequent appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
3	11–15	• Satisfactory, generally accurate knowledge of relationship between producers, audiences and representations. • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate explanation of how representation can be used to target audiences. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Generally appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
2	6–10	• Basic knowledge of relationship between producers, audiences and representations. • Basic understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by occasional appropriate explanation of how representation can be used to target audiences.

		• Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
1	1–5	• Minimal knowledge of relationship between producers, audiences and representations. • Minimal understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by some basic explanation of how representation can be used to target audiences. • Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples. • Minimal use of subject specific terminology throughout.
0	0	• Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

Responses are required to make judgements and draw conclusions about the extent to which producers have targeted audiences through representations. They should refer to the video game CSPs to support their points.

Responses in the higher bands will clearly engage with the 'to what extent' element of the argument and will support their points with effective reference to the CSPs. Responses in the middle band will show some engagement with this element of the question and use examples in a straightforward way to support conclusions. Responses in the lower bands may not engage with this element of the question, may not draw conclusions that are substantiated by reference to the CSPs, or may simply describe aspects of representation, audience and/or the set products.

There is no requirement to argue that audiences are targeted through representations (although that would be a valid response); students might equally argue it is only true to a certain extent. Various conclusions are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through reference to the set products.

As a synoptic question, the knowledge and understanding and judgement of the products should also allow students to draw on material from across the framework and media contexts. Responses in the higher bands must draw together elements across the course of study to inform their analysis and judgements (responses do not have to refer to all four areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media but should draw from a range of elements from across the course).

This question assesses knowledge and understanding of the theoretical frameworks of audience and industries, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):

Media Language
• Construction of representations is through mise en scene, costumes, props etc which can be analysed to provide evidence for the argument about representation.
• Semiotics, particularly denotation, connotation and myth can be used to analyse the representations.
• Concept of targeting can be analysed through narratology and the link to representation – the hero quest etc.
• Changing representation can be linked to genre developments over time in the CSPs.

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Industry
- Context of gender categories in the industry and audience – move by producers to make games appealing beyond the stereotypical young male audience.
- Industry response to sexism within the gaming industry can be linked to representation.
- Different types of institutions linked to different representations.

Representation
- Relevant representations in the set games are around gender – positive and negative responses to Lara Croft as a female hero, questions of gender fluidity (and of humans and machines) in Metroid.
- Responses are likely to take on the implied assumption of the question – that the CSPs are reflective of progressive, female friendly representations.
- References to theories of feminism, post feminism and gender could be used to analyse the types of representations on offer.
- The question of whether the representations are reflective of a socially and culturally aware industry of part of an economic imperative could be discussed.

Audience
- Responses may challenge the assumption about audiences for games through empirical evidence – arguing that women have always played games despite the representations.
- Multiple ways of targeting audience other than through representation can be considered – narrative, identification with characters, skill and gameplay, nostalgia (Lara Croft).
- Debates around gendered identification with narrative characters would be relevant (the male gaze).
- Audience theories of encoding and effects could be used to analyse the relationship between content and audience, as well as the producers control over these responses.