



A-level
MEDIA STUDIES
7572/2

Paper 2 Media Two

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



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 Examiner.

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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

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

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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.

| Question | Marking guidance | | Total marks | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|---|-------------|-------|------------|---|-----|--|---|-----|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| <p>01</p> | <p>Analyse Figure 1 using the following structuralist ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deconstruction • cultural codes. <p style="text-align: center;">AO2 1</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products, including in relation to their contexts and through the use of academic theories (9 marks).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="284 678 1351 1868"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="284 678 389 757">Level</th> <th data-bbox="394 678 507 757">Marks</th> <th data-bbox="512 678 1351 757">Descriptor</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 757 389 1128">3</td> <td data-bbox="394 757 507 1128">7–9</td> <td data-bbox="512 757 1351 1128"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is detailed and critically engages with nuanced aspects of ideas related to deconstruction and cultural codes. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1128 389 1541">2</td> <td data-bbox="394 1128 507 1541">4–6</td> <td data-bbox="512 1128 1351 1541"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of ideas of deconstruction and cultural codes – answers in this band may not attempt to consider both ideas. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1541 389 1809">1</td> <td data-bbox="394 1541 507 1809">1–3</td> <td data-bbox="512 1541 1351 1809"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Minimal, if any, use of structuralist 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. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1809 389 1868">0</td> <td data-bbox="394 1809 507 1868">0</td> <td data-bbox="512 1809 1351 1868"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Level | Marks | Descriptor | 3 | 7–9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is detailed and critically engages with nuanced aspects of ideas related to deconstruction and cultural codes. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. | 2 | 4–6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of ideas of deconstruction and cultural codes – answers in this band may not attempt to consider both ideas. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. | 1 | 1–3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Minimal, if any, use of structuralist 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. | <p>9</p> |
| Level | Marks | Descriptor | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 7–9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is detailed and critically engages with nuanced aspects of ideas related to deconstruction and cultural codes. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 4–6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 structuralist ideas to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis of the cover is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of ideas of deconstruction and cultural codes – answers in this band may not attempt to consider both ideas. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1–3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Minimal, if any, use of structuralist 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Indicative content</p> <p>This question assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media language to analyse media products, particularly focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings • how the combination of elements of media language influence meaning • how audiences respond to and interpret the above aspects of media language • the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies. <p>Structuralist ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deconstruction • cultural codes. <p>In the analysis of the <i>Man About Town</i> magazine cover, students are expected to apply concepts related to structuralism to analyse the meaning of the image in the product.</p> <p>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 offer only examples from the product. There is no requirement for students to deal with both concepts equally.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In their analysis of the <i>Man About Town</i> cover, students may discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the cover is a form of advertising – an attempt to attract an audience • the direct address to the audience and unconventional costume is part of the positioning of the magazine in its appeal to an audience • the minimal style of the cover – in contrast to other magazines – places it as an alternative, independent publication – form of deconstruction • cultural codes would include the image of the model which represents traditional aspects of masculinity through the focus on the muscular torso • the construction of masculinity can be read as paradoxical, with aspects of vulnerability (the pleading look, body language, nakedness) combined with traditional strength • the representation relies on recognising the way an image – or code – of masculinity replaces the traditional role of the female as cover model and object of the gaze • the fluidity of gender – playing with signifiers of masculinity and femininity – draws on contemporary codes, debates and issues. <p>Accept any other valid analytical responses. Answers must link to the focus of the question.</p> | |
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| Question | Marking guidance | | Total marks | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|---|-------------|-------|------------|---|-------|---|---|-------|---|----|
| 02 | <p>Theories of the regulation and control of media industries suggest that there is a conflict between protecting the public interest and the needs of media companies.</p> <p>How valid do you find this argument in explaining the regulation of the media?</p> <p>You should refer to both of your television Close Study Products in your answer:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Capital and Deutschland 83</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Responder and Lupin</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>No Offence and The Killing</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1b, AO2 2 and AO2 3</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (10 marks).</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to evaluate academic theories (10 marks).</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions (5 marks).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="284 1167 1350 2022"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="284 1167 389 1240">Level</th> <th data-bbox="394 1167 507 1240">Marks</th> <th data-bbox="512 1167 1350 1240">Descriptor</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1247 389 1686">5</td> <td data-bbox="394 1247 507 1686">21–25</td> <td data-bbox="512 1247 1350 1686"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through critical engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Excellent, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is insightful, thorough and critically informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation 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. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1693 389 2022">4</td> <td data-bbox="394 1693 507 2022">16–20</td> <td data-bbox="512 1693 1350 2022"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through some engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is logical and informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the set television products. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Level | Marks | Descriptor | 5 | 21–25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through critical engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Excellent, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is insightful, thorough and critically informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through some engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is logical and informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the set television products. | 25 |
| Level | Marks | Descriptor | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 21–25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through critical engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Excellent, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is insightful, thorough and critically informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through some engagement with the nuanced aspects of the theories and argument. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is logical and informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the set television products. | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. |
| 3 | 11–15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through engagement with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of the theories and argument. • Satisfactory, generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation. • Evaluation is reasonable and straightforward, although there may be a tendency to apply rather than evaluate the theories. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of theories of regulation 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of the theoretical framework of media demonstrated through engagement with more straightforward aspects of the theories and argument; this is likely to be limited. • Basic application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate theories of regulation; there is likely to be a lack of clarity or relevance. • There may be a tendency to simply describe features of the set products rather than evaluate the theories. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal, if any, understanding of the theoretical framework of media that engages with minimal aspects of the theories and argument. • Minimal, if any application of knowledge and understanding to evaluate the theories of regulation. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. |
| <p>Indicative content</p> <p>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.</p> | | |

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| | <p>This question assesses understanding of theories of regulation, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • how media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally • the regulatory framework of contemporary media in the UK • the impact of ‘new’ digital technologies on media regulation, including the role of individual producers • how processes of production, distribution and circulation shape media products. <p>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.</p> <p>Note: there is no requirement to cover both products equally or to be comparative. However, responses which fail to address both CSPs should not be awarded marks above the top of Level 3 (15).</p> <p>The key areas that students would be expected to refer to in evaluating the validity of regulation theories would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the forms of regulation, ownership and control in the UK and global media industries as exemplified in the television close study products and their contexts • the way in which forms of regulation, ownership and control can affect the style and content of media products • the problems faced by regulators in an increasingly global media industry • how media production can be characterised as for or against the public interest and how this influences regulation and ownership • the characterisation of audiences as consumers or citizens and how this affects the understanding of the regulator’s role • the role of the media as both challenging to and protective of the audience • the relationship between regulators, media industry and government • the ideas and theories developed by Curran and Seaton and Livingstone and Lunt would be particularly relevant to exploring this area. <p>Specific relevance to television CSPs: The specific CSPs can be used to demonstrate understanding of the theories and to evaluate their validity.</p> <p>Capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a public service broadcaster, the BBC can be seen as exemplifying the argument that the media has to be regulated (in this case by Ofcom) in order to protect the public interest. • The prestige nature of its cast and source material, Sunday evening scheduling, the representation of contemporary political and cultural issues (the ‘state of the nation’) signify the programme as a serious, quality product which is worthy of public funding. | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a prestige production, <i>Capital</i> is positioned in contrast to more superficial pleasures provided by private or commercial channels. • The BBC and <i>Capital</i> can be discussed in terms of the needs of the consumer and citizen – providing the audience with products which are intelligent and challenging, a protection against the short-term profit-led focus of private industry. • Alternatively, it could be argued that public service broadcasters like the BBC are paternalistic and restrict the range of products available to a media-literate audience. • The validity of the distinction between public and private industry and the increasingly blurred lines between the two could be explored – <i>Capital</i> is a commission from the independent production company Kudos, BBC Studios is a global, commercial subsidiary of the BBC which attempts to target global audiences. • The attacks on the BBC by politicians and the threat to the license fee suggest the position set out in the question is valid. <p>Deutschland 83</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The German broadcast system is similar to that of the UK, with a mix of public service broadcast channels and private companies, all of which are nationally regulated, suggesting a belief in the argument of the need to protect the audience. • <i>Deutschland 83</i> is produced by the private German company RTL, a subsidiary of the European conglomerate Bertelsman – characteristic of the ownership structure of commercial media industries. • The nature of <i>Deutschland 83</i> as a series representing German history and culture conforms to the aims of public service broadcasting despite being outside of that model – suggesting that the apparent opposition between public and private isn't always valid. • The financial demands on media companies to distribute globally are evident in the transnational production and distribution context of <i>Deutschland 83</i> (RTL Germany and the US companies AMC and Sundance TV) which may shape the content of the programme – arguably lessening the focus on the national audience. • <i>Deutschland 83</i> as a transnational coproduction illustrates the limitations of national regulation which is restricted by borders – audience protection may therefore be secondary to the aims of institutions. • The need to be part of a transnational coproduction could be seen as a result of Bertelsman's failure to develop a presence in streaming platforms – suggesting how the organisation of companies are shaped by global influences. <p>The Responder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a public service broadcaster, the BBC can be seen as exemplifying the argument that the media has to be regulated (in this case by Ofcom) in order to protect the public interest. • The prestige nature of its cast, Sunday evening scheduling, the representation of contemporary political and cultural issues (the 'state of the nation') signify the programme as a serious, quality product which is worthy of public funding. • The BBC and <i>The Responder</i> can be discussed in terms of the needs of the consumer and citizen – providing the audience with products which are | |
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| | <p>culturally specific, a protection against the short-term profit-led focus of private industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatively, it could be argued that public service broadcasters like the BBC are paternalistic and restrict the range of products available to a media-literate audience. • The representations – of police corruption, drug crime and sexual abuse – are controversial and can be in part read as an attack on mainstream institutions, suggesting public service broadcasting can maintain a distance from the establishment. • The validity of the distinction between public and private industry and the increasingly blurred lines between the two could be explored – <i>The Responder</i> is a commission from the independent production company Dancing Ledge, BBC Studios is a global, commercial subsidiary of the BBC which attempts to target global audiences. • The attacks on the BBC by politicians and the threat to the license fee suggest the position set out in the question is valid. <p>Lupin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French regulatory context is similar to other Western European countries in its mix of public and commercial broadcasters with state intervention to regulate aspects of the broadcast platforms – with the emphasis on protecting freedom to communicate. • Arguments for increased state regulation and control of media companies have come in response to the changing media landscape in France with concern about the growing concentration of media power in the control of fewer companies. • The producer of <i>Lupin</i> – Gaumont – exemplifies debates over the competing needs and aims of the public and commercial sectors – a French company which celebrates national culture and history while diversifying with subsidiaries across Europe and in the US. • The style and content of <i>Lupin</i> can be read as both culturally specific (France’s colonial legacy and contemporary multicultural society) and global in its appeal (genre, high production values, star led, romance) – in response to the nature of the contemporary media industry. • The distribution deal for <i>Lupin</i> via Netflix demonstrate the dominance of a few streaming services in the contemporary market. • The questions for regulators posed by companies like Netflix – registered in one country but streaming globally – are central to this debate. (Please note at time of writing Ofcom had announced plans to regulate Netflix but this hadn’t been put into practice – clearly subject to change). <p>No Offence (UK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel 4 has a unique position in the contemporary British media context – a publicly owned broadcaster which is commercially run, so exemplifies key aspects of the demand between public and private interests. • Recent political attacks on the company – including plans to sell it to a private company – suggests the vulnerability of the concept of the public interest in a broadcast context. • Channel 4’s remit of representing alternate views and stimulating debate can be seen as bringing it into conflict with some of the Ofcom regulations designed to protect the viewer – a model central to ideas and theories of regulation. | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No Offence</i> – through its representation, regional setting, approach to genre and auteur status – can be analysed as an example of the channel’s remit to provide innovative and challenging programmes. • The production model for the programme – commissioned from the independent company AbbottVision is typical of the commercial/public partnerships which now characterise public service broadcasting. • <i>No Offence</i> was distributed by Fremantle – a subsidiary of RTL/Bertelsmann – which has recently announced plans for a US remake, suggesting the way content is shaped by global production and distribution needs. <p><i>The Killing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denmark – like many other European countries – has a regulated media industry with a mix of public and private broadcasters. The small national market makes state intervention vital to ensure that a plurality of voices are represented in national broadcasting. • <i>The Killing</i> was produced by DR, an independent Danish public service broadcaster which is funded by a license fee in a similar way to the BBC. • DR’s recent launch of a streaming service has caused concerns about the dominance of the public service broadcaster and the blurring of the lines between public and commercial activities (similar to debates around the BBC). • <i>The Killing</i> can be analysed both as an example of public service broadcasting through the new representation of female characters and the exploration of Danish society but also as a product designed to appeal to a global audience through the reliance on familiar forms. • The transnational success of <i>The Killing</i> was an early indicator of the shifts in the contemporary media landscape where series need to have global appeal to succeed. • The different stages of distribution and remakes via BBC4, AMC, Fox studios and then Netflix provide plentiful examples of ownership and control in the media industry. | |
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| Question | Marking guidance | | Total marks | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|--|-------------|-------|------------|---|-------|--|---|-------|--|---|-------|--|------------------|
| <p>03</p> | <p>Media products represent social and cultural contexts to convey values and beliefs.</p> <p>To what extent does an analysis of the video game Close Study Products <i>The Sims FreePlay</i> and <i>Horizon Forbidden West</i> support this view?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AO2 1 and AO2 3</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products, including in relation to their contexts and through the use of academic theories (15 marks)</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="284 790 1351 2056"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="284 790 389 869">Level</th> <th data-bbox="394 790 507 869">Marks</th> <th data-bbox="512 790 1351 869">Descriptor</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 875 389 1346">5</td> <td data-bbox="394 875 507 1346">21–25</td> <td data-bbox="512 875 1351 1346"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent analysis of the products that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. • 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. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1352 389 1787">4</td> <td data-bbox="394 1352 507 1787">16–20</td> <td data-bbox="512 1352 1351 1787"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis of the products that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. • 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. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="284 1794 389 2056">3</td> <td data-bbox="394 1794 507 2056">11–15</td> <td data-bbox="512 1794 1351 2056"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis of the products that is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of the influence of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Level | Marks | Descriptor | 5 | 21–25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent analysis of the products that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis of the products that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis of the products that is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of the influence of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. | <p>25</p> |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic analysis of the products that is undeveloped and tends towards description of the influence of the relationship between social and cultural contexts, media producers, representations and audiences. • Basic application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the video games. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 video games. • Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples. • Minimal, if any, use of subject-specific terminology. |
| 0 | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. |

Indicative content

This question assesses students' ability to analyse video games in relation to their contexts and the relationship between contexts, representation and meaning.

Answers are likely to refer to:

- the effect of social and cultural context on representations
- how and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively
- how and why particular social groups, in a national and global context, may be underrepresented or misrepresented
- how media representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media representations
- how audiences respond to and interpret media representations.

There is no requirement to argue that media products represent social and cultural contexts in order to convey attitudes and beliefs – they can argue that they do to a certain extent or that there are other factors and aims which are important. Various conclusions are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through analysis of the set products.

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| | <p>Points that argue that media products represent social and cultural contexts in order to convey attitudes and beliefs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • media products are part of the social and cultural contexts which produce them – representation of these is inherent • media products are ideological – their purpose is to transmit values and beliefs • audiences are positioned to accept the representations and messages of media products. <p>Points that argue that media products do not represent social and cultural contexts in order to convey attitudes and beliefs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the idea that there is a direct link between representation and reality (social and cultural contexts) is open to debate • not all (or any?) media products are necessarily ideological – they may not therefore transmit values and beliefs • audiences are capable of resisting the values and beliefs conveyed by media products – appeal of the products may be in genre, escapism etc. <p>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.</p> <p>Note: there is no requirement to cover both products equally or to be comparative. However, responses which fail to address both CSPs should not be awarded marks above the top of Level 3 (15). Also note that <i>Horizon Forbidden West</i> is only studied in relation to cultural contexts.</p> <p>The CSPs can be used to demonstrate understanding of the argument.</p> <p><i>The Sims FreePlay</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The representation of contemporary social and cultural contexts is central to the game – part of its appeal and ongoing success. • The game producers foreground issues of representation in the game and its marketing – often focusing on the importance of progressive representations which are debated in social and cultural contexts. • The nature of the values and beliefs being conveyed could be debated – the game has been read as representing conservative values which are reflective of mainstream society and culture. • The construction of the fictional world in the game could be too stylised to be accepted as version of reality – reinforcing the escapist nature of the wider form. • The emphasis on the player’s decision making and ability to construct their own representation creates a challenge to the power of the producer to control which values and beliefs are conveyed. • The immersive nature of the game means that the player is more vulnerable to accepting the values and beliefs being conveyed. <p><i>Horizon Forbidden West</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of a future, post-apocalyptic world for the setting could distance it from contemporary cultural contexts or be read as a metaphor for them. | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of technology to create a realist aesthetic may reinforce a reading of the game as being about the real world (cultural contexts). • The representations in the game have referred to contemporary debates and controversies around Black and Native American representations – which might suggest that the producers are using contexts to convey values and beliefs. • The representation of the central female character can be read as representing issues of gender but also the specific cultural context of accusations of misogyny in the gaming industry. • These issues may also be being used as a form of marketing by the producers – another form of ideology. • The third-person, open-world nature of the game play could be used to analyse how the player receives the representations and to consider the power relations between play and producer. | |
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| Question | Marking guidance | | Total marks | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>04</p> | <p>If magazines are to survive, producers must target specialised audiences.</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this statement?</p> <p>Refer to the Close Study Products <i>GQ</i> and <i>The Gentlewoman</i> to support your answer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1a, AO1 1b and AO2 3</p> <p>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).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="296 779 1339 2045"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="296 779 400 853">Level</th> <th data-bbox="400 779 517 853">Marks</th> <th data-bbox="517 779 1339 853">Descriptor</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="296 853 400 1301">5</td> <td data-bbox="400 853 517 1301">21–25</td> <td data-bbox="517 853 1339 1301"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate discussion of the ways producers 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. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="296 1301 400 1675">4</td> <td data-bbox="400 1301 517 1675">16–20</td> <td data-bbox="517 1301 1339 1675"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples. • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="296 1675 400 2045">3</td> <td data-bbox="400 1675 517 2045">11–15</td> <td data-bbox="517 1675 1339 2045"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory, generally accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Level | Marks | Descriptor | 5 | 21–25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate discussion of the ways producers 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples. • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. | 3 | 11–15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory, generally accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. | <p>25</p> |
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| 3 | 11–15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory, generally accurate knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| 2 | 6–10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge of the extent to which magazines survive through targeting specialised audiences. • Basic understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by occasional appropriate discussion of the way producers target audiences. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. |
| 1 | 1–5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal knowledge of how magazines target audiences. • Minimal understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by some basic discussion of targeting audience. • Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples. • Minimal use of subject-specific terminology throughout. |
| 0 | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit. |

Indicative content

Responses are required to make judgements and draw conclusions about the extent to which media producers target specialised audiences as a strategy to maintain readership. They should refer to the magazine 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 the audience and/or the set products.

As a synoptic question, the knowledge and understanding and judgement of the products should also allow candidates 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).

Language:

- how the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings
- how the combination of elements of media language influence meaning
- how audiences respond to and interpret the above aspects of media language
- the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies.

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| | <p>Representations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the way the media through re-presentation construct versions of reality • the processes which lead media producers to make choices about how to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups • how representations may invoke discourses and ideologies and position audiences • how audience responses to and interpretations of media representations reflect social, cultural and historical circumstances. <p>Industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally • the relationship of recent technological change and media production, distribution and circulation. <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how audiences are grouped and categorised by media industries, including by age, gender and social class, as well as by lifestyle and taste • how media producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences • how media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated • how specialised audiences can be reached, both on a national and global scale, through different media technologies and platforms • how media organisations reflect the different needs of mass and specialised audiences, including through targeting. • the role and significance of specialised audiences, including niche and fan, to the media. <p>Responses which fail to address both CSPs should not be awarded marks above the top of Level 3 (15).</p> <p>The CSPs can be used to discuss the way producers target audiences.</p> <p>Some points relevant to both CSPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of relevant theories (within the frameworks of audience and industry) which explore how producers target audiences. • Discussion of the differences between mass and specialised audiences, including niche and alternative groups. To what extent are these distinctions still valid? • To what extent have the producers of print magazines moved towards a focus on specialised audiences? • The nature of representations in print magazines and the extent to which they can be understood as targeting a specialised – or otherwise – audience. • How can the aesthetics and mode of address of print be seen as part of an address to a specific audience? • How the nature of the distribution of print (rather than digital) magazines relates to audience demographics. • Additional industry strategies which are used to target audiences such as a multi-platform experience. | |
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| | <p>The CSPs can be used to demonstrate understanding of the argument:</p> <p>GQ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target audience can be defined by demographics and psychographics (urban millennials and Gen Z). • The target audience can be defined as specialised by the magazine’s focus on youth, diversity, alternative fashion and a reference to queer culture. • The producers of the magazine have shifted from more mainstream representations of social and cultural developments to more specialised ones. • The aesthetic (media language and representation) is part of the selling point of the magazine which is specific to the print form. • Aesthetic is positioned more with alternative magazine styles (eg <i>Kinfolk</i>, <i>Frame</i>) than mainstream (eg <i>Men’s Health</i>) • Representations of masculinity as fluid, with an interest in fashion and beauty as the norm – though the extent to which this can now be defined as specialised could be evaluated. • Audience is targeted through consumerism and notions of ideal images in a similar was to the construction of a mainstream, mass mode of address. <p>The Gentlewoman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target audience can be defined by demographics and psychographics – the readership is relatively small and has an unusually high average income, distinguishing it from the mass audience. • The mode of address is defined as serious but ‘playful’, constructing the audience as intellectual. • Focus on ‘long form’ journalism as opposed to celebrity-led profiles. • Focus on literature, environment, design and architecture suggests the way the producers construct a specialised readership. • Explicit focus on modernist design in the aesthetic of the magazine differentiates the representations from those aimed at a mass audience. • Coverage of mainstream women’s magazine subject areas such as fashion and beauty are constructed to be authentic in opposition to negative consumerism – focus on individuality. • The <i>Gentlewoman</i> ‘club’ personifies the brand’s (paradoxical?) attempt to mix consumer luxury and alternative taste to target a specialised audience. | |
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