



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

## General Certificate of Education

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# Media Studies 5571/6571 2009

### Special Features

- Balance of theory and practice
- Analysis of unseen materials
- Production and Research Skills
- Focus on Key Concepts at AS
- Focus on Contexts at A2

### Material accompanying this Specification

- Examination Papers and Mark Schemes
- Guidance on Unit 3
- Examiners' Reports

# SPECIFICATION

This specification will be published annually on the AQA Website ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)). If there are any changes to the specification centres will be notified in print as well as on the Website. The version on the Website is the definitive version of the specification.

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AQA Logistics Centre, Unit 2, Wheel Forge Way, Ashburton Park, Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1EH.  
Telephone: 0870 410 1036 Fax: 0161 953 1177

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# Background Information

## 1

# Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Specifications

## 1.1 Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

Advanced Subsidiary courses were introduced in September 2000 for the award of the first qualification in August 2001. They may be used in one of two ways:

- as a final qualification, allowing candidates to broaden their studies and to defer decisions about specialism;
- as the first half (50%) of an Advanced Level qualification, which must be completed before an Advanced Level award can be made.

Advanced Subsidiary is designed to provide an appropriate assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of candidates who have completed the first half of a full Advanced Level qualification. The level of demand of the AS examination is that expected of candidates half-way through a full A Level course of study.

## 1.2 Advanced Level (AS+A2)

The Advanced Level examination is in two parts:

- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) - 50% of the total award;
- Advanced (A2) - 50% of the total award.

Most Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level courses are modular. The AS comprises three teaching and learning modules and the A2 comprises a further three teaching and learning modules. Each teaching and learning module is normally assessed through an associated assessment unit. The specification gives details of the relationship between the modules and assessment units.

With the two-part design of Advanced Level courses, centres may devise an assessment schedule to meet their own and candidates' needs. For example:

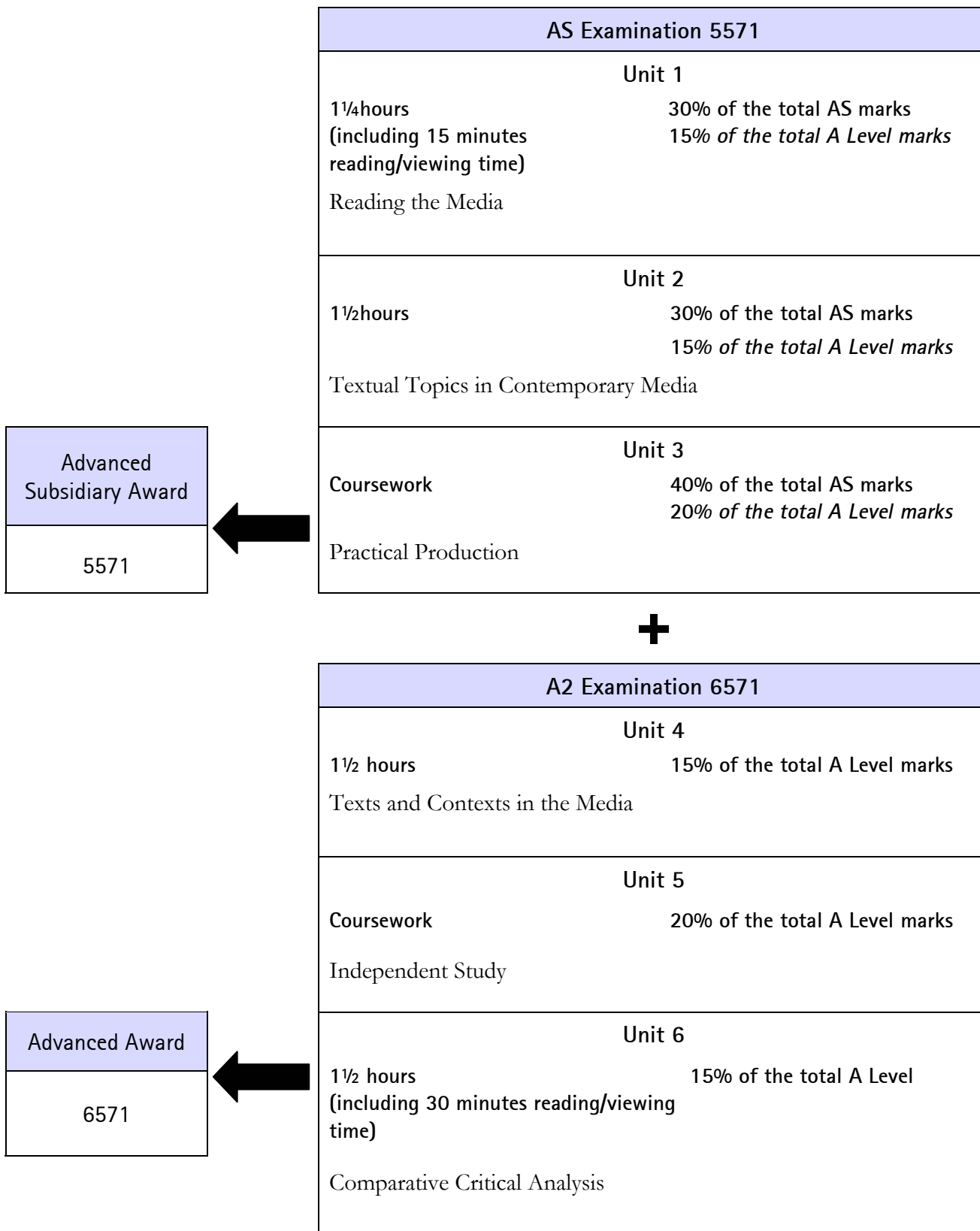
- assessment units may be taken at stages throughout the course, at the end of each year or at the end of the total course;
- AS may be completed at the end of one year and A2 by the end of the second year.
- AS and A2 may be completed at the end of the same year.

Details of the availability of the assessment units are provided in Section 3.

2

# Specification at a Glance

## Media Studies



## 3

# Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

## 3.1 Availability of Assessment Units

Examinations based on this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of Units		Availability of Qualification	
	AS	A2	AS	A Level
January	1, 2 and 3	4, 5 and 6	✓	✓
June	1, 2 and 3	4, 5 and 6	✓	✓

Resit opportunities for externally assessed A2 units will be available in January 2010. Details of the arrangements have been provided to centres through the JCQ notice **Withdrawal of Curriculum 2000 Specifications.**

## 3.2 Sequencing of Units

There is no constraint to follow the units in the order given for assessment purposes, but the introduction to each module indicates its position in the overall design and progression of the specification. It is expected that candidates would normally study the modules from one to three, or from one to six.

## 3.3 Entry Codes

Normal entry requirements apply, but the following information should be noted.

The following unit entry codes should be used:

AS	A2
Unit 1 - <i>MED 1</i>	Unit 4 - <i>MED 4</i>
Unit 2 - <i>MED 2</i>	Unit 5 - <i>MED 5</i>
Unit 3 - <i>MED 3</i>	Unit 6 - <i>MED 6</i>

The **Subject Code** for entry to the AS only award is 5571.

The **Subject Code** for entry to the Advanced Level award is 6571.

## 3.4 Classification Codes

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this specification is 5350.

## 3.5 Private Candidates

This specification is available to private candidates in the following circumstances. Where an AS/A2 award has already been made within 12 months the coursework modules may be carried forward for one year if the rest of the qualification is being taken. Private candidates should write to the AQA for a copy of ‘Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates’.

### 3.6 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification.

Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document:

*Access Arrangements and Special Consideration*

*Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examination*

*GCE, AEA, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills*

This document can be viewed via the AQA Website ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk))

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

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### 3.7 Language of Assessment

Assessment of this subject will be available only in English.

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## Scheme of Assessment

## 4

## Introduction

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### 4.1 General

The modular format of the specification is conducive to effective learning in a subject where candidates demonstrate progression by gaining knowledge and skills cumulatively, rather than through the absorption of content. Coursework is a requirement at both AS and A2. The AQA believes that this form of assessment is the most effective in ensuring that certain Assessment Objectives are met.

The media are here defined as those technological means of communication which communicate with their audiences primarily on a one way basis. These are, predominantly, television, radio, film, the press and forms closely associated with the media such as advertising and the Internet.

While centres need to provide adequate facilities such as television, radio and video and audio cassette recorders, sophisticated technical equipment is not required.

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### 4.2 Rationale

The mass media arguably constitute the primary symbolic forms of contemporary western cultures.

They are

- the most important means by which information, ideas, aesthetic experiences and entertainment are transmitted to citizens and consumers

- vital forces for social and cultural cohesion or exclusion
- central to contemporary discussion of politics, aesthetics, social identity and cultural rights.

Just as the widening of print literacy was necessary to the extension of the franchise in the nineteenth century so it can be argued that the development of what the QCA has called the “extension literacy” of media competency is necessary if democratic rights and values and active citizenship are to be carried forward into the media-saturated cultures and electronic democracies of the new millennium. Indeed, the national development of the twin extension literacies of information technology and media competency constitute perhaps the most important challenges facing our educational system in improving the country’s knowledge and skills base.

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#### 4.3 Broad Objectives

This specification contributes to this wider project by having as its broad objectives

- the systematic and progressive development of critical reading and communication competencies in relation to the mass media
- the attainment of media literacy through the development in candidates of a high level of critical autonomy.

This autonomy refers to the ability of candidates to apply critical ideas and/or principles to the new situations which they experience both as consumers and producers of media texts.

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#### 4.4 Aims

In order to achieve these broad objectives the specification aims to provide candidates with a range of supportive concepts, ideas and skills. In particular it aims to

- provide candidates with a conceptual framework which will give them the critical tools necessary to carry out their own readings and investigations, and generate their own questions of the mass media
- enable candidates to engage with theory, research and ideas relating to the media, to develop research skills, show evidence of independent study and to communicate effectively both via a media technology, and in written form
- develop candidates’ ability to explore the historical, social, political and economic contexts relevant to the critical reading of media texts and an understanding of media issues
- build on, develop and extend candidates’ own interests, knowledge and enjoyment of media texts and technologies.

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#### 4.5 Opportunities for progression

Whilst the specification has been planned as a rigorous course of study in its own right it does provide a clear link between media work undertaken at Key Stage 4 and HE/employment opportunities. The specification shares the same conceptual framework as all GCSE specifications in Media Studies, and has been planned as an extension and development of those specifications. In its emphasis on detailed textual study the specification also extends and develops approaches to media study found in GCSE English specifications.

The emphasis in this specification is upon the development of independent critical thinking skills which makes it particularly appropriate and relevant to candidates wanting to study the media at higher academic levels. In addition, the conceptual framework for this specification forms the basis for most degree courses in Media Studies and other, related subjects.

The specification is not intended to be a vocational course of study. It has not been designed as a qualification for entry into the media industries. It aims to provide a range of media competencies relevant to candidates as future citizens and consumers of media. As such it can provide a useful “taster” for candidates considering more specialised vocational courses. In addition, knowledge of the media is increasingly valued and is becoming an important aspect of work in most institutions in an information society. This qualification should therefore be of value to candidates entering employment across a wide range of industries and professions.

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#### 4.6 Prior level of attainment and prior recommended learning

Candidates may enrol for the qualification without prior learning or attainment in the subject. A GCSE in Media Studies or English, Grade C or better, is desirable, but it is not essential given the diversity of the potential candidature, and the qualification’s relevance to candidates with an interest in media production as well as media textual analysis. Candidates should however be able to demonstrate some practical or critical awareness of the mass media.

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#### 4.7 Key Skills

AS and A Level specifications in Media Studies should provide opportunities for producing evidence for assessing the Key Skills. Section 16 of the specification provides further details on teaching, developing and providing opportunities for producing evidence for Key Skills.

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## 5 Progression from AS to A Level

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### 5.1 Progression from AS to AL

There are major differences between the demands made of candidates in the AS and A Level modules, as well as a clear line of progression between them.

The **AS modules** are textually-centred.

Primarily they require candidates to:

- apply the conceptual framework to the reading of media texts
- undertake the detailed study of two topics which are amenable to study primarily via the use of contemporary texts
- engage with theory, research and ideas relating to their two chosen topics
- produce their own media texts using an appropriate technology.

The **A Level Modules**, whilst also rooted in the study of media texts, and having strong lines of continuity and development from the AS modules, require candidates to consider a range of contexts relevant to a fuller understanding of texts.

Whereas the emphasis in the AS modules is upon developing candidates' understanding of how texts work, here the focus is also on why texts are the way that they are and the historical, social, political and economic forces that have shaped them. The A Level modules will require candidates to

- apply the conceptual framework with increasing flexibility and sophistication to the reading of media texts and an understanding of their relevant contexts
- select and use those aspects of the conceptual framework most appropriate to an independent study of a media text, topic or issue, to the detailed study of two media topics, and, synoptically, to the comparative analysis of media texts
- show evidence of independent study, via investigation of a media text or issue and its relevant contexts
- undertake the detailed study of two topics, focusing not simply on media texts but also on the wider contexts which have shaped them
- engage with theory, research and ideas relating to the texts and contexts of their two chosen topics
- undertake a synoptic comparative analysis of media texts, drawing on the conceptual framework, and their knowledge of any relevant contexts in drawing out and explaining points of similarity and difference between them.

## 5.2 Relevant contexts

It is not possible to stipulate in advance the precise weighting or significance which should be given to different contextual factors within the A Level modules. These will be dependent upon such factors as

- the major issues and areas of debate around the topic studied
- the availability of support material (e.g. of historical texts relevant to the topic)
- the contexts of most interest and relevance to the candidate.

However, in **Module Four** clear guidance is given on the relevant contextual factors in the sub-topics for study under each category. In general terms it can be said that

- in **The Production and Manufacture of News**, important political, social and economic issues are raised by all of the sub-topics. Lack of availability of historical news footage makes detailed historical comparisons difficult, but recent changes in news coverage and production will be covered
- in **Representations**, the historical, social, political and economic dimensions of the topic should be covered
- in **Genre**, the historical development of the chosen genre will be covered, together with comparative analyses of the social, political and economic contexts of production, and their influence upon the processes of generic change
- in **Media Audiences** social, political and economic issues inform most of the sub-topics listed for study
- in **Module Five** the precise contexts to be studied will be dependent upon the choice of text, topic or issue for the Independent Study, and those contexts of most interest and

relevance to candidates. Appropriate social and economic contexts might include those relating to issues of production, distribution or reception

- in **Module Six**, a synoptic module, candidates are required to draw on a wide range of possible relevant contexts in accounting for the similarities and differences between comparative texts.

## 6

# Assessment Objectives

- 6.1 The differences between AS and A Level Assessment Objectives reflect the differences in the depth and breadth of the requirements of their specifications.
- 6.2 The Assessment Objectives for this specification are as follows:
- This specification requires that the following Assessment Objectives are tested.
- Assessment Objectives 1 and 3i apply to both AS and A Level.
- Assessment Objective 4 applies only to AS.
- Assessment Objectives 2, 3ii and 5 apply only to A Level.
- 6.3 The examination will assess a candidate's ability to
- At AS*
- A01 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts
- A03i demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media
- A04 demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of at least one media technology
- At A Level*
- A01 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts
- A02 demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies
- A03i demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media
- A03ii demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences
- A05 demonstrate the ability to use appropriate investigate and research techniques in carrying out an independent study of a media text, topic or issue.

## 6.4

Though Assessment Objectives 1 and 3i apply to both AS and A Level, there are qualitative differences between the ways in which they are tested at these levels.

**AO1**

In **Module One** this objective is tested at a basic or introductory level of competence. Emphasis will be placed upon the concepts of Media Language, Representation and Media Audiences and candidates will be expected to apply their knowledge of the Key Concepts to a single unseen media text, and evaluate that text using the key concepts.

In **Module Two** candidates will apply the key concepts to a more detailed study of two contemporary media topics, covering a range and variety of texts.

In **Module Three**, knowledge and application of the Key Concepts is integral to all three components of the Practical Production. The **brief** must apply the Key Concepts in analysing the topic to be explored, and pay particular attention to matching content and form (Media Language) with intended audience. The **finished product** must demonstrate application of Media Language, and be relevant to the analysis (using the Key Concepts) of the chosen topic. The **evaluation** must evaluate the finished product, paying particular attention to the Key Concepts which have informed the work.

In **Module Four** the Key Concepts will be applied to, and used to evaluate, two further media topics. Here, however, candidates will need to go beyond a textual study and consider in addition, the wider contextual forces which shape media texts. The concepts of institution and ideology will play a more important role here than they did in the AS modules.

In **Module Five** candidates must apply the Key Concepts with increasing independence, depth and sophistication in selecting and investigating a media text, topic or issue as the subject of an Independent Study.

In **Module Six** knowledge and application of the Key Concepts (and their evaluative purposes) will be tested synoptically. Candidates must apply the Key Concepts in an unseen exercise (as in Module One) to more than one text (Module Two), and their relevant contexts (Module Four), thereby demonstrating their independent critical thinking (Module Five).

**AO3i**

In **Module Two** this objective is tested primarily in relation to the elucidation of media texts.

In **Module Four** this objective is tested in relation to both media texts and the wider contextual forces which have shaped them.

In **Module Six** this objective is tested in relation to the comparative elucidation of both media texts and their wider contexts.

## 6.5 Quality of Written Communication

The quality of written communication is assessed in all assessment units where candidates are required to produce extended writing. Candidates will be assessed according to their ability to

- select and use forms and styles of writing appropriate to purpose and complex subject matter
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate
- ensure text is legible, and spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

The assessment of the quality of written communication is included in all Assessment Objectives.

## 7

## Scheme of Assessment – Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

The Scheme of Assessment permits either staged assessment or assessment at the end of the course. The Advanced Subsidiary (AS) award comprises three compulsory assessment units (modules).

### 7.1 Modules

<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Written Paper</b>	<b>1¼ hours</b>
<i>30% of the total AS marks</i>		

Reading the Media

<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Written Paper</b>	<b>1½ hours</b>
<i>30% of the total AS marks</i>		

Textual Topics in Contemporary Media

<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Coursework</b>
<i>40% of the total AS marks</i>	

Practical Production

### 7.2 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for AS

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

Assessment Objectives	Weightings of Modules (%)			Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	1	2	3†	
AO1	30	20	10	60
AO3i	-	10	-	10
AO4	-	-	30	30
<b>Overall Weighting of Modules (%)</b>	30	30	40	100

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

† Centre assessed.

## 8

## Scheme of Assessment – Advanced Level (AS+A2)

The Scheme of Assessment permits either staged assessment or assessment at the end of the course. The A Level award comprises three compulsory assessment units (modules) from the AS Scheme of Assessment and three compulsory assessment units (modules) from the A2 Scheme of Assessment.

### 8.1 AS Modules

Module 1 15% of the total A Level marks	Written Paper	1¼ hours
Module 2 15% of the total A Level marks	Written Paper	1½ hours
Module 3 20% of the total A Level marks	Coursework	

### 8.2 A2 Modules

Module 4 <i>15% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Paper	1½ hours
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Texts and Contexts in the Media

Module 5 <i>20% of the total A Level marks</i>	Coursework
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Independent Study

Module 6 <i>15% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Paper	1½ hours
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Comparative Critical Analysis

### 8.3 Synoptic Assessment

The Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Criteria state that A Level specifications must include synoptic assessment (representing at least 20% of the total A Level marks). In this specification synopticity is assessed in Unit 5 (5%) and Unit 6 (15%).

The full synoptic assessment criteria for this specification are as follows:

- (i) candidates will be expected to demonstrate attainment in the specifications' three most widely distributed Assessment Objectives (AO1, AO2 and AO3)

- (ii) candidates will be required to draw together their understanding of the Key Concepts, major ideas, theories, debates and information from different parts of the specification in order to make
  - (a) effective textual readings
  - (b) effective textual comparisons
- (iii) candidates must draw upon their knowledge and application of a wide range of possible relevant contexts, in order to **account** for the
  - (a) characteristics of media texts
  - (b) and the similarities and differences between media texts

These “relevant contexts” are those specified in AO2 (historical, social, political, economic).

- (iv) candidates must demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the broad objectives of the specification of critical autonomy – the ability to apply critical ideas and principles to new situations – and media literacy in their responses to media texts.

All of these synoptic assessment criteria will apply to Module Six, a full synoptic module.

In Module Five candidates will be expected to meet the following synoptic criteria

- (i) to demonstrate their attainment of the major Assessment Objectives of AS (A01) and A level (A02)
- (ii) to draw together their understanding of Key Concepts from different parts of the specification in order to make effective textual readings
- (iii) to draw upon their knowledge and application of a wide range of possible relevant contexts, in order to account for the characteristics of media texts

These “relevant contexts” are those specified in A02 (historical, social, political, economic).

- (iv) candidates must demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the broad objectives of the specification of critical autonomy – the ability to apply critical ideas and principles to new situations – and media literacy in their responses to media texts.

#### 8.4 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for A Level

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

Assessment Objectives	Weightings of Modules (%)						Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	1	2	3†	4	5†	6	
AO1	15	10	5	2½	2½	5	40
AO2				7½	2½	2½	12½
AO3i		5		5		2½	12½
AO3ii						5	5
AO4			15				15
AO5					15		15
<b>Overall Weighting of Modules (%)</b>	15	15	20	15	20	15	100

† Centre assessed

In order to achieve the weightings for the specification as a whole Units will be scaled as shown below.

Unit	Total Raw Mark	Scaled Mark	Overall %
1	60	30	15
2	60	30	15
3	100	40	20
4	60	30	15
5	60	40	20
6	60	30	15
		200	

Mark allocations for the Assessment Units have been determined to make subject aggregation straightforward.

# Subject Content

## 9

## Summary of Subject Content

### 9.1 AS Modules

#### MODULE 1 - Reading the Media

It is the aim of Module 1 to introduce candidates to the Key Concepts underpinning the specification, concepts with which they will familiarise themselves by applying them to a wide range of media texts.

#### MODULE 2 - Textual Topics in Contemporary Media

Candidates will be encouraged to apply the Key Concepts to a more detailed study of two media topics. In these topics the emphasis will be upon the analysis of contemporary texts, an understanding of the principles underpinning them and an engagement with the issues relevant to them.

#### MODULE 3 - Practical Production

Candidates will be expected to apply their knowledge of the Key Concepts to a practical production project involving a media technology.

### 9.2 A2 Modules

#### MODULE 4 - Texts and Contexts in the Media

Candidates will study two further topics in detail. Here, they will be required to apply the Key Concepts both to a variety of texts and a range of relevant wider contexts.

#### MODULE 5 - Independent Study

Candidates will use the Key Concepts to investigate or research an independent area of study, which will deal with a contemporary text, topic or issue, and its relevant contexts. This module will contribute to the specification's synoptic assessment (see para 8.3).

#### MODULE 6 - Comparative Critical Analysis

Candidates will apply the Key Concepts to the comparative study of texts and their relevant contexts. This is a synoptic module which will be assessed by the specification's synoptic assessment criteria (see para 8.3).

### 9.3 General Introduction

This specification is based upon the assumption that the media are symbolic systems which represent reality rather than simply reflect it. From this representational view of the media, a number of consequences flow:

- that media representations are actively produced, that they are the result of human, and, most frequently, institutional agency
- that these representations are articulated in characteristic languages and forms (frequently audio-visual, but often print-based)
- that these representations carry explicit and implicit values, many of which may be naturalised by the text and carry larger ideological meanings
- that these representations address and create audiences who may decode them in a variety of ways.

---

### 9.4 Key Concepts

The Key Concepts which underline the specification are therefore:

- Media Representations
- Media Language
- Media Institutions
- Media Values and Ideology
- Media Audiences.

In addition, two aspects of media language have such a high degree of importance and purchase across every media text, that they can also be considered as part of the Media Studies conceptual framework.

They are:

- Narrative
- Genre.

These Key Concepts underpin every aspect of the specification at both AS and A Level. They are essential to the critical reading of media texts (Modules 1 and 6). They will be indispensable to the detailed study of specialised topics (Modules 2 and 4). They should inform the Practical Production (Module 3); and they should provide the investigative tools for candidates in undertaking their independent study (Module 5).

The kind of questions raised by the Key Concepts, which may be applied to the analysis, investigation and production of all media texts and issues may be indicated as follows:

---

#### 9.4.1 Media Representations

Who is being represented?

- In what way?
- By whom?

Why is the subject being represented in this way?

- Is the representation fair and accurate?

What opportunities exist for self-representation by the subject?

---

#### 9.4.2 Media Languages and Forms

- What are the denotative and connotative levels of meaning?
- What is the significance of the text's connotations?
- What are the non-verbal structures of meaning in the text (e.g. gesture, facial expression, positional communication, clothing, props etc)?
- What is the significance of mise-en-scène/sets/settings?
- What work is being done by the sound track/commentary/language of the text?
- What are the dominant images and iconography, and what is their relevance to the major themes of the text?
- What sound and visual techniques are used to convey meaning (e.g. camera positioning, editing; the ways that images and sounds are combined to convey meaning)?

---

#### 9.4.3 Narrative

- How is the narrative organised and structured?
- How is the audience positioned in relation to the narrative?
- How are characters delineated? What is their narrative function? How are heroes and villains created?
- What techniques of identification and alienation are employed?
- What is the role of such features as sound, music, iconography, genre, mise-en-scène, editing etc. within the narrative?
- What are the major themes of the narrative? What values/ideologies does it embody?

---

#### 9.4.4 Genre

- To which genre does the text belong?
- What are the major generic conventions within the text?
- What are the major iconographic features of the text?
- What are the major generic themes?
- To what extent are the characters generically determined?
- To what extent are the audience's generic expectations of the text fulfilled or cheated by the text? Does the text conform to the characteristics of the genre, or does it treat them playfully or ironically?
- To what extent are the audience's generic expectations of the text
- Does the text feature a star, a director, a writer etc who is strongly associated with the genre? What meanings and associations do they have?

---

#### 9.4.5 Media Institutions

- What is the institutional source of the text?
- In what ways has the text been influenced or shaped by the institution which produced it?
- Is the source a public service or commercial institution? What difference does this make to the text?
- Who owns and controls the institution concerned and does this matter?
- How has the text been distributed?

#### 9.4.6 Media Values and Ideology

- What are the major values, ideologies and assumptions underpinning the text or naturalised within it?
  - What criteria have been used for selecting the content presented?
- 

#### 9.4.7 Media Audiences

- To whom is the text addressed? What is the target audience?
  - What assumptions about the audience’s characteristics are implicit within the text?
  - What assumptions about the audience are implicit in the text’s scheduling or positioning ?
  - In what conditions is the audience likely to receive the text? Does this impact upon the formal characteristics of the text?
  - What do you know or can you assume about the likely size and constituency of the audience?
  - What are the probable and possible audience readings of the text?
  - How do you, as an audience member, read and evaluate the text? To what extent is your reading and evaluation influenced by your age, gender, background etc?
- 

#### 9.5 Concepts and Subject Matter

This conceptual framework and its constituent Key Concepts should be well understood by all candidates, since they should help them to raise most of the important questions and issues relevant to a critical reading of media texts, and an understanding of media topics and issues. The Key Concepts as such are not part of the subject matter of Media Studies. Rather they provide a network of interlocking questions and ideas which is essential to the reading and investigation of the subject matter. They provide the essential tools for any critical reading of media texts and issues.

However, it should be noted that some of the Key Concepts do “double-up” as substantive content areas in their own right. In this specification, for example, it is possible to study Representations, Genre and Audiences as **topics** with their own histories, discourses, debates and supportive literatures. A clear distinction does need to be made, therefore, between the use of Representations, Genre and Audiences as concepts, of general importance and applicability in the reading and investigation of all media texts and issues; and their use as topics and major areas of study in their own right.

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#### 9.6 The Conceptual Framework: Continuity and Progression

It is the aim of **Module 1** to introduce candidates to the Key Concepts underpinning the specification, concepts with which they will familiarise themselves by applying them to a wide range of media texts. The texts will also be evaluated using the Key Concepts.

In **Module 2** candidates will be encouraged to apply the Key Concepts to a more detailed study of two media topics. In these topics the emphasis will be upon the analysis of contemporary texts, an understanding of the principles underpinning them and an engagement with the ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to them.

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In **Module 3** candidates will be expected to apply their knowledge of the Key Concepts to a practical production project involving a media technology.

In **Module 4**, candidates will study two further topics in detail. Here, they will be required to apply the Key Concepts both to a variety of texts and to a range of relevant wider contexts.

In **Module 5**, candidates will use the Key Concepts to investigate or research an independent area of study, which will deal with a text, topic or issue, and its relevant contexts. Some of the criteria for synoptic assessment will apply to this Module (see para 8.3).

In **Module 6**, candidates will apply the Key Concepts to the comparative study of texts and their relevant contexts. This is a **synoptic module** in which candidates will be examined on their understanding on the connections between the different elements of the subject (for Synoptic Assessment Criteria see para 8.3).

The “relevant contexts” which candidates will be encouraged to consider and investigate in **Modules 4, 5 and 6** will include:

- **historical contexts** (e.g. generic; social etc)
- **social contexts** (e.g. of production; of reception; social history; influence of social ideas and movements upon texts etc)
- **political contexts** (political pressure; political climate; political allegiances of the press etc)
- **economic contexts** (the ways in which economic factors may have shaped or influenced the text or issue).

## AS Module 1

### *Reading The Media*

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#### 10.1 Introduction

The aim of this module is to introduce candidates to a conceptual framework for reading and understanding media texts. As a result of studying this module candidates should be able to

- understand the Key Concepts indicated in para 10.3 below
- understand the relationship between these concepts
- apply these concepts to a range of media texts
- arrive at a basic evaluation of media texts through the application of the Key Concepts to the texts both studied and unseen.

#### 10.2 Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to

AO1 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (30% AS, 15% AL).

#### 10.3 Content

The subject matter of this module will consist of a wide range of texts chosen by centres and teachers themselves, to which candidates will be required to apply the Key Concepts of

- Media Representations
- Media Institutions
- Media Language (including Narrative and Genre)
- Media Values and Ideology
- Media Audiences

Because these Key Concepts are inter-related it is expected that they will all be taught as part of this module. The emphasis, however, should be placed upon Media Language, Representations and Media Audiences, since they should be readily applicable to all media texts from the earliest stages of analysis.

#### 10.4 Mode of Assessment

Assessment will be by a written paper of 1 ¼ hours including approximately 15 minutes of reading or viewing time. Candidates will then have one hour to answer **one** compulsory question on an unseen media text.

## AS Module 2

### *Textual Topics in Contemporary Media*

#### 11.1 Introduction

In this module candidates will have the opportunity to apply the Key Concepts introduced in Module One to a more detailed study of two contemporary media topics (selected from four options), and to evaluate texts and ideas using the Key Concepts. Candidates will also be expected to demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to their chosen topics. Specification of relevant ideas, theories, debates and information is offered under the sub-headings for each topic.

The rationale for the four options is that they are amenable to study primarily via the use of contemporary texts. In its emphasis upon detailed textual study, therefore, this module has clear lines of continuity with Module One. However, candidates will also have to engage with ideas, theories and debates which will illuminate the nature of the texts they study. In its concern with these wider ideas, theories and debates, this module represents an evolutionary development from Module One. It should be emphasised, however, that these wider ideas, theories and debates are not intended to be objects of study in and for themselves. Their purpose is to enable candidates to make fuller sense of contemporary texts.

For the purposes of this module, contemporary is defined as texts first released no earlier than five years before the start of the course. In addition, two texts before 1990 must be studied for Documentary.

#### 11.2 Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to

- A01 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies, and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (20% AS, 10% AL)
- A03i demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media (10% AS, 5% AL).

#### 11.3 Content

##### Film and Broadcast Fiction.

The following four topics are offered in this module from which candidates must select **two** for the purposes of assessment.

A range of texts should be studied (at least two film and two broadcast fiction texts). The following issues should be raised across the whole range of texts (not necessarily in relation to each individual text):

- knowledge, application and evaluation of film and media language (e.g. the analysis of image, sound and music; mise-en-scène, sets and settings; visual techniques [editing, camera positioning, lighting, etc]; generic conventions; non-verbal codes,

- basic semiotics]; iconography etc)
- debates around meaning and evaluation
- issues of audience (audience positioning; target audience; the text's assumptions about the audience; possible audience readings and evaluations; conditions of reception); the candidate's own reading and evaluation of the text, and the major cultural and sub-cultural influences upon this)
- issues of representation (e.g. of gender, race, nationality, region, heroes, villains, historical periods etc). Debates around the fairness, accuracy, function and purpose of particular representations
- narrative issues (e.g. study of specific narratives; comparison of different narrative structures and techniques; major differences between film and television narratives; types of television fictional narrative - soaps, series, serials and single narratives; influence of genre on narrative; influence of conditions of viewing; narrative openings and closures; use of character and actors in narrative; techniques of audience engagement and identification)
- institutional issues (influence of film/broadcasting institutions upon texts; differences **within** film and broadcasting institutions e.g. Hollywood v non-Hollywood; public service v commercial broadcasting; influence of finance, marketing and distribution upon the production and reception of texts. Debates around aesthetic value, profit, public-service values etc)
- questions of, and debates around, values and ideology.

#### Documentary

- Analysis and evaluation of a range of documentaries using the Key Concepts.
- Forms and styles of documentary (e.g. docu-soaps; fly-on-the-wall; personal; investigative; drama-documentary etc). Appropriateness of style to content and intentions.
- Analysis and evaluation of documentary techniques (e.g. selection and compression; relation of sound to image; editing; use of narrative; function of narrator; set-ups; effect of camera and crew; entertainment functions etc). Debates around these issues.
- Positive values of documentary (e.g. educative; informative; illuminative; empathetic, social and political functions of documentary etc).
- Historical contextualisation of documentary practice through the study of at least two documentaries made before 1990.
- Institutional issues and debates around contemporary documentary. Evaluation of current trends and tendencies.

#### Advertising and Marketing

- Analysis and evaluation of a current advertising or marketing campaign using the Key Concepts.
- Marketing theory, principles and practice.
- Analysis and evaluation of promotional and covert advertising techniques (e.g. sponsorship, product placement, public relations, plugs etc). Functions and purposes of different techniques.
- Politics and marketing (role of spin doctors; images of parties and party leaders; political news management; debates around image v substance etc).

**British Newspapers**

- The impact of promotion, advertising and advertising funding upon media content. Financial/ethical/professional/public service/audience debates around this issue.
- Analysis and evaluation of a range of national newspapers, as well as the local press (including free newspapers) using the Key Concepts.
- Analysis and evaluation of press coverage of an issue or story.
- Critiques of, and debates around, press coverage (e.g. privacy; sensationalism; inaccuracy and fabrication; propaganda; emphasis upon sex, stars and personalities etc). Proposals for reform.
- Defences, and positive aspects, of the press.
- News and entertainment values of the press.
- Press ideologies (politics and the press; political and social orientation of the press; values implicit in news and feature stories of specific newspapers).
- Press audiences (circulations; readerships; the press and audience segmentation; relationship with readers).

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**11.4 Mode of Assessment**

Assessment will be by a written paper of 1½ hours duration. Candidates will be required to answer **two** questions, one on each of the topics chosen for study. Two questions will be set on each optional topic from which candidates will choose one.

## 12

## AS Module 3

### Practical Production

#### 12.1 Introduction

This module will provide candidates with the opportunity to use one (or more) media technology to produce a finished piece of practical coursework and the accompanying written materials outlined below. The practical production will show that candidates have acquired the appropriate skills to enable them to use the chosen technologies competently. It will also demonstrate their knowledge and application of relevant Key Concepts both in their analysis of their chosen topic (the Brief) and the Practical Production itself. The evaluation of the production will also utilise the Key Concepts. The context for the work **must** be provided by one of the topics studied in Module 2. Through the production of a piece of practical work candidates will reflect further on the issues arising from Module 2 and deepen their understanding of the topic.

#### 12.2 Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| A01 | demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (10% AS, 5% AL) |
| A04 | demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of at least one media technology (30% AS, 15% AL).   |

#### 12.3 Content

There will be three components of the Practical Production.

- **Brief (10%)**

An initial brief of approximately 750 words is written by each individual candidate. In the case of group productions being undertaken, the brief will identify clearly those aspects of the work for which each candidate will take specific responsibility. It will identify the technologies to be used and indicate the aspect of Module 2 which the production will explore and how the content and form of the piece will be matched to its intended audience.

- **Finished Product (65%)**

This will be a media production piece which demonstrates a candidate's skill in using one or more appropriate media technologies. It will arise directly from the candidate's study of one of the four topics in AS Module 2. Thus the "appropriateness" of the technologies will be clear cut in the case of *Film and Broadcast Fiction*, where video or film will be the primary vehicle for production, and *British Newspapers*, where desk top publishing packages will be used to produce a page-based text comprising printed words and photographic images. Work relating to *Documentary* is likely to use video technology but could also be conceived as a radio piece, a photo-journalistic assignment, indeed anything which relates to the candidate's study of "forms and styles of documentary".

*Advertising and Marketing* may legitimately involve candidates in the use of those technologies which are time-based, those technologies which are page-based or a combination of the two.

Defining exactly how long the production piece should be is inappropriate. What centres need to ensure is that their candidates produce pieces which provide sufficient evidence that individuals know and understand how to use any given technology to create a piece which not only demonstrates an understanding of the way the media language of the chosen form works but also relates this use to the relevant Module 2 topic. It is quite possible for a well constructed 30 second video advertisement to provide evidence of this knowledge and understanding, whereas 4-5 minutes may be necessary to show an understanding of the codes and conventions at work in a particular type of documentary. Where newspaper production is undertaken, two contrasting front page designs can be effective in showing both knowledge of design and lay-out and awareness of the news and entertainment values of the press.

- **Evaluation (25%)**

An evaluation of approximately 1000 words is written by each individual candidate. In the case of group productions, the evaluation will identify the specific parts of the product for which each candidate was eventually responsible. In addition to a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the finished work, the evaluation will show how the product is linked to the particular aspects of Module 2 which it has explored and also show an understanding of the Key Concepts studied in Module 2 and the way in which these have informed the work.

Where candidates work as a group, it must be possible to identify the individual contribution of each candidate so that the requirements in the specification are met.

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## 12.4 Mode of Assessment

Candidates will be required to produce coursework including a written brief of approximately 750 words, the finished product and a written evaluation of approximately 1000 words.

VHS videotape and standard audiotape are the required formats for moving image and audio work. Where appropriate, hard copy must accompany material produced on video, audio or ICT-based media. Centres wishing to submit coursework in any other format must contact the Subject Office in Guildford once they have received details of their moderator for the appropriate examination series.

Assessment criteria may be found in Section 20 of this specification.

## A2 Module 4

### *Texts and Contexts in the Media*

#### 13.1 Introduction

In this module candidates will study **two** from a choice of four media topics. The four topics have been chosen because

- a) they are major areas of study within Media Studies
- b) they embody a range of approaches to the subject
- c) they cover a variety of texts, practices and issues
- d) each has an internal coherence. Each possesses its own history, discourses, debates and supportive literature.

**Note:** Three of the four topics for study in this module (Representations, Media Audiences and Genre) are closely associated with some of the Key Concepts. It is important to stress that whilst these terms are used throughout the specification as Key Concepts which candidates are required to use as analytical tools in order to raise important questions about any media text, in this module these terms also constitute substantive **topics** and major areas of study in their own right (see Concepts and Subject Matter para 9.5). The precise use of these terms, as either concepts or topics, should be clear from the context in which they are used.

#### 13.2 Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| AO1  | demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (2½%) |
| AO2  | demonstrate knowledge, and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies (7½%)                     |
| AO3i | demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media (5%).      |

This module has strong lines of continuity from previous modules. AO1 should be pursued with increasing confidence, flexibility and sophistication. Textual analysis and the development of the skills of critical analysis retain their importance. Whereas the emphasis in the AS modules was upon developing an understanding of how texts work, and the immediate issues arising from them, here the focus is also upon why texts are the way that they are, the major ideas, theories and debates which inform them, and the wider historical, social, political and economic forces which have shaped them. The study of these theories, debates and wider contexts should, however, be rooted in or illuminate textual study, wherever possible.

**13.3 Content**

The following four topics are offered in this module from which candidates must select **two** for the purposes of assessment.

**The Production and Manufacture of News**

- News values, including institutional and cross-media differences in news values.
- News sources and their influence.
- Balance and bias in the news.
- Influence of technological developments upon news (e.g. digitisation, the Internet).
- Recent changes and current issues in news production.
- Political, social and economic issues relating to news.

**Representations**

- Two detailed studies of the images of particular groups or places across a range of media.
- Alternative images of these groups or places across the media.
- General issues of representation and stereotyping within the media.
- Problems of producing fair and accurate media representations.
- Representation and power in the media.
- Reasons for dominant representations (e.g. historic, economic, social, political etc).

**Genre**

- Codes, conventions, iconography and themes of one genre from any medium or media.
- Detailed study of a range of modern and historical texts in a chosen genre. Historical development of the genre (via textual study rather than potted history).
- Social, economic and political contexts of a genre. Reasons for any rise and fall in its popularity.
- Recent developments in genre; parody and pastiche; playing with generic conventions; mixing genres.

**Media Audiences**

- Textual representations of audiences and the public. Their role in phone-ins, documentaries, confessional shows, audience participation programmes, news etc.
- Economic, social and political issues raised by the role of audiences in different media texts.
- Segmentation of audiences by the media.
- Theories of audience. How audiences read media texts.
- Political, social and economic functions of audiences: audiences as citizens, consumers and products.
- Audience power. How to use/influence/complain about/support the media.
- Influence of new technologies (e.g. digitisation, the Internet) on media-audience relations; the interactive audience.

**13.4 Mode of Assessment**

Assessment will be by a written paper of 1½ hours duration. Candidates will be required to answer **two** questions, one on each of the topics chosen for study. Two questions will set on each topic of which candidates will choose one.

## A2 Module 5

### *Independent Study*

#### 14.1 Introduction

This module will provide candidates with the opportunity to produce an independent study of

**either**

- a contemporary media text or texts

**or**

- a topic or issue arising out of or suggested by a contemporary media text or texts.

This module contributes 5% of the total of 20% synoptic assessment.

#### 14.2 Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to

- A01 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (2½%)
- A02 demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies (2½%)
- A05 demonstrate the ability to use appropriate investigative and research techniques in carrying out an independent study of a media text, topic or issue (15%).

#### 14.3 Synoptic Assessment

In this module candidates will be expected to meet the following synoptic criteria

- (i) to demonstrate their attainment of the major Assessment Objectives of AS (A01) and A2 (A02).
- (i) to draw together their understanding of Key Concepts from different parts of the specification in order to make effective textual readings.
- (ii) to draw upon their knowledge and application of a wide range of possible relevant contexts, in order to account for the characteristics of media texts.

These “relevant contexts” are those specified in A02 (historical, social, political, economic).

- iv) candidates must demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the broad objectives of the specification of critical autonomy – the ability to apply critical ideas and principles to new situations – and media literacy in their responses to media texts.

## 14.4 Content

The Independent Study will enable candidates to apply and develop their understanding of the Key Concepts to

**either**

- a contemporary media text or texts

**or**

- a topic or issue arising out of, or suggested by, a contemporary media text or texts.

“Contemporary” is defined for this module as being produced or released within the previous two years (thus, for example, repeats of programmes made outside this period should not be used as central texts). However, historical texts may be used for the purposes of comparison in order to illuminate the nature of the contemporary text, but they must remain subordinate to it. Any text studied should be appropriately contextualised. Appropriate contexts might include any relevant historical, social, political or economic contexts. The contexts of production, distribution and reception might also be included. A simple textual analysis of a film or soap opera, would not be appropriate. The purpose of the contextualisation, however, should be to illuminate or enhance understanding of the contemporary text, topic or issue. It should not overshadow it. The analysis and discussion of the contemporary text, topic or issue should be the dominant element in the candidate’s study. If a topic or issue is chosen as the subject of the Independent Study it should be clearly textually-centred.

The Independent Study should be investigative or research-based. It should seek, for example, to answer a question, clarify an issue, or test a hypothesis. Candidates will be expected to use appropriate investigative and research techniques in carrying out the study. Details of ‘appropriate’ techniques may be found below (para 14.5).

The evaluative and analytical comment produced by candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relevant Key Concepts.

## 14.5 Guidance on research methods

The Independent Study should be an investigative or research-based piece of work based upon either a contemporary media text or texts, or a topic or issue arising out of a contemporary media text or texts.

### **Appropriate Research Methods**

The Independent Study is not intended to be an exercise which will involve the collection of large quantities of empirical data. It should be textually-centred. The use of such research techniques as questionnaires, surveys and interviews will therefore probably be inappropriate, as will the presentation of information in the form of charts, graphs or computer analyses.

More appropriate would be any of the following techniques:

- Reviews of the literature on the text, topic or issue.
- The formulation of a question, problem, hypothesis or area of debate around the text, topic or issue.

- Investigation of, or research into, the question. This should normally involve some textual or content analysis (content analysis should not simply be head-counting but have an interpretative element).
- Comparative analysis (e.g. with a generic or historical text) which elucidates the contemporary text.
- Textual analysis from a particular perspective or point of view.
- Investigation of an issue (e.g. censorship; the value of the Internet; the influence of ratings) via the analysis of a contemporary text.
- Political, social, economic, or historical influences upon the text. Institutional influences or audience issues might also be researched.

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#### 14.6 Selecting a topic

The study must be text-based and should refer to specific examples.

The study could usefully develop work already undertaken in Unit 4 Texts and Contexts in the Media. 25% of the marks are synoptic, requiring that candidates draw on other aspects of the course within this unit.

The study contributes 5% of the total 20% synoptic assessment. Candidates should therefore demonstrate their understanding of the Key Concepts, major ideas, theories and debates from different parts of the specification. They should also demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the broad objectives of the specification in terms of critical autonomy – the ability to apply critical ideas and principles to new situations – and media literacy in their responses to media texts.

‘Contemporary’ is defined as two years previous to the start of the GCE course. For example a candidate who started the AS course in September 2007 (i.e. submitting work in 2009) **must** focus on a text or texts first released in Britain on or after September 2005.

‘First release’ relates to the first date that the text was released in Britain in its original format (not the re-release date or release on a different medium i.e. LP to CD, video to DVD is **not** acceptable).

Historical texts can be used if they are used as a point of comparative analysis with contemporary texts. However the bulk of the study must focus on the contemporary text(s).

There is a need for a focused title that reflects the investigative/research-based character of the study.

Candidates will be expected to undertake both primary and secondary research. Primary research may include their own reading and analysis of media texts as well as content analysis or in-depth interviews.

However the Independent Study is not intended as an exercise which will involve the collection of large quantities of empirical data.

## 14.7 Administration

Cohorts of candidates may study the same topic; for example ‘the representation of women in contemporary media texts’. However the actual study carried out and written by candidates must be an individual piece of work.

Candidates must adhere to the word limit of 3000 words. Support material may be included as appendices but **only** if it supports particular findings and significantly adds to the quality of the work.

The mark scheme is designed to reward focused and controlled pieces of work. Teachers must take this into account when marking candidates’ work.

All studies must have bibliographies and clear and accurate referencing. Work copied directly from unreferenced texts will be treated as plagiarism.

Work must be clearly annotated by teachers.

If teachers are in doubt about the suitability of particular studies they should contact their coursework adviser. Contact details can be obtained from the Subject Office at Guildford.

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## 14.8 Mode of Assessment

Candidates will be required to produce a written study of approximately 3000 words. This word count will not include any supportive material the candidate considers relevant. As the Independent Study is designed to assist in the development of the candidates’ critical autonomy, it will test their ability to present a clearly focused title; to carry out an investigation or piece of research based upon that title; to collect and evaluate appropriate evidence, and to reach coherent conclusions, based on that evidence.

Assessment criteria may be found in Section 20 of this specification.

## A2 Module 6

### Comparative Critical Analysis

#### 15.1 Introduction

This is a synoptic module in which candidates must demonstrate their understanding of the connections between the different elements of the specification. In order to do this candidates will be expected to produce evidence of their attainment of the broad objectives of the specification – critical autonomy and media literacy – through the comparative analysis of texts. They will be required to analyse, explain and account for the similarities and differences between media texts. To do this satisfactorily candidates will need to

- (i) demonstrate their critical reading abilities using the Key Concepts
- (ii) draw upon their knowledge of major ideas theories, debates and information
- (iii) use their knowledge of a range of relevant contextual factors.

The aim of this module then, is to provide candidates with the opportunity to draw together, and make connections between, the different elements of their course of study. This will be necessary in order to achieve the required depth of analysis demanded by this module, and in order to explain and account for the similarities and differences between media texts.

#### 15.2 Assessment objectives

This module requires candidates to

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| A01   | demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (5%) |
| A02   | demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies (2½%)                     |
| A03i  | demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media (2½%)     |
| A03ii | demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences. (5%)    |

#### 15.3 Synoptic Assessment

All of the synoptic assessment criteria apply to this module:

- (i) candidates will be expected to demonstrate attainment in the specifications' three most widely distributed Assessment Objectives (A01, A02 and A03)
- (ii) candidates will be required to draw together their understanding of the Key Concepts, major ideas, theories, debates and information from different parts of the specification in order to make:

- (a) effective textual readings
- (b) effective textual comparisons
- (iii) candidates must draw upon their knowledge and application of a wide range of possible relevant contexts, in order to account for the
  - (a) characteristics of media texts
  - (b) the similarities and differences between media texts

These “relevant contexts” are those specified in AO2 (historical, social, political, economic).

- (iv) candidates must demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the broad objectives of the specification of critical autonomy – the ability to apply critical ideas and principles to new situations – and media literacy in their responses to media texts.

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## 15.4 Content

This module is concerned with the comparative study of media texts. During their course of study candidates should

- study texts, firstly, as individual texts in their own right
- compare texts in terms of their similarities and differences, explaining and accounting for these in terms of any relevant Key Concepts (media language, representations, genre, institution, ideology, audience) and wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic).

Examples of the kind of comparative readings which might be undertaken could include the following:

- the same topic represented in different media forms
- the same genre from different historical periods
- the same theme treated by different media
- similar texts produced by different institutions
- the same medium or genre with different target audiences
- cross-cultural comparisons
- mainstream and alternative variants (e.g. of topics, representations, audiences, ideologies etc.).

These examples are provided for elucidation only. They are not exhaustive, and texts chosen for examination may not necessarily be taken from or confined to these examples.

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## 15.5 Mode of Assessment

Assessment will be a written paper of 1½ hours’ duration including approximately 30 minutes reading/viewing/listening time.

Candidates will have one hour to write a comparative critical analysis of two unseen texts.

## Key Skills and Other Issues

16

# Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

### 16.1 Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of *Application of Number*, *Communication* and *Information Technology*. These are the ‘main’ Key Skills.

The units for the ‘wider’ Key Skills of *Improving own Learning and Performance*, *Working with Others* and *Problem-Solving* are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these ‘wider’ Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates, but they do not form part of the Key Skills Qualification.

Copies of the Key Skills Units may be downloaded from the QCA web site ([www.qca.org.uk/keyskills](http://www.qca.org.uk/keyskills))

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- A What you need to know.
- B What you must do.
- C Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Media Studies can be offered opportunities to produce evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Information Technology*, *Working with Others*, *Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving*. Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to produce evidence for Part B of the units, are indicated below. More specific guidance on integrating the provision of Key Skills in courses based upon this specification is given in the AQA specification support material.

## Communication

What you must do:	Opportunities for Producing Evidence in Modules					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
C3.1a Contribute to discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.1b Make a presentation			✓			
C3.2 Read and synthesise information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.3 Write different types of documents		✓	✓	✓	✓	

## Information Technology

What you must do:	Opportunities for Producing Evidence in Modules					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
IT3.1 Plan and use different sources to search for and select information			✓		✓	
IT3.2 Explore, develop and exchange information, and derive new information			✓		✓	
IT3.3 Present information including text, numbers and images			✓		✓	

## Working with Others

What you must do:	Opportunities for Producing Evidence in Modules					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
WO3.1 Plan the activity			✓			
WO3.2 Work towards agreed objectives			✓			
WO3.3 Review the activity			✓			

## Improving own Learning and Performance

What you must do:	Opportunities for Producing Evidence in Modules					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
LP3.1 Agree and plan targets			✓		✓	
LP3.2 Seek feedback and support			✓		✓	
LP3.3 Review progress			✓		✓	

## Problem Solving

What you must do:	Opportunities for Producing Evidence in Modules					
	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
PS3.1 Recognise, explain and describe the problem			✓		✓	
PS3.2 Generate and compare different ways of solving problems			✓		✓	
PS3.3 Plan and implement options			✓		✓	
PS3.4 Agree and review approaches to tackling problems			✓		✓	

The ticks recorded in the tables above, represent the opportunities to produce evidence of the Key Skills seen to be achievable through the specification. There may be further opportunities to produce evidence of these and other aspects of Key Skills, but these are dependent on the detailed course of study provided within centres.

### 16.3 Key Skills in the Assessment of Media studies

The 'main' Key Skills will contribute to the assessment of Media Studies. Aspects of Communication are an intrinsic part of all of the Assessment Objective and hence will form part of the assessment requirements for all units.

### 16.4 Further Guidance

More specific guidance and examples of tasks that can provide evidence of one or more Key Skill are given in the AQA specification support material.

## Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

### 17.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues

**Values and ideologies** are Key Concepts in this specification, and a consideration of the moral, ethical and ideological assumptions of media texts underpins every aspect of the specification.

In addition, **value questions**, including issues of democratic and communication rights are explicitly raised in the emphasis given to issues of representation and audience. These appear in the specification both as Key Concepts (para. 9.4) and as major topics of study in their own right.

Major **cultural** issues are addressed by the specification as a whole, see especially paras. 4.2 to 4.5, whilst **social** issues are raised in the emphasis upon the social contexts of media production and reception (Modules 4-6).

### 17.2 European Dimension

The AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers. Cross-cultural comparisons of film and media texts are explicitly encouraged in Module 6 (see para. 15.4), offering the opportunity for the study of European media texts. Major opportunities for the study of European texts are offered by specialist topics for study in Film and Broadcast Fiction (Module 2) and Genre (Module 4), and by the Independent Study (Module 5).

### 17.3 Environmental Education

The AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report “*Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education*” 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers. The specification specifically encourages the study of representations of places (Module 4, para. 13.3), and the contrasts between media images and environmental realities. Opportunities also exist for candidates to study media coverage of environmental issues in Module 2 (British Newspapers), Module 4 (The Production of News), Module 3 (The Practical Production) and Module 5 (Independent Study).

### 17.4 Avoidance of Bias

The AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and associated specimen papers to avoid bias of any kind.

## Centre-Assessed Component

18

### Nature of Centre-Assessed Component

#### Definition and Nature of Coursework

The skills to be assessed in coursework are listed in the Assessment Objectives (para. 6.3) and Scheme of Assessment (paras. 7.2 and 8.4) sections of the syllabus. Specifically, these objectives assess candidates' ability to

- A01 demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts (Units 3 and 5)
- A02 demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies (Unit 5)
- A04 demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of at least one media technology (Unit 3)
- A05 demonstrate the ability to use appropriate investigative and research techniques in carrying out an independent study of a media text, topic or issue (Unit 5).

It is intended that the work submitted should be an integral part of the scheme of work for the AS and A2. It is, therefore, important that the types of activity be chosen carefully to provide valid evidence of the candidates' positive achievement of the assessment criteria. These activities should also make reasonable demands on candidates.

Guidance on the subject content outlining suitable activities is given in paras. 12.3 and 14.6 above. Individual activities will depend on the scheme of work adopted by a centre. Details of the mode of assessment is given in paras. 12.4 and 14.8 above.

19

### Guidance on Setting Centre-Assessed Component

19.1

The AQA will not require prior approval of candidates' coursework. However, coursework advisors will be available to assist centres with any matters relating to coursework. Details will be provided when the AQA knows which centres are following the specification.

19.2

Where candidates work as a group, it must be possible to identify the individual contribution of each candidate so that it can be determined that each candidate has met the requirements in the specification.

19.3

VHS videotape and standard audiotape are the required formats for moving image and audio work.

Where appropriate, hardcopy must accompany material produced on video, audio or ICT-based media.

Centres wishing to submit coursework in any other format must contact the Subject Office in Guildford once they have received details of their moderator for the appropriate examination series.

## 20

## Assessment Criteria

### 20.1 Introduction

Both coursework modules are marked according to criteria based closely on the appropriate assessment objectives. The general marking criteria for this subject have been adapted to meet the needs of the individual modules. The relevant mark band descriptors relating to the assessment objectives for Unit 3 (Practical Production) and Unit 5 (Independent Study) are given below. Centres should use the whole spread of marks when assessing their candidates' coursework.

### 20.2 Marking Criteria

#### Module 3: Practical Production

##### BRIEF (10 marks)

9-10 marks	The brief contains cogent analysis and research arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and explains fluently how the product will be linked to it. It provides a sharply-focused description of the target audience with a detailed explanation of the ways in which the form and content of the product will match it.
7-8 marks	The brief contains extended analysis and research arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and explains clearly how the product will be linked to it. It gives clear evidence of the target audience and explains how the form and content of the product will match it.
5-6 marks	The brief contains some competent analysis and research arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and indicates how the product will be linked to it. It contains evidence of the target audience and how the form and content of the product will match it.
3-4 marks	The brief contains some analysis and research arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and gives a limited indication of how the planned product will be linked to it. It gives some indication of the target audience and how the form and content of the product will match it.

- 1-2 marks The brief shows some awareness of the issues arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and makes minimal attempts to show how the planned product will be linked to it. It attempts to identify an appropriate audience and form for the product.
- 0 marks No brief submitted or work which shows no awareness of the issues arising from the relevant Module 2 topic and which does not attempt to identify an appropriate audience and form for the product.

#### PRODUCTION (65 marks)

- 51-65 marks The product shows a high degree of technical proficiency in the use of the chosen technologies, demonstrates thorough attention to detail and displays a level of creativity. The product will demonstrate thorough use of the appropriate media language and may show originality in the application of the relevant codes and conventions.
- 41-50 marks The product shows technical proficiency in the use of the chosen technologies, producing work with some attention to detail and creativity. The product will demonstrate good use of the appropriate media language and will apply the relevant codes and conventions throughout.
- 31-40 marks The product shows technical competence in the use of the chosen technologies, producing work with a fair level of consistency and finish. The product will demonstrate competent use of the appropriate media language and will generally apply the relevant codes and conventions.
- 21-30 marks The product shows some technical competence in using the chosen technologies but the work may show some inconsistency and lack of finish. The product will demonstrate some limited skill in using the appropriate media language to achieve the desired outcome but will apply the relevant codes and conventions inconsistently.
- 11-20 marks The product shows some minimal ability to use the chosen technologies and the work will be characterised by inconsistency and lack of finish. The product will demonstrate limited awareness of the appropriate media language and makes little attempt to apply relevant codes and conventions.
- 0-10 marks Incomplete work or work which shows very limited ability to use the chosen technology. Work which fails to demonstrate awareness of the appropriate media language and which does not apply relevant codes and conventions. Limited contribution to group work.

**EVALUATION (25 marks)**

21-25 marks	The evaluation contains detailed and fluent analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the product and demonstrates clear understanding of the key concepts in the light of the work undertaken. It shows with precision an appreciation of the link between the finished product and the area of study on which it is based. It makes excellent use of the appropriate technical vocabulary.
17-20 marks	The evaluation shows proficient analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the product and demonstrates proficient understanding of the key concepts in the context of the work undertaken. It shows clearly an appreciation of the link between the finished product and the area of study on which it is based. It uses the appropriate technical vocabulary with confidence.
13-16 marks	The evaluation contains competent analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the product and demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the key concepts in the context of the work undertaken. Generally it will show an appreciation of the link between the finished product and the area of study on which it is based. It uses the appropriate technical vocabulary throughout.
9-12 marks	The evaluation contains some analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the product and demonstrates some limited understanding of the key concepts in the context of the work undertaken. It will show some appreciation of the link between the finished product and the area of study on which it is based. It makes some use of the appropriate technical vocabulary.
5-8 marks	The evaluation describes the production process rather than evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the product. It demonstrates minimal understanding of the key concepts in the context of the work and does not make an explicit connection between the finished product and the area of study on which is based. It makes minimal use of the appropriate technical vocabulary.
0-4 marks	No evaluation submitted or work which is severely limited in coverage, shows no understanding of key concepts and makes no use of the technical vocabulary.

**Module 5: Independent Study**

At each of these levels candidates will demonstrate the majority of these characteristics to a large degree although there may be a particular dominance of one or more criteria over others. It is unlikely that at any level candidates will fully demonstrate equally all the criteria, marking is therefore a matter of identifying 'best fit'.

Level 6 51 – 60 Marks	Detailed, thorough and well-illustrated research with clear and accurate identification and referencing of sources used.  Evidence of confident and thorough knowledge and application of Key Concepts throughout.
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	<p>Thorough evaluation of text(s) chosen and related issues using the Key Concepts.</p> <p>Confident and appropriate evaluation of the conditions of production referring to a wide range of contextual influences. Confident and appropriate application of wider historical, social, political and economic contexts to the chosen text(s) and related issues.</p> <p>Thorough evidence of synoptic ability in drawing together concepts and ideas from different parts of the specification.</p> <p>Writing will be fluent and controlled and the study will be very well organised and presented and will contain a clearly focussed hypothesis which is addressed and answered.</p>
Level 5 41 – 50 Marks	<p>Proficient and appropriately illustrated research with clear identification and referencing of sources used.</p> <p>Competent knowledge and application of Key Concepts throughout. Comprehensive evaluation of text(s) chosen and related issues using the Key Concepts.</p> <p>Competent and appropriate evaluation of the conditions of production referring to a wide range of contextual influences. Competent and appropriate application of wider historical, social, political and economic contexts to the chosen text(s) and related issues.</p> <p>Evidence of competent synoptic ability in drawing together concepts and ideas from different parts of the specification.</p> <p>Writing will be clear and focussed and the study will be well organised and presented and will contain a clearly focussed hypothesis which is fully addressed.</p>
Level 4 31 – 40 Marks	<p>Sound and illustrated research with identification and referencing of most sources used.</p> <p>Some evidence of competent knowledge and application of Key Concepts throughout. Sound evaluation of text(s) chosen and related issues using the Key Concepts.</p> <p>Sound evaluation of the conditions of production referring to a range of contextual influences. Sound application of wider historical, social, political and economic contexts to the chosen text(s) and related issues.</p> <p>Evidence of synoptic ability in drawing together concepts and ideas from different parts of the specification.</p> <p>Writing will be clear and the study will be competently organised and presented and will contain a hypothesis which is addressed.</p>
Level 3 21 – 30 Marks	<p>Some evidence of research with some identification and referencing of sources used.</p> <p>Some evidence of knowledge and application of Key Concepts. Some evaluation of text(s) chosen and related issues using the Key Concepts.</p> <p>Basic demonstration of the evaluation of the conditions of production referring to some contextual influences.</p>

Some application of wider historical, social, political and economic contexts to the chosen text(s) and related issues.

Some evidence of synoptic ability in drawing together concepts and ideas from different parts of the specification.

Writing will be quite clear with evidence of some organisation and planning in presentation and will contain a hypothesis.

Level 2 11 – 20 Marks Some research but limited and not always appropriate, with few sources identified or referenced.

Simplistic demonstration of knowledge and application of Key Concepts. Simplistic evaluation of text(s) chosen and related issues using the Key Concepts.

Some attempt to engage with the conditions of production and contextual influences. Some attempt to apply wider historical, social, political and economic contexts to the chosen text(s) and related issues but limited in both detail and appropriateness.

Basic evidence of synoptic ability in drawing together concepts and ideas from different parts of the specification.

Some writing will be well presented and the study may show evidence of organisation. Some evidence of a hypothesis but this may be poorly formulated and/or lacking in appropriateness.

Level 1 1 – 10 Marks Below A Level standard.

### 20.3 Evidence to Support the Award of Marks

Teachers should keep records of their assessments during the course, in a form which facilitates the complete and accurate submission of the final assessments at the end of the course.

When the assessments are complete, the final marks awarded under each of the assessment criteria must be entered on the *Candidate Record Form*, with supporting information given in the spaces provided. A specimen *Candidate Record Form* appears as Appendix B; the exact design may be modified before the operational version is issued.

## 21

## Supervision and Authentication

### 21.1 Supervision of Candidates' Work

Candidates' work for assessment must be undertaken under conditions which allow the teacher to supervise the work and enable the work to be authenticated. If it is necessary for some assessed work to be done outside the centre, sufficient work must take place under direct supervision to enable the teacher to authenticate with confidence the work of each candidate.

Centres must assure the AQA that the assessments submitted are the work of the candidates concerned. As much internal assessment as possible must be undertaken by the teacher(s) involved in the assessment of coursework.

### 21.2 Guidance by the Teacher

The work assessed must be solely that of the candidate concerned. Any assistance given to an individual candidate which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded on the *Candidate Record Form*. If part of a candidate's coursework is taken from other sources, all such cases must be identified clearly in the text and fully acknowledged either on the *Candidate Record Form* or in the supporting evidence. Where phrases, sentences or longer passages are quoted from a source candidates must use quotation marks.

It is expected that teachers supervising candidates' work will conduct periodic reviews to ensure that the coursework is meeting the AQA's requirements.

### 21.3 Unfair Practice

At the start of the course, the supervising teacher is responsible for informing candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice. Candidates must not take part in any unfair practice in the preparation of coursework to be submitted for assessment, and must understand that to present material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception. Centres must report suspected malpractice to the AQA. The penalties for malpractice are set out in the AQA Regulations.

### 21.4 Authentication of Candidates' Work

Both the candidate and the teacher are required to sign declarations confirming that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own. The teacher must declare that the work was conducted under the specified conditions, and record details of any additional assistance.

## 22

# Standardisation

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### 22.1 Standardisation Meetings

Annual standardising meetings will be held, usually in the autumn term. Centres entering candidates for the first time must send a representative to the meetings. Attendance is also mandatory in the following cases:

- where there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specification requirements in the previous examination
- where the nature of coursework tasks set by a centre has been inappropriate in the previous examination
- where a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's marks in the previous year's examination.

At these meetings support will be provided for centres in the development of appropriate coursework tasks and assessment procedures.

### 22.2 Internal Standardisation of Marking

The centre is required to standardise the assessments across different teachers and teaching groups to ensure that all candidates at the centre have been judged against the same standards. If two or more teachers are involved in marking a component, one teacher must be designated as responsible for internal standardisation.

Common pieces of work must be marked on a trial basis and differences between assessments discussed at a training session in which all teachers involved must participate. The teacher responsible for standardising the marking must ensure that the training includes the use of reference and archive materials such as work from a previous year or examples provided by the AQA. The centre is required to send to the moderator the *Centre Declaration Sheet* (Appendix C) duly signed, to confirm that the marking of centre-assessed work at the centre has been standardised. If only one teacher has undertaken the marking, that person must sign this form.

## 23

# Administrative Procedures

### 23.1 Recording Assessments

The candidates' work must be marked according to the assessment criteria set out in para. 20.2. The marks and supporting information must be recorded in accordance with the instructions in para. 20.3.

The completed *Candidate Record Form* for each candidate must be attached to the work and made available to the AQA on request.

Candidate Record Forms are available on the AQA website in the Administration area. They can be accessed via the following link [http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p\\_course.php](http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_course.php).

### 23.2 Submitting Marks and Sample Work for Moderation

The total component mark for each candidate must be submitted to the AQA on the mark sheets provided or by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) by the specified date. Centres will be informed which candidates' work is required in the samples to be submitted to the moderator.

### 23.3 Factors Affecting Individual Candidates

Teachers should be able to accommodate the occasional absence of candidates by ensuring that the opportunity is given for them to make up missed assessments.

Special consideration should be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances. Information about the procedure is issued separately by AQA and centres should ask for a copy of *Regulations and Guidance relating to Candidates with Particular Requirements*.

If work is lost, the AQA should be notified immediately of the date of the loss, how it occurred, and who was responsible for the loss. The AQA will advise on the procedures to be followed in such cases.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, the AQA must be informed so that such help can be taken into account when assessment and moderation take place.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes present a problem for a scheme of internal assessment. Possible courses of action depend on the stage at which the move takes place. If the move occurs early in the course the new centre

should take responsibility for assessment. If it occurs late in the course it may be possible to accept the assessments made at the previous centre.

Centres should contact the AQA at the earliest possible stage for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases.

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#### 23.4 Retaining Evidence and Re-Using Marks

The centre must retain the work of all candidates, with *Candidate Record Forms* attached, under secure conditions, from the time it is assessed, to allow for the possibility of an enquiry upon result. The work may be returned to candidates after the issue of results provided that no enquiry upon result is to be made which will include re-moderation of the coursework component. If an enquiry upon result is to be made, the work must remain under secure conditions until requested by the AQA.

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## 24

## Moderation

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### 24.1 Moderation Procedures

Moderation of the coursework is by inspection of a sample of candidates' work, sent by post from the centre to a moderator appointed by the AQA. The centre's marks must be submitted to AQA and the sample of work must reach the moderator by 15 May for the June examination series and 10 January for the January examination series in the year in which the qualification is awarded.

The AQA will notify centres of the required composition of the samples.

Following the re-marking of the sample work, the moderator's marks are compared with the centre's marks to determine whether any adjustment is needed in order to bring the centre's assessments into line with standards generally. In some cases it may be necessary for the moderator to call for the work of other candidates. In order to meet this possible request, centres must have available the coursework and *Candidate Record Form* of every candidate entered for the examination and be prepared to submit it on demand. Mark adjustments will normally preserve the centre's order of merit, but where major discrepancies are found, the AQA reserves the right to alter the order of merit.

### 24.2 Post-Moderation Procedures

On publication of the GCE results, the centre is supplied with details of the final marks for the coursework component(s).

The candidates' work is returned to the centre after the examination. The centre receives a report giving feedback to the centre on the appropriateness of the tasks set, the accuracy of the assessments made, and the reasons for any adjustments to the marks.

Some candidates' work may be retained by the AQA for archive purposes.

# Awarding and Reporting

## 25

### Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits

#### 25.1 Grading System

Both the AS and the A Level qualifications will be graded on a five-grade scale: A, B, C, D and E. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for Grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

Individual assessment unit (module) results will be certificated.

#### 25.2 Shelf-Life of Unit Results

The shelf-life of individual module results, prior to the award of the qualification, is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification.

#### 25.3 Module Re-Sits

Each assessment unit may be re-taken an unlimited number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result will count towards the final award.

Candidates who wish to repeat an award must enter for at least one of the contributing units and also enter for certification (cash-in). There is no facility to decline an award once it has been issued.

An AS award can be converted into an A Level award by taking the A2 examination at any examination series when Media Studies is available.

#### 25.4 Minimum Requirements

Candidates will be graded on the basis of work submitted for the award of the qualification.

#### 25.5 Awarding and Reporting

This specification complies with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the current GCSE, GCE, VCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice 2006/7, and will be revised in the light of any subsequent changes for future years.

# Appendices

## A

### Grade Descriptors

The following grade descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at A Level. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at Grades A, C and E. The descriptors should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives (as in Section 6) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

- Grade A** Candidates demonstrate a comprehensive, detailed knowledge and application of the Key Concepts in the specification, and are able to evaluate texts and ideas using the Key Concepts in depth and with some sophistication. They are able to demonstrate excellent knowledge, application and evaluation of the major ideas, theories and debates they deal with. They are able to use relevant contextual knowledge both to illuminate media texts and to account for significant differences between texts. They are able to demonstrate excellent knowledge, application and evaluation of a media technology and demonstrate excellent ability to carry out an independent investigation or research-based study of a media text, topic or issue of their own choice. In all of the above respects candidates display a high degree of critical autonomy and excellent media literacy skills. Written expression is fluent, well-structured, accurate and precise, and shows a confident grasp of appropriate terminology.
- Grade C** Candidates demonstrate sound knowledge and application of the Key Concepts in the specification, and are able to evaluate texts and ideas competently using the Key Concepts. They are able to demonstrate sound knowledge, application and evaluation of the major ideas, theories and debates they deal with. They are able to use some relevant contextual knowledge to illuminate media texts and to account for significant differences between texts. They are able to demonstrate competent knowledge, application and evaluation of a media technology and demonstrate sound ability to carry out an independent investigation or research-based study of a media text, topic or issue of their own choice. In some of the above respects candidates display a sound degree of critical autonomy and competent media literacy skills. Written expression is accurate and clear and shows a sound use of appropriate terminology.

**Grade E** Candidates demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the Key Concepts in the specification, and are able to carry out some evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts. They are able to demonstrate some knowledge, application and evaluation of the

major ideas, theories and debates they deal with. They use sound, relevant contextual knowledge both to illuminate media texts and to account for significant differences between texts. They are able to demonstrate some knowledge, application and evaluation of a media technology and demonstrate ability to carry out an independent investigation or research-based study of a media text, topic or issue of their own choice. Candidates display some aspect of critical autonomy and some media literacy skills. Written work is generally accurate in conveying statements and opinions, sometimes supported by reference to the texts, and shows the use of some appropriate terminology.

**B**



# Centre-assessed work Centre Declaration Sheet 2009

Qualification:
  ELC
  GCSE
  GCE
  GNVQ
  FSMQ
  Key Skills

Specification title: ..... Unit code(s): .....

Centre name: ..... Centre no: 

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**Authentication of candidates' work**  
 This is to certify that marks/assessments have been given in accordance with the requirements of the specification and that every reasonable step has been taken to ensure that the work presented is that of the candidates named.  
 Any assistance given to candidates beyond that given to the class as a whole and beyond that described in the specification has been recorded on the *Candidate Record Form(s)* and has been taken into account. The marks/assessments given reflect accurately the unaided achievement of the candidates.

*Signature(s) of teacher(s) responsible for assessment*

Teacher 1: ..... Teacher 4: .....  
 Teacher 2: ..... Teacher 5: .....  
 Teacher 3: ..... Teacher 6: .....

*(continue overleaf if necessary)*

**Internal standardisation of marking**  
 Each centre must standardise assessment across different teachers/assessors and teaching groups to ensure that all candidates at the centre have been judged against the same standards.  
 If two or more teachers/assessors are involved in marking/assessing, one of them must be designated as responsible for standardising the assessments of all teachers/assessors at the centre.

I confirm that *[tick either (a) or (b)]*

- (a) *the procedure described in the specification has been followed at this centre to ensure that the assessments are of the same standard for all candidates; or*  
 (b) *I have marked/assessed the work of all candidates.*

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Head of Centre: ..... Date: .....

*This form should be completed and sent to the moderator with the sample of centre-assessed work*