
AS
MEDIA STUDIES
7571/W

WRITTEN PAPER

Mark scheme

SAMs

V1.0

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

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

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

Level of response marking instructions

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

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

Step 1 Determine a level

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

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

Step 2 Determine a mark

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

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

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

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

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

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
01	1	<p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1a and AO1 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (4 marks)</p> <p>Award two marks for each correct answer: A, C, D, E</p>	4
01	2	<p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1a and AO1 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (2 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (2 marks)</p> <p>1 mark for each correct example and 1 further mark for an explanation</p> <p>Conventions of magazine covers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mast Head • Pugs • Central image • Direct address (gaze) • Colour palette • Selling line / strapline <p>Credit any other accurate responses.</p> <p>Explanations clarify understanding that these are consistently repeated elements.</p> <p>The Vanity Fair Mast Head – Consists of the magazine’s name presented at the top of the page with a particular typeface and size which creates the brand image of the magazine and makes it instantly recognisable for the target audience.</p> <p>The Pugs (date and price) are placed in the top right corner so as to be eye catching to the potential reader.</p> <p>Central image – Presented here as a studio shot of a main female model with man in background that sets the tone for the magazine and make the main feature of the magazine clear.</p> <p>Direct address (gaze) – Where person in the central image is looking straight at the reader. Direct gaze helps simulate interaction with each individual reader.</p> <p>Colour palette – Defined choice of colours to further create the magazine’s brand identity, in this case shades of red, white and blue (the tricolour).</p> <p>Selling line / strapline – Functions as introductory headline positioned</p>	4

		below the masthead and here describes intended audience for the magazine and anchors the meaning of the image.	
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02	<p>Assessment Objectives – AO2 1 and AO2 2</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse media products including in relation to their contexts (15 marks) • make judgements and draw conclusions (5 marks) 	20
Level	Mark range	Description
4	16-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse the products. The analysis is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the representations of gender in the magazine cover and video game. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions both in relation to the products and also the contexts in which they were created that are consistently well supported by relevant examples. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
3	11-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse the products. The analysis sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of the representations of gender in the magazine cover and video game. • Good judgements and conclusions both in relation to the products and also the contexts in which they were created that are frequently supported by relevant examples. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
2	6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media analyse the products though this is likely to be undeveloped and may, in places, be more descriptive than analytical. The analysis engages with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of the representations of gender in the magazine cover and video game. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions both in relation to the products and also the contexts in which they were created that are sometimes supported by examples. At this level, students may only focus on either the products or the contexts. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology.

1	1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic, if any, application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media that is likely to be generalised and unfocused. The analysis that engages with very straightforward aspects of the representations of gender in the magazine cover and video game, and is more descriptive than analytical. • Basic judgements and conclusions both in relation to the products and also the contexts in which they were created that are generally unsupported by examples. At this level, responses will be undeveloped and are likely to only consider one product and/or one context. • Very little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

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

Responses should address all of the bullet points in the question, but it is not expected that they are covered equally. Responses that do not address all of the bullet points should be assessed using a 'best fit' approach based on the performance indicators in the marking grid.

Responses are expected to compare the unseen magazine cover and the set video game. Responses in the higher bands will explore more detailed aspects of the ways gender is represented in the two products and the issues these representations raise. Responses in the lower bands will focus on more straightforward or obvious aspects of representation and will tend to be descriptive.

For marks in Band 3 and above, responses must include comparisons between the set product and the unseen product. Responses in the higher bands will cover both products in a more even way, whilst at Band 2 or below there may be greater emphasis on one product.

Responses are expected to consider how far the representations relate to relevant media contexts. Responses in the higher bands will explicitly engage with the 'how far' aspect of the question, responses in the middle band will show knowledge of contexts and some straightforward engagement with 'how far' whilst responses in the lower bands will show limited awareness of contexts and may not engage with this aspect at all.

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

Analyse each media product in terms of the choices made by media producers in the representations of gender, including:

- selection and combination of aspects of media language, including technical codes, to construct representations

- how the purpose of the products and features of products designed to attract audiences influences the choices made by media producers in the representations of gender
- editing in order to appeal to audiences and to market the product
- shot type and size, framing and composition of the images
- slogan, titles and typography

Analyse key **similarities and differences** in the representations of gender across the products:

For example, both products aim to appeal to audiences through selection and combination by, at times, challenging stereotypical representations of gender.

Vanity Fair

The cover offers a traditional take on gender through its:

- use of stereotypes of young women as concerned with all forms of appearance: clothes, flowers, make up and jewellery: references to a set of 'myths' of femininity
- colour palette, which is pastel and gentle which, combined with a soft focus and the texture of the material and her hair suggests (connotes) a traditional femininity

Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:

- focus on a carefree superficiality: posture, tilt of the head, facial expression suggest an effortless elegance
- above readings reinforced (anchored) by the title *Vanity Fair* which suggests/enshrines this image of the worldly and the superficial

The cover also challenges stereotypes of gender through:

- the positive visual representations of a young woman – strong, confident, attractive, evidenced by her posture, tilt of head, facial expression
- the construction of the cover creates a hierarchy which features the woman as powerful and important through her positioning and the use of a low camera angle to reinforce her dominance.
- use of visual codes – the woman is smartly dressed but there are also connotations of free movement in her posture and 'address'

Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:

- The representation of the male, 'floored' in her wake reinforces the appeal to its specified audience of "the younger smarter woman"
- the composition of the cover implies a simple, playful narrative involving both characters as potential equals, which challenges the otherwise stereotyped presentation of 'man' and 'woman'/'masculine' and 'feminine'
- what is anchored by the slogan "the younger smarter woman" is an attitude, an outlook, a lifestyle choice which would seem to be at odds with stereotypical ideas of women in the 1950s.

Tomb Raider Anniversary begins as a rejection of the passive femininity referenced above. It does this most powerfully by Lara's entirely physical involvement in the game's quest narrative as the initiator of the game's action. It **challenges** stereotypes through:

- the focus on the Lara character throughout representing her character as central and essential: she battles an array of creatures across three continents

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • her costume, hairstyle and physique speak of freedom and action and open up a conversation about contemporary femininity. <p>Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the woman on <i>Vanity Fair</i> cover, she too is represented as "the younger, smarter woman". <p><i>Tomb Raider Anniversary</i> reinforces stereotypes through the physical appearance of the Lara Croft character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the now famous costume, hairstyle and physique seem to be created to appeal to the male gaze <p>Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the fact that this is an 'anniversary' edition and a recreation of the original game also references the development of the Lara character from over-inflated disproportionate manifestation of the male gaze <p>How far the representations relate to relevant media contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magazine cover offers a historical perspective on gender as does the video game (video cover and game) • Representations of gender in both products reflect changing social and cultural meanings of gender in the modern era • Issues of representation of gender in both products relate to debates about value and appearance (including sexualisation) • Lara Croft has cultural significance and value as a symbolic embodiment of arguments about contemporary gender politics and the history and current state and status of video games. <p>Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact that these representations challenge stereotypes confirm to some extent the presence of these stereotypes • <i>Vanity Fair</i> cover, though 'of its time' is not that different to magazine covers of today and so raises interesting questions about how far we have come (or not) as a society in terms of representations. 	
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03	10	
<p>Assessment Objectives – AO2 1</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products through the use of academic theories (10 marks)</p>		
Level	Mark	Description
5	9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of Barthes' levels of signification to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the representation of royalty on the magazine cover. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. • Good, accurate use of Barthes' levels of signification to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis is logical and frequently engages with the nuanced aspects of the representation of royalty on the magazine cover. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source though this may, in places, be more descriptive than analytical. • Satisfactory, generally accurate use of Barthes' levels of signification to analyse the unseen source. • Analysis is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of the representation of royalty on the magazine cover. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
2	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source though this is likely to be generalised. • Basic use of Barthes' levels of signification to analyse the unseen source though there is likely to be a lack of clarity or relevance. • Analysis is undeveloped and tends towards description of the representations of royalty on the magazine cover. • Little appropriate use of subject specific terminology.

1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the unseen source. Minimal, if any, use of Barthes' levels of signification to analyse the unseen source. Analysis contains multiple inaccuracies or irrelevant points and is almost always descriptive. Minimal, if any, use of subject specific terminology.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

In the analysis of the cover of *Tatler* magazine, the choices made by *Tatler* staff will have some bearing on the broader discussion of myth and ideology prompted by Barthes' ideas about signification. However, the main focus of this task assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the processes of signification (the relationship between signifiers and signifieds, denotation, connotation, myth and ideology) to the analysis of the *Tatler* cover.

Answers in the higher bands are likely to engage with all three levels of signification and consider the full extent of the question whilst answers in the lower bands are more likely to focus on denotation and/or connotation and not extend beyond those ideas.

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

- As a mode of signification myth begins in the identification of **dominant signifiers** (for example the corgi, the crown, the loose pants, the positioning, the facial expression)
- These signifiers potentially have multiple **signifieds** (e.g. the corgi is a small dog, a puppy, a lap dog, a dog associated with our queen, a cute dog).
- Candidates can then 'track' these signifiers through levels/orders of signification as **denotation** (where a crown is a form of valuable adornment and the corgi is a dog) and then **connotation** (which represents an individual's personal response: e.g. the child is boyish/innocent/bewildered/cute).
- Myth** can be seen at this second connotative level as a simple deception ("myth is a double system") co-opting our personal responses so as to involve us in a collective experience at the same time as a personal one thereby 'normalising' or 'naturalising' this process. In this case our apparently natural or at least 'open' or 'free' response to a cute kid and equally cute dog are folded in with our understanding that both crown and dog signify monarchy such that this 'historical event' and potential point of dispute is presented as though unthinkingly benign.
- The central myth then is the myth of monarchy as a natural and

		<p>attractive, engaging and selfless experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The image portrays the idea that the monarchy/royal bloodline will naturally continue into the next generation, e.g. the baby wearing a crown and looking into the distance. • It plays into the idea of the bourgeoisie ‘normalising’ or ‘naturalising’ a situation that confers advantage on them – it is desirable both to be a part of the monarchy and also to live in one. The surrounding stories provide both anchorage and relay to support the preferred reading. • There is also a kind of Tattler myth with connotations of elitism, influence and ‘insider’ information. • The reference to a ‘Collector’s Edition’ feeds the myth that this is something you should want to be associated with; that the birth of the prince is an important historical event which you will want to refer back to and that everyone will want to know about. • The point of the mythologist is to expose the ways myth distorts and “to explain these examples of the falsely obvious”. The oppositional reading this prompts points out privilege, vested interest, nepotism and irrelevance. <p>Accept any other valid analytical responses. Answers must link to Barthes’ ideas about signification.</p>	
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04		<p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1a</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of the media</p> <p>Hegemony is the (political, economic, ideological or cultural) power influenced by a dominant group over other groups (1) which encourages people to consent to the status quo (1).</p>	2
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05		<p style="text-align: center;">AO1 1a</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of the media</p> <p>Cultivation theory relates to the long-term effects of television (1) and states that the more time people spend 'living' in the television world, the more likely they are to believe the social reality portrayed on television (1)</p>	2
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06	<p>Assessment Objectives – AO1 1a and AO1 1b</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (10 marks)</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (5 marks)</p>	15
Level	Mark	Description
5	13-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective explanation of how media organisations build and maintain audiences. • Consistent appropriate and effective reference to the close study product. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by frequent effective explanation of how media organisations build and maintain audiences. • Mostly appropriate and effective reference to the close study product. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by some appropriate and effective explanation of how media organisations build and maintain audiences. • Often appropriate reference to the close study product, but inconsistently effective. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.
2	4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by little appropriate explanation of how media organisations build and maintain audiences. • Occasional appropriate reference to the close study product and with limited effect. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.
1	1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by very rare, if any, appropriate explanation of how media organisations build and maintain audiences. • Little, if any, appropriate reference to the close study product with no real effectiveness. • Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

	<p>Indicative content:</p> <p>When applying the above mark scheme, the difference between consistently effective and frequent effective (levels 4 and 5) could apply to how effective the points are or how regularly effective points are made throughout the response. In the top band it is expected that the response is consistently appropriate and effective throughout the response, whereas in level 4, there may be fewer relevant points made or they may be made less well.</p> <p>The content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all of the points listed.</p> <p>Responses are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how media organisations maintain audiences through the specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation.</p> <p>Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different ways that media organisations maintain audiences and will refer to issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • media institutions as producers and distributors of cultural products (high status) • the relationship between national and global audiences • Ideas about the function of institutions in both 'free market' and PSB contexts: • issues of identity at both an institutional and programme level • marketing within a globalised and transmedia context • the importance to audiences of certain kinds of narrative structure, genre, talent • the importance of technology in adding value to cultural products <p>Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different ways that media organisations maintain audiences and will refer to examples such as:</p> <p>With reference to <i>The Missing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the BBC has a global identity and appeal which it can exploit • the idea of co-production between BBC and Starz as a means of establishing audience and extending appeal • the relation of this second series opener to the newly established franchise (follow up to the 'mega-hit' original) • Tchéky Karyo as the unlikely star (previously unknown): international flavour also in locations but also a solid, 'actorly' British cast • Distinctive storytelling based on time slip elements (product identity) • Conscious exploitation of social media landscape to create both anticipation and ongoing interest (especially Twitter: 1000 tweets a minute) 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment of time to develop a narrative which inhabits the box-set/ literary sensibility <p>With reference to <i>Deutschland 83</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a co-production of AMC Networks' SundanceTV and RTL Television (German and American) to ensure context • RTL is Germany's largest free-to-air broadcaster (corporate identity) • Distributed by Freemantle (global identity) • Security of production (greenlit for two further seasons): free from national/ local economic pressure • First German language series to air on a US network and most successful foreign language show on British TV • Bought by C4 in Britain as part of their 'Walter presents...' (world cinema style, high register) • Very different appeals in national and global contexts: sensitive subject for the united Germany treated in an irreverent retro style plays abroad as an intriguing window onto somebody else's problems. East German perspective asks for us to identify with this Communist spy (innocent abroad) • Post-modern appeal: stylish. Use of popular cultural references especially a soundtrack which is explicitly 'marketed' • Ambitious drama of ideas and events: multi-character: predicated on solid economic foundation: three series in which to (on all levels) invest <p>With reference to <i>The Killing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a co-production of Danish and German PSB companies (DK and ZDF) • Exploiting the success of US long form drama with a local twist (20 episodes for a single crime drama) • Exploring the economic possibilities offered by an international/global market (e.g. success of Wallander): sold to over 120 countries • Marketing prestige 'serious'/literary drama for the boxset context (focus on aesthetic qualities: photography, narrative structure, character focus): chasing international awards rather than a local audience • Cultivation of the 'celebrity' detective: Sarah Lund and the actress Sophie Grabol who has extended these themes and their appeal by subsequent work • Sanctioning of an American version 	
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07	15	
<p>Assessment Objectives – AO1 1b, AO1 2a and AO1 2b</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (5 marks)</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (5 marks)</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (5 marks)</p>		
Level	Mark	Description
5	13-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective explanation of how audiences may interpret the same media in different ways. • Excellent knowledge and understanding of contexts of the media and their influence on media products that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to Common’s Letter to the Free. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by frequent effective explanation of how audiences may interpret the same media in different ways. • Good knowledge and understanding of contexts of the media and their influence on media products that is usually supported by mostly appropriate and effective reference to Common’s Letter to the Free. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by some appropriate and effective explanation of how audiences may interpret the same media in different ways. • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of contexts of the media and their influence on media products that is sometimes supported generally appropriate reference to Common’s Letter to the Free, but inconsistently effective. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.
2	4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by little appropriate explanation of how audiences may interpret the same media in different ways. • Basic knowledge and understanding of contexts of the media and their influence on media products that is generally unsupported by appropriate reference to Common’s Letter to the Free and with limited effect.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.
1	1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by very rare, if any, appropriate explanation of how audiences may interpret the same media in different ways. Minimal, if any, knowledge and understanding of contexts of the media and their influence on media products that is rarely supported by any appropriate reference to Common's Letter to the Free with no real effectiveness. Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

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

Responses are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how contexts can influence the ways in which audiences variously read media products with particular reference to the set music video.

General points

- This is a question about the ways in which different parts of a product's audience may offer quite different readings of that product according to how they are positioned to it socially, culturally and politically
- There is an opportunity to employ both cultivation theory (Gerbner) and reception theory (Hall) to support an examination of how groups might be positioned by their socio-cultural status (reinforced by dominant modes of representation) and may position themselves politically to offer 'dominant hegemonic', 'negotiated' and 'oppositional' readings

Common's Letter to the Free

- This is an explicitly political text dealing with social and cultural issues
- The audience are invited to position themselves in relation to these issues by the provocative character of this video (Common rapping alongside other musicians inside an otherwise deserted prison)
- The title includes an implicit challenge that we as an audience live up to our billing since we are, potentially 'the free' and are drawn into this heart of darkness partly to find a way out. In a long tradition this is therefore partly a 'redemption song' exhorting us to emancipate ourselves from 'mental slavery' to embrace the prospect that freedom will come.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The contrivance of the hovering black rectangle stresses the need for an interpretative response which cannot then let these things be. It seems likely that there is a reference here to Kubrick's 2001 and the black obelisk which facilitates the transition from one state of being to another (primitive to 'early modern'). This was also an inspiration for the cover of Led Zeppelin's seventh studio album <i>Presence</i> which also features a black 'object'.• The lyrics, displayed, are also a provocative gesture offering an informed if emotive response to the troubling issues of race and incarceration. The song appeared at a time when race was once more on the agenda and is very much a history of the present: though they refer to "southern trees we hung from", "the new Jim Crow" and "the caged bird sings for freedom", it is concerned starkly with the here and now: "Shot me with your ray-gun, And now you want to trump me, Prison is a business, America's the company".• Stylistically it has an austerity which implies verité/ authenticity (black and white film, realistic location, element of historical accuracy)• The song and video are both part of a broader political project that links with and depends upon the work of collaborators like Bradford Young (the cinematographer) who has also previously worked with Ava DuVernay whose Netflix documentary <i>13th (about the 13th amendment)</i> featured the song. Also musicians like Karriem Riggins as well as Robert Glasper who also collaborated in a performance of the song at the White House for Barack Obama. There is also some gesturing at least to the history of Black protest music and in particular Billy Holliday's <i>Strange Fruit</i>.• The song is part of an album entitled <i>Black America Again: a call to action</i> that asks its audience to stand up and be counted.• Some of the ways that context is productive concern issues of gender, ethnicity and social disadvantage/ advantage all of which may impact on the way this text is read.	
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08	<p>Assessment Objectives – AO2 1 and AO2 2</p> <p>Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products through the use of academic theories (10 marks)</p> <p>Make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)</p>	20
Level	Mark range	Description
5	17-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the radio product. • Excellent, detailed and accurate use of Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to analyse the product. • Analysis is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of encoding and decoding in relation to the product. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant and detailed analysis of specific aspects of the product. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	13-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the radio product. • Good, accurate use of Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to analyse the product. • Analysis is logical and frequently engages with the nuanced aspects of encoding and decoding in relation to the product. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by appropriate analysis of relevant aspects of the product. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the radio product. • Satisfactory, generally accurate use of Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to analyse the product. • Analysis is generally sound and engages with the straightforward aspects of encoding and decoding in relation to the product. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are reasonable and supported by analysis of relevant aspects of the product. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.
2	5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic application of knowledge and

		<p>understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the radio product.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic use of Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to analyse the product. • Analysis is undeveloped and tends towards description of the product and its reception with minimal reference to encoding and decoding. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are only partially supported by reference to the product. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.
1	1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the radio product. • Minimal, if any, use of Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to analyse the product. • Analysis contains multiple inaccuracies or irrelevant points and is almost always descriptive. • Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples. • Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit

Indicative content:

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

Responses are required to apply Hall's theory of encoding and decoding to the set radio product and to make judgements and draw conclusions around the extent to which the product studied conforms to this theory.

Responses in the higher bands will explicitly engage with the 'to what extent' aspect of the question through reference to the set product and will demonstrate an understanding of the complex character of relationships between production and reception, responses at band 3 may straightforwardly apply the theory to the set product rather than explicitly assessing to what extent it conforms, whilst responses in the lower bands may not engage with Hall's theory or may simply describe the theory or aspects of the set product.

Although candidates are required to apply their understanding of Hall's theory to the set product, there is no requirement to argue that the product does conform to the theory; candidates might equally argue that the product does not conform to Hall's theory at all, or that it only conforms to it to a certain extent, or that the set product does not feature all of the elements identified in Hall's theory. Various conclusions are acceptable provided they are substantiated by analysis

	<p>of the product.</p> <p>Analysis of the product is likely to focus on aspects of Media Audiences and Media Industries, however, elements of Media Language (particularly in relation to codes and conventions and genre) and Media Representations (particularly stereotypes) could also feature. Prominence should not be given to any aspect of the theoretical framework in this analysis as long as the points made link back to Hall's theory of encoding and decoding.</p> <p>Content below is not prescriptive; all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all points listed. Answers are likely to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how audiences respond to an interpret media representations • the specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation • how audiences interpret the media, including how they may interpret the same media in different ways • Media effects including Bandura <p>Encoding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a meaning-making system which exists prior to the creation of the media product – the world was on the brink of World War II and the invasion anxiety of much of the listening audience was well-known and would have been to the producers • There is a broadly understood set of codes and conventions for media products – Welles/the producers of War of the Worlds chose to subvert and challenge these codes and conventions (both of radio drama and literary adaptations). This could speak to them intending to create effects similar to those that were, in fact, documented. Though the primary purpose was undeniably to entertain, it could be that those who decoded the program as factual were responding to an intended encoding. • Exploiting the character of the medium: radio programme inside a very realistic, professional sounding radio programme – the faux reportage (which brings the audience into the drama in a direct way) is inserted into a realistic sounding music broadcast. • Playing with the forms and functions of radio: representation of reality/discourse of realism. Live reports and interruptions to broadcasts were an emerging convention in the radio form and had been used recently in relation to events in Europe and it is unlikely that the producers were unaware of this fact which, again, would support the idea that, at least in part, the intention of the producers was to alarm the listening audience and convince them that what they were hearing was really happening. It didn't sound like a joke. Additionally, the discovery of the 'spaceship' mimics the reports of the Hindenburg crash which had happened only a year previously. • When creating the media product the producers constructed a version of reality through re-presentation which, again, though done with the intent to entertain could definitely speak to the 	
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		<p>producers intending to convince the audience of the truth of what they were hearing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme was initially broadcast on Halloween night which would appear to demonstrate the producers' intent to scare listeners as entertainment rather than to cause actual panic. <p>Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mercury on the Air (and Welles himself) were not well-known or particularly popular so the intent could well have been to cause panic and outrage in order to generate publicity, in which case it certainly worked. The producers needed readings of the product that took it to be factual in order to create this publicity so, whilst such a reading would not be the dominant intended reading, it is possible that it was <i>an</i> intended meaning. • Though not the focus of the question, students may refer to genre theory as they discuss conventions and rules, sub-genre and hybridity as this is directly relevant to the question of encoded messages and meanings. • The impact of representations should not be underestimated when considering the encoding of meanings and messages. The use of stereotypes in order to transmit an intended meaning to an audience quickly is one way in which producers can be relatively assured of how a meaning will be decoded, by the dominant culture at least – the use of the 'professor' character positioned as an expert was highly likely to draw the audience into the producers' intended reading which might suggest intent on the producers' part to encourage a panicked response. This can also be applied to the 'serious' newscaster/reporter – someone who is trusted to present a reliable version of reality to the audience. <p>Decoding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The texture of production is very important when considering the ways in which media products are de-coded: the radio programme uses stereotypes, selective representation and cleverly positions the audience to receive the messages being transmitted. • If dominant readings are to be counted as the key measure of the success of a media producer transmitting a message then The War of the Worlds was clearly a success in this area – most people who listened understood the joke and took it to be a piece of entertainment. This entertainment may well have had a comment to make on the state of the world at the time, as many do, but its primary function was to entertain and it did. • Negotiated and oppositional readings are also important to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ product at the time of release ○ impact on the codes and conventions of that media form (and others) ○ lasting impact of the product itself • The radio programme is still aired on radio to the present day so its lasting impact is evident. It is considered to be a significant media product and marked the start of a successful career for Orson Welles and the impact was great enough to persuade Campbell's soup to sponsor <i>The Mercury Theatre on the Air</i>. • The well-reported impact of product lies in the confusion of one 	
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		<p>genre with another</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is significant evidence that a) audience was much smaller than reported b) reports that people had left their homes and suffered from shock were unsubstantiated and c) that the press were responsible for exaggerated reports (in an on-going war against radio) so it could, reasonably be concluded that the negotiated and oppositional readings that were reported at the time were, in fact, largely fabricated. <p>Answers in the higher bands may consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiated readings could include the explicit association of the 'aliens' with Nazi invaders which caused some panic. The implicit comparisons of invading forces within the product would indicate some intent on the part of the producers to illuminate such concerns. Though the aliens are clearly referred to within the programme, and described, the associations in peoples' minds, given the problems emanating from Europe would seem logical and easy to make. • It could be assumed that any reading that took the product as literal truth is oppositional (though this could be challenged if it is considered that the ultimate goal of the producers was to create publicity) but this has had an impact on the codes and conventions, not just of radio drama but of other media forms – especially news media (exaggerated news 'teasers'). • The setting of the radio programme (as opposed to the original novel) increased its immediate relatability for audiences so they were much more likely to engage with the narrative as presented. • The notion that agency is placed with the audience would seem to be inappropriate in this context as any listeners who were frightened by the broadcast are unlikely to have actively chosen to decode it as fact; that is simply how they interpreted the product as it was presented to them which would cast them as passive consumer, in opposition to Hall's assertions about how media products are read. 	
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09	Assessment Objectives – AO2 1 and AO2 2 Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products including in relation to their contexts (10 marks) Make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)	20
Level	Mark range	Description
5	17-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent and judicious application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the set product that provides a detailed and accurate analysis of how Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of interested groups. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant and detailed reference to specific aspects of the product. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	13-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the set product that provides a logical and mostly accurate analysis of how Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of interested groups. • Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by appropriate reference to relevant aspects of the product. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory, generally accurate application of the theoretical framework to analyse the set product that provides a generally sound analysis of how Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of interested groups. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are reasonable and supported by some reference to relevant aspects of the product. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.
2	5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic application of the theoretical framework that lacks development to analyse the set product that provides a basic and often descriptive analysis of how Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of interested groups. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are only partially supported by reference to the product. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.
1	1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal application of knowledge and

		<p>understanding of the theoretical framework to analyse the set product with multiple inaccuracies or irrelevance that provides a very limited and mostly descriptive account of how Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of interested groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited judgements and conclusions that lack reasoning and are unsupported by examples. • Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit

Indicative content:

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

It is expected that a significant focus of this question will be the relationship between media producers and their groups interested in their products:

- how media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated
- the interrelationship between media technologies and patterns of consumption and response

However, as a synoptic question, the analysis and judgement of the product should also allow candidates to draw on material from across the framework and media contexts. Responses in the higher bands are expected to draw together elements across the course of study to inform their analysis and judgements (responses do not have to refer to all four areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media but should draw from a range of elements from across the course).

There is no expectation that the responses will be entirely balanced. If a student constructs a clear argument on either side of the debate showing astute analysis using the theoretical framework, then this should not prevent them from reaching the higher mark bands.

Similarly, if their analysis using the framework leads to them to a balanced conclusion that is logical and well supported, this should be rewarded and could also reach the higher mark bands.

Media language

- How the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings. For example Teenvogue.com offers both clarity and intrigue: beauty, fashion and entertainment but also ‘What’s Up?’ and ‘Vogue Daily’.
- How the combination of elements of media language influence meaning. For example Teenvogue.com has a strong register

		<p>across its complete range of ‘departments’. This operates through clarity in written style and a plethora of generously proportioned images.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How developing technologies affect media language. For example Teenvogue.com consciously develops its audience by offering interesting content in interesting ways through hyperlinked menus, through speculative headlining and through interactivity. <p>Students could use any of the points above (or other relevant points relating to media language) to argue that Teen Vogue is constructed entirely to meet the demands of the consumers as it appears to be so clearly targeted at them. They could, however, also argue that the use of media language is a matter of appealing to advertisers or of beating competitors (either by setting the agenda for teen online magazines or by emulating those competitors and, ultimately, outperforming them).</p> <p><u>Media representations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect of social and cultural context on representations. For example the image of Teenvogue.com, in-keeping with the parent brand, is socially and culturally elite with a focus on high fashion and society events (eg ‘Balmain Autumn/Winter’ and ‘Pippa Middleton’s honeymoon’). • How and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively. For example there is a strong sense of product and audience identity (audience members are pictured and represented as part of an individual and collective experience). • Hall’s theory of encoding/decoding (focus on messages and values). <p>Students could use any of the points above (or other relevant points relating to media representations) to argue that Teen Vogue is mindful of its target audience and uses representations that will attract and reflect that target audience. They could, however, also argue that the magazine is simply following the tone set by the parent magazine, Vogue, and that the representations are a matter of continuing the brand which would speak to them responding to the demands of competitors as the brand and tone of the magazine has already established itself and stands out against the competition.</p> <p><u>Media industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation. For example Teenvogue.com exists in a completely supported and ‘strategised’ relationship with Teen Vogue, which has developed the magazine into a quarterly. • The relationship of recent technological change and media production, distribution and circulation. For example, Teenvogue.com is that element of the brand that is focusing more on digital readers. • How media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally. For example the ‘sub-brand’ has persisted in the global market despite the failure of other teen-orientated spin-offs like Cosmo Girl. Teen Vogue is a prestige production in whatever form it appears; it has status, a 	
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		<p>familial relationship with a global heavyweight, the status of some of the contributors (eg former First Ladies Hilary Clinton and Michelle Obama) will likely appeal to potential advertisers since these are newsworthy women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of competitors, Teen Vogue has survived and outlived a number of competitors, including heavyweight names such as Elle Girl and Cosmo Girl. It has responded well to what might have been lacking in competitor offerings, reduced its print publication schedule and successfully managed a move to an online marketplace. • The presence in the market of personal websites and blogs, which allow more niche engagement can be seen as good news for Teen Vogue. This competitor activity and disturbance (e.g. sister mag, polyester, shade mag) can lead to more online traffic, more interest in online magazines and, potentially, more customers for them. • Teen Vogue is evidently aware of competitor products (either independents or 'names') and offers a hybrid in terms of content. • Though brand loyalty cannot be assumed, brand confidence is important and Vogue is an established brand. <p>Students could use any of the points above (or any other relevant points relating to media industries) to argue that Teen Vogue is constructed to meet the demands of the consumers as it has responded to market trends towards online content and survived in a challenging environment as a result of this. Equally, they could argue that this move online is a response to a combination of factors, competitors have also moved online and, in fact, have been created precisely because of the Internet. They could also argue that there is an expectation from advertisers that their content will be able to appear across platforms and to only continue to operate in a print form may lead to a loss of advertising revenue so, it is possible that the online presence is as much to do with other interested groups as it is to do with consumers.</p> <p><u>Media audiences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally. For example, Teenvogue.com is well-organised and well-stocked; there is a substantial amount to both browse and read. • How media producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences. For example the aim is to both target and develop an audience of educated and socially aware young women. • How audiences interact with the media and can be actively involved in media production. For example Teenvogue.com makes full use of the interconnectedness offered by social media and of e-media marketing strategies. • Gauntlett's theory of identity as a socially constructed and negotiated thing. For example, Teenvogue.com has been repositioning itself in this respect; since 2015 there has been a change of emphasis which has delivered a broader and more diverse content (politics, feminism, identity and activism now 	
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	<p>feature consistently).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The character of convergent media and the communities it fosters reinforces a ‘collaborative’ spirit online which is obvious in any study of the teen lifestyle online magazine ‘presence’. Teen Vogue have ensured that their offer comprises something which is sufficiently different from competitors but also compatible with it. Brand loyalty is no longer an expectation and Teen Vogue have responded to this effectively. <p>Students could use any of the points above (or any other relevant points relating to media audiences) that Teen Vogue has re-invented itself in relation to changing demands from consumers and that their continued success is related to their agility in this regard. They could also argue that, as the online content is free, the website’s audience is advertisers and affiliate retail partners as they need to attract both in order to maintain the site as a financially viable tool. The links between advertisers and consumers is most clear in this regard as the content has to attract consumers in order for retailers to want to advertise and promote their goods and services on the website in order to satisfy all parties.</p> <p><u>Contexts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website marries political content with fashion and lifestyle material which reflects the social, cultural and political contexts. Consumers are likely to expect a wide range of content due to the abundance of websites that carry news and lifestyle materials (think of the websites of newspapers and other outlets such as BuzzFeed). • Representations of gender in Teen Vogue products reflect changing social and cultural meanings of gender in the modern era • These representations challenge stereotypes and confirm, to some extent, the presence of these stereotypes – the content is very clearly focused on challenging the biases that (young) women face on a daily basis and will not accept the status quo • High level of political content reflects the state of the political context and a time of deep division in America and the wider world as the gap between right and left, rich and poor seems to be widening • In terms of the economic context, Teen Vogue has managed to survive in a very difficult climate that has seen competitors fail. 	
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