



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**MEDIA STUDIES
GCSE**

AUTUMN 2020

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

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Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Unit	Page
Component 1: Exploring the Media	1
Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products	2

MEDIA STUDIES

GCSE

November 2020

COMPONENT 1: EXPLORING THE MEDIA

General Comments

39 students were entered for the Autumn 2020 Series. While this is a too low a number from which to draw detailed, specific conclusions, it was encouraging to see how centres and candidates had continued to respond to the demands of the specification and how well candidates had been guided by centres, particularly in terms of timings this year: no candidates failed to complete the paper.

The candidates generally demonstrated a good level of familiarity both with the set products and with many relevant aspects of the theoretical framework. Candidates' analysis of Media Language for Question 1 was secure but there remain weaknesses with the analysis of text/written language, with candidates continuing to focus on fonts/colour palettes: these are part of layout/design. Centres are advised to use candidates' cross-curricular skills to help them analyse text/written language in media products: as the mark scheme shows, there is much crossover here with the non-fiction aspects of GCSE English Language.

Comments on individual questions/sections

For Question 2b, most candidates were able to draw out similarities and differences between the representations of men in the set product, the film poster for *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974) and the unseen resource, a film poster for *Holding The Man* (2015). The latter of these is a good example of a rich text, offering similarities and differences in terms of its representations and those of the set product. It offered candidates an opportunity to develop their exploration of *why* those representations are similar/different from production, audience and contextual perspectives; and it allowed candidates' answers to be framed securely within the theoretical framework in terms of stereotypes and counter-types. Question 2a was more problematic for many candidates who struggled to show a good understanding of how context (in this case, cultural context) had influenced the production of the set product beyond general statements such as "the 1970s were sexist."

Though the set product used for Question 3 has now been replaced, most candidates talked with confidence about how video game websites enable them to reach audiences around the world and they could identify who the video game regulator is. An area for more development here would be the *influence* that regulation has had on the set product.

Finally, identifying audiences for the set product used in Question 4 and some of the ways through which they can access the text proved unproblematic for most candidates. It was pleasing to see far less 'downloading' of theory for the final question than we have done in the past, with the most successful candidates understanding how audiences' needs were met by specific examples from the set product.

Summary of key points

It is hoped that, with these general comments to guide them, centres will be able to use this paper, its mark scheme and exemplar materials for practice and mock examinations, helping to guide candidates towards good outcomes next year.

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COMPONENT 2: UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS AND PRODUCTS

General Comments

Candidates responded to Component 2 with a generally sound grasp of the key concepts underpinning the theoretical framework in the GCSE specification and, in most cases, offered answers with a clear focus on the specific questions set. Overall, there was a clear understanding of what was required from the different elements of the paper, showing that candidates had been well prepared for this component.

Comments on individual questions/sections

In terms of Media Language, it was pleasing to see many candidates applying their understanding of Propp's character functions to their analysis in Question 1a, which led to some excellent responses. Candidates also demonstrated confidence in their grasp of Representation in Question 3, although the idea of self-representation proved challenging to some candidates. This is an area which could be explored in more depth in the future, particularly in relation to the official websites and social media associated with the set music artists for Section B.

For Question 2, candidates were rewarded for their knowledge and understanding of a range of audiences and this question was generally answered successfully. However, some candidates would benefit from securing more detailed knowledge of demographics and psychographics as ways of categorising audiences. Learners with this knowledge and terminology were able to offer more specific and precise definitions of the different audiences for their chosen television genre.

On the whole, responses to Question 4 showed clear knowledge and understanding of media contexts, which in many cases was good and reasonably detailed. Responses to both questions in Section B and the set products and centres should continue to encourage their learners to make contextual links an integral part of set product study.

A key determiner in distinguishing responses in the higher bands on all questions was their ability to refer to specific aspects of the set product to illustrate and exemplify their knowledge, understanding, analysis or ability to make convincing judgements and conclusions. Many candidates used generalised examples when discussing crime dramas or sitcoms in Question 2 and this prevented them from accessing the higher bands. Some responses to Question 3 also struggled to explore specific examples of posts on social media and learners would benefit from being reminded of the importance of studying detailed examples from all the set products to support their points.

As was the case in 2019, some rubric infringements were made in Question 3, where a significant number of responses failed to respond to the question set in a relevant way and instead offered answers which focused entirely on one or two of the set music videos. Although it is entirely acceptable to reference the videos and websites in relation to the artists' social media in this question, it is not appropriate to respond with no reference at all to the social media requirement set out in the question and the specification. Centres are reminded to ensure candidates are well prepared to answer Question 3, the extended response question, by referring closely to the specification requirements for Component 2 Section B and using the sample assessment materials available on the Eduqas website. This will help familiarise learners with the specific requirements of the question and help avoid rubric infringements.

Finally, the number of candidates who did not attempt the final question on the paper continues to be a concern, pointing to a need for candidates to organise their time effectively. Some candidates, for example, appeared to allocate too much time to the 8-mark question in Section A (Question 1a).



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