

EDUQAS GCE MEDIA STUDIES FAQs

ADMINISTRATION

Q How do I access the secure website?

A The secure website can be accessed at www.wjecservices.co.uk You will need a user name and password issued by your Exams Officer. Centres that are not registered with WJEC will need to contact centres@wjec.co.uk to register first.

GENERAL

Q Is it possible for centres to enter all learners for AS at the end of Year 1 and then allow those who want to progress to complete the A level in Year 2?

A This is theoretically possible but please consider the following:

- The AS and A level are separate, standalone qualifications. The AS and A level are co-teachable but the AS does not contribute to the A level in any way. So, if learners sit the AS assessments at the end of Year One, they will still have to sit all of the A level assessments at the end of Year 2.
- This has implications for the structuring of the NEA in particular as learners would complete the AS production in Year 1 and would then have to complete the full A level cross-media production in Year 2. The briefs offered will always be in the same forms, so the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at AS will be transferable to A level. Learners could begin the NEA at the end of the summer term and during the summer holiday to allow plenty of time for completion of all components for the A level in the second year.
- The AS content for the exam components could be covered in Year 1 and then the additional A level content, products and theories could be taught in Year 2.

Q Would you recommend teaching Component 1 before Component 2?

A We would certainly advise that learners begin with Component 1 as this will introduce them to the theoretical framework and begin to develop their textual analysis skills. However, it is not necessary to teach all of Component 1 before introducing Component 2. Centres might want to consider which options they will offer for the NEA and ensure that they teach these forms prior to Component 3. The Guidance for Teaching document on the Eduqas website offers further advice and suggested course plans.

Q How often will the set products for Components 1 and 2 be changed?

A The set products will be reviewed periodically, and some may be changed in the future to ensure that they are still relevant; however the products will not be changed every year.

Q Where can we find the set products for Components 1 and 2?

A

- The set print products for Component 1 Section A are available in the Digital Resources section of the Eduqas website:
<http://resources.eduqas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rId=970> .
- The audio-visual set products for Component 1 Section A are available online, using the links in the specification.
- The set products for Component 1 Section B are listed in the specification and centres are able to select some of the specific examples that they study. These examples need to be accessed online and, in the case of the newspaper products, purchased by the centre.
- The set television products for Component 2 Section A need to be purchased by the centre. All of the products are readily available on DVD, with the possible exception of *No Burqas Behind Bars*. If a centre wishes to study this option and is not able to find a copy to purchase, please contact Jo Johnson as Eduqas has an agreement with the distributor to supply the product at a cost.
- The relevant sections of the set historical magazine products for Component 2 Section B are available in the Digital Resources section of the Eduqas website:
http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies/as-a-level/A%20and%20AS%20level%20Media%20Studies%20teaching%20from%202017%20Set%20Products%20for%20Component%202%20Section%20B%20Magazines_Redacted.pdf?language_id=1
- The set contemporary magazines for Component 2 Section B need to be purchased by the centre and details of where to buy them are included in the above link.
- The set products for Component 2 Section C are online and can be accessed using the links in the specification.

Q There is a statement on the Eduqas website that the resources should be used as a starting point for teaching. How much more detail is required?

A The resources are designed to support teachers in preparing to deliver the course, and there are many activities that can be used in class, covering the different areas of the framework as well as contexts and theoretical perspectives. However, the resources do not comprehensively cover every aspect of the subject content and it is expected that teachers will use these as a starting point and develop their own teaching materials. It is important that centres cover all of the subject content listed in the specification and, in Component 1, learners need to study additional products selected by the centre to develop their knowledge and understanding.

Q With regard to the named theories, do we only have to teach the bullet points listed in the appendix of the specification or is more detail required?

A The bullet points in the appendix summarise the areas of each theory that need to be studied and that learners need to engage with. These elements do need to be fully explored, for example from the Genre Theory list: *the idea that genres exist within specific economic, institutional and industrial contexts* - learners will need to fully consider what Neale means by this and to explore these different contexts in relation to the relevant products. So, it may benefit learners to know a little

about the background to the theory but there is no requirement to move beyond these bullet points and cover different areas of the theory.

Q Are learners expected to use theories to demonstrate their understanding in all questions in Components 1 and 2?

A If learners are specifically required to refer to or evaluate academic theory this will be stated in the question, for example Questions 4-6 in the SAMs. However, the instructions on the front of each exam paper include the following statement: *You should use relevant theories and relevant subject-specific terminology where appropriate.* Therefore it is likely that learners, especially at the higher levels, will include reference to theories or theoretical approaches where appropriate.

Q Can you please clarify the differences between an extended response, a stepped question and a two part question for Components 1 and 2?

A

- An **extended response** requires 'the ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured' - e.g. SAMs Component 1, Question 1.
- A **stepped question** contains two or more parts, with lower and higher tariffs, to allow the full range of learners to access the marks e.g. SAMs Component 1 Question 3.
- A **two-part question** is where the marks allocated to a question are split between two parts e.g. SAMs Component 2 Section A.

Q Will additional sets of Sample Assessment Materials be published?

A There is one set of accredited SAMs for each exam component and further examples will be published in future. Centres may wish to design their own assessment tasks for internal use with learners, and details of the way each component section will be assessed are included in the Specification. The SAMs give an indication of the structure of the papers, and also of the command words that may be used - there is some further explanation of these in the Guidance for Teaching document on the Eduqas website. The subject content listed in the specification will also help when devising internal assessments in centres.

Q Is there a textbook available for Eduqas GCE Media Studies?

A The textbook is published by Illuminate. Details are available here:

http://www.illuminatepublishing.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=11&products_id=129

Q What other resources are available?

A WJEC Eduqas have produced a wide range of free resources to support delivery of the GCE. There is a factsheet for all of the set products for Component 1, as well as interactive digital resources on Component 2, Section A (Television) and Section B (Magazines). The Guidance for Teaching provides example course outlines, teaching approaches, resources lists and much more. All of the resources can be accessed under the Digital Resources tab of the subject page:

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies/as-a-level/>

COMPONENT 1

Q In Component 1 Section A the specification advises that additional contrasting products should be explored alongside the set products. Do these texts need to be from the same period, genre etc. as the set product?

A The specification states that the contrasting products chosen by centres should allow learners to 'develop their analytical skills and explore a range of representations to support analysis of the representation issues highlighted in the set products'. This will help to prepare them for the representation question where they have to compare a set product with an unseen resource. We would recommend, therefore, that centres select products that are contrasting with the set products in terms of representation issues; they do not need to be from the same period or genre, and it would be interesting to explore different representations.

Q Do we need to cover every area of representation e.g. gender, age, and ethnicity in relation to every set product?

A The specification requires learners to study the way **events, issues, individuals** and **social groups are represented**. Learners should be able to discuss the relevant social groups and events/ issues if appropriate in each product. Centres are also advised to teach additional products in each form, and so these could include different representations for learners to analyse.

Q Is it appropriate to consider audience in Section A as part of the analysis of the set products?

A While the focus of Section A is media language and representation, it will be helpful for learners to consider audience factors here, for example the target audience for a product. In the list of content for media language and representation there are some bullet points that refer to audience, so these elements must be explored.

Q Will the representation comparison question in Section A require comparison of an unseen product and set product in the same media form?

A No, not necessarily. The comparison could be **within** the forms studied for section A, or **across** those forms, as it is productive to look at how representations are constructed across a range of media forms. So, for example, the question could require comparison of an unseen advert with one of the set adverts studied (as in the SAMs), or it could require comparison of an unseen music video with one of the set adverts studied.

Q In Section B learners are required to study a complete edition of the set newspapers. Does this have to be the same edition as the front cover set in Section A?

A No, this can be any edition of the centre's choosing. It is recommended that multiple copies are purchased on the same day for study in class and also that learners access the website on the same day to understand the relationship between content in the newspaper and on the website. The edition does not need to feature a major event or news story as it will be studied in relation to industry and audience issues.

Q Do learners need to study the entire newspaper in detail for Section B?

A No, as the emphasis is on industry and audience issues, centres should select particular articles and sections to explore with their learners.

Q The set radio product, *Late Night Woman's Hour*, is listed on the BBC website as being 28 minutes in length but the podcast is 45 minutes. Which version should be used?

A The set product is the 45 minute podcast which can be downloaded from the BBC website. This does not need to be analysed in detail in relation to media language and representation, but it should be listened to in order to identify audience and industry issues. An interesting exercise might be to compare the original broadcast version with the extended podcast.

Q Will the breakdown of marks for questions in Component 1 always be the same as they are in the SAMs?

A No, these may vary for Section B.

- Component 1 Section A: there will be two questions totalling 35 marks for AS and 45 marks at A level. The representation question will be an extended response requiring comparison of an unseen with a set product, which will always be worth 25 marks at AS level and 30 marks at A level. The media language question will always be worth 10 marks in total at AS and 15 marks in total at A level.
- Component 1 Section B: there will be two stepped questions, one on industry and one on audience. These two questions will always total 25 marks at AS and 45 marks at A level but the breakdown of marks between questions and within questions will vary.

Q In Section A there is an unseen product for Question 1 and Question 2 – will this be the same product or will there be two different unseen products?

A Each question will have a different unseen resource - for example, in the SAMs Q1 requires learners to compare the Water Aid set product with an unseen Save the Children advert; Q2 requires analysis of unseen newspaper front covers.

Q In Section A will Question 1 always be on media language and Question 2 on representation?

A No, the media language question will always be an unseen analysis and the representation question will always be a comparison of a set product with an unseen resource. The order of the questions may be swapped as the audio-visual 'unseen' product will always be shown first, for example if the representation question featured analysis of an unseen A/V product, this would be Question 1.

COMPONENT 2

Q Do you recommend teachers select the options that the whole class will study, or is it advised to teach all of the options and allow the students to decide which they will write about in the exam?

A We recommend that you select one option for learners to study, rather than trying to teach them all. This is primarily a timing issue as there is a considerable amount of content to cover in each section and studying one option will allow learners to develop the required depth of knowledge and understanding.

Q Do learners need to study the entire set episodes of the television programmes in Section A?

A Yes, learners need to analyse the media language (including genre and narrative) and representations throughout the episodes.

Q Do learners need to study the entire set magazines in Section B?

A No, learners need to study selected extracts from the magazines. The extracts from the historical magazines are available in the digital resources section of the Media Studies page on the Eduqas website: http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies/as-a-level/A%20and%20AS%20level%20Media%20Studies%20teaching%20from%202017%20Set%20Products%20for%20Component%202%20Section%20B%20Magazines_Redacted.pdf?language_id=1 . The set extracts from the contemporary magazines are listed in the document above, and centres need to purchase the magazine following the link provided.

Q Do learners need to study the entire websites for the set products in Section C?

A No, as detailed in the specification, learners need to study the following elements of their chosen websites and blogs:

- the design of the home page, including its use of images and topical material
- links to other content, including audio-visual material such as the relevant *YouTube* channel, vlog etc.
- interactive links, including to social and participatory media.

Q Do you recommend studying both set products in each section together or is it better to teach one in the first year and the other in the second year?

A Either approach could work – if you are going to be co-teaching the first year of the A level alongside the AS then you will teach the AS product in Year 1 and move onto the second product in Year 2. If you are teaching the linear A level only then you may prefer to teach both products together as this will allow you to explore and compare areas such as genre and industry issues in relation to both products.

Q Can we mix and match products from the different options in each section? For example, in Section A can we study *The Bridge* and *Humans*, or do we have to study *Humans* and *The Returned*?

A The Component 2 products cannot be mixed and matched from different options - they have been paired by genre and must be studied in the combinations detailed in the specification, as the assessment will be based upon these pairings.

Q Do you recommend teaching additional products alongside the set products in Component 2?

A The main focus should be on the set products, however it will be useful for learners to study short extracts from other products to demonstrate genre conventions for example. There are some suggested examples in the digital resources for each topic.

Q Will exam questions always require students to refer to both texts?

Yes, learners will complete either one extended response question or a two-part question in each section. The extended response questions will be based on both set products; for the two-part questions, learners will be asked about one set product in the first part and the other set product in the second part (as per the A level SAMs Section A questions).

Q Will there always be a two-part question in Component 2?

A Yes, there will always be two extended response questions and one two-part question in Component 2; however the two-part question will not always be set in the same section.

COMPONENT 3

Q When and how are the NEA briefs released to centres?

A The NEA briefs change annually and are released on 1 March in the year prior to assessment, so the briefs for assessment in 2019 will be released on 1 March 2018 and so on. The NEA briefs will be published on the secure website under 'Non-exam assessment materials'.

Q The specification advises that centres should spend no more than 16 weeks on the NEA. How many hours of delivery time per week is this based on?

A As contact times varies between centres, we have stipulated the timings in terms of weeks, however most centres have between 4 and 5 hours per week.

Q Should learners be offered a free choice of the set briefs or can centres prescribe one or more of the briefs for them to use?

A It is entirely up to centres to decide which NEA options to offer to learners depending on teacher expertise and the resources available. For example, some centres may choose to offer the audio-visual or print based cross-media briefs.

Q Can a centre set a specific genre for all learners? For example, could all learners complete a television crime drama sequence?

A At A level the briefs require learners to select and research a genre - this is a development from the GCSE specification where Eduqas will specify the genre. So, genres should **not** be set on a whole class basis. Teachers are able to advise learners on selecting an appropriate brief and on completing the research and planning, as detailed in the Specification, page 53.

Q Where the production companies are suggested as examples in the briefs, should learners create a production for one of those companies or is it acceptable to create a product for a different company?

A If companies are suggested as examples it is acceptable for learners to create products for a different company as long as this fits into the stipulated industry context. If the brief states that the production should be made for a particular production company then this should be adhered to.

Q Can learners create a product as part of an existing brand or franchise?

A No – the production must be original. The production may be created for an existing production company but must not be an existing brand (e.g. learners must not create an episode or website for a product such as *Eastenders* or *Doctor Who*)

Q The brief states that learners must create original material for this component but can they use ‘found’ logos, such as a production company logo for Warner Bros if creating film marketing materials?

A Yes, it is acceptable for learners to use existing generic logos such as production company logos, age certificate logos and barcodes, but these do not count towards to number of images stipulated in the brief as they are not original images.

Q Some of the sample briefs require learners to target an older audience. How can they do this if they are not able to film or photograph people who fit into the target age group?

A Learners may use performers or models who do not fit the exact age group of the character or persona they wish to portray. For example, a fellow learner could portray a business person who is supposed to be middle-aged. This is acceptable as long as the representation of an older character is constructed through elements such as dress codes, dialogue etc.

Q The indicative content for bands 4 and 5 suggests that candidates may create complex representations and challenge or subvert stereotypes. Is it possible for learners to achieve the top levels if they don’t create complex or challenging representations?

A Yes. The indicative content outlines the elements that learners are likely to include in order to meet the requirements of the brief and the band 4 and 5 bullet points outline some areas that learners at these levels may explore. This is not a checklist of expected elements and valid alternatives should be rewarded where deemed appropriate, in line with the skills set out in the banded levels in the generic assessment grids. For example, learners may construct highly appropriate, purposeful representations that conform to stereotypes.

Q For the online briefs learners have to create audio or audio-visual footage. Do they have to create the type of footage suggested in the brief?

A That depends – if a particular type of footage is stipulated then this is what should be produced. However, if the list offers suggestions then learners are free to produce a different type of footage appropriate to the brief.

Q Do websites created for the online options have to be functional?

A Yes, the site should be functional with working links between the pages. It is not necessary to create websites using HTML and it is possible to use web design software as detailed in the Guidance for Teaching. However, learners should not rely on pre-populated templates and all elements of the design of the website should be original, created by the learner.

Q If a learner completes the AS qualification and then decides to complete the full A level in year 2, can they re-submit the NEA production as part of their A level assessment?

A No, as the AS and A level are now separate, standalone qualifications learners are not permitted to submit the same work for both qualifications. If a learner who has completed AS wants to progress to the full A level they will need to create a cross-media production in response to one of the A level briefs set for the year of assessment.

Q Where can I find the NEA cover sheets?

A The cover sheets are available on the Media Studies GCE page of the Eduqas website under 'All Course Documents': <http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/qualification-resources.html?subject=MediaStudies&level=asaLevel>