AQA

GCSE
Specification

Media Studies and Media Studies (Double Award)

For exams June 2014 onwards
For certification June 2014 onwards

GCSE

Specification

Media Studies
4810

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1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose AQA?

AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why is AQA so popular?

AQA understands the different requirements of each subject by working in partnership with teachers. Our GCSEs:

- enable students to realise their full potential
- contain engaging content
- are manageable for schools and colleges
- are accessible to students of all levels of ability
- lead to accurate results, delivered on time
- are affordable and value for money.

AQA provides a comprehensive range of support services for teachers:

- access to subject departments
- training for teachers including practical teaching strategies and approaches that really work presented by senior examiners
- personalised support for Controlled Assessment
- 24 hour support through our website and online *Ask AQA*
- past question papers and mark schemes
- comprehensive printed and electronic resources for teachers and students.

AQA is an educational charity focused on the needs of the learner. All our income goes towards operating and improving the quality of our specifications, examinations and support services. We don't aim to profit from education – we want you to.

If you are an existing customer then we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of moving to AQA then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.2 Why choose Media Studies?

The current AQA GCSE Media Studies course attracts an increasingly large number of students every year because it makes learning interesting, challenging, creative and fun. It offers rigorous but accessible learning on a subject of key importance for young people's understanding of the world they experience.

This specification is intended to keep the best of the previous specification whilst responding to new technologies and media practices.

It offers:

- Extensive and meaningful coverage of media theory and practice
- Practical work which integrates theories and concepts
- A choice of assignments for production and pre-production
- The chance to study across a range of different media
- Opportunities to learn about real media products and industries
- Opportunities for progression, especially to GCE Media Studies
- A Double Award to increase flexibility and choice

1.3 How do I start using this specification?

Already using the existing AQA Media Studies specification?

- Register to receive further information, such as mark schemes, past question papers, details of teacher support meetings, etc, at **http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php** Information will be available electronically or in print, for your convenience.
- Tell us that you intend to enter candidates. Then we can make sure that you receive all the material you need for the examinations. This is particularly important where examination material is issued before the final entry deadline. You can let us know by completing the appropriate Intention to Enter and Estimated Entry forms. We will send copies to your Exams Officer and they are also available on our website (**http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_entries.php**).

Not using the AQA specification currently?

- Almost all centres in England and Wales use AQA or have used AQA in the past and are approved AQA centres. A small minority is not. If your centre is new to AQA, please contact our centre approval team at **centreapproval@aqa.org.uk**

1.4 How can I find out more?

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions at **http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php**

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query for our team. Our target response time is one day.

Teacher Support

Details of the full range of current Teacher Support and CPD courses are available on our web site at **http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/cpd/index.php**

There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for all of our courses at **http://coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk/training**

2 Specification at a Glance

Media Studies 4812

Unit 1: Investigating the Media

Written Paper – 1 hour 30 mins – 60 marks – 40%

External Assessment

Based on pre-released topic (changed annually) with guidance and stimulus.
Four tasks
Available June

plus

Unit 2: Understanding the Media

Controlled Assessment taken from banks of set assignments – 90 marks – 60%

Three Assignments: Introductory assignment; Cross-media assignment; Practical Production and Evaluation.
Available June

Media Studies (Double Award) 4814

Unit 1: Investigating the Media

Written Paper – 1 hour 30 mins – 60 marks – 20%

External Assessment

Based on pre-released topic (changed annually) with guidance and stimulus.
Four tasks
Available June

plus

Unit 2: Understanding the Media

Controlled Assessment taken from banks of set assignments – 90 marks – 30%

Three Assignments: Introductory assignment; Cross-media assignment; Practical Production and Evaluation.
Available June

plus

Unit 3: Exploring Media Industries

Written Paper – 1 hour 30 mins – 60 marks – 20%

External Assessment
Section A: 10 short answer questions. Section B: 5 longer responses to a media stimulus. Available June

plus

Unit 4: Responding to a Media Brief

Controlled Assessment – set brief (changed annually) – 90 marks – 30%

Research, Planning and Presentation to a 'client'.
Fully Realised Production and Evaluation. Available June

For assessments and subject awards after June 2013 there is a requirement that 100% of the assessment is terminal.

3 Subject Content

GCSE Media Studies is offered as a two-unit GCSE and a four-unit Double Award

Units 1 and 2 comprise the GCSE, offering a complementary package which provides a useful preparation for units 3 and 4 which combine with units 1 and 2 to make up the Double Award. For both awards pre-production and production skills are fully integrated into both the Controlled Assessments and the External Assessments. Controlled Assessments make up 60% of each award and the External Assessments count for 40%.

Unit 1 is externally assessed and requires candidates to investigate a pre-released media topic and to undertake research and planning in order to respond to four tasks.

Unit 2 comprises three controlled assessments which require candidates to build on their understanding of the media key concepts for their own pre-production planning, leading to a realised production for Assignment 3.

The topic for Unit 1 will change each year and the topics for Unit 2 will be taken from assignment banks that allow for personal choice and flexibility.

For Units 3 and 4, candidates are required to look closely at media industries and practices. The units are complementary.

Unit 3 is externally assessed and is made up of two sections. In Section A, candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how media industries function, and in Section B to demonstrate application of that knowledge and understanding in response to a related stimulus.

Unit 4 focuses on practical exemplification of candidates' understanding of media industries through a cross-media production response to an industry based brief. The brief is provided by AQA and will change annually.

This qualification lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Media Studies or related subjects, in particular AQA GCE Media Studies. It encourages the development of critical understanding of the impact of mass media and its technologies on contemporary society.

The key concepts, media forms and platforms, skills, assessment objectives and expected learning outcomes are common across all units.

Key Concepts

GCSE Media Studies uses four major concepts which form the basis of the subject content.

- Media Language: forms and conventions
- Institutions
- Audience
- Representation.

Media Forms/Platforms

Underpinning the Key Concepts, the subject content is classified according to the following media forms/platforms:

- **Print and Electronic Publishing** including newspapers, comics, magazines etc.
- **Moving Image:**
  - **Television** including genre study, franchises, scheduling etc.
  - **Film** covering features, shorts, trailers, production, distribution and exhibition as well as genre study
  - **Video** including promotional, training and corporate
- **Radio** including commercial, network, public broadcasting, community etc.
- **Web-based Technologies/New Media** including Internet, web design, social networking, weblogs, vblogs, podcasts, gaming etc.

It is noted that the following can be found across the media forms/platforms listed above:

- **Advertising and Marketing** – including advertisements in print publications, on radio, on television, in the cinema, film trailers, billboards etc.
- **Popular Music** – including Artistes & Repertoire (A & R), promotion, marketing etc.
- **News** – including television, newspapers, internet, radio etc.

Candidates must cover at least **three** discrete media forms/platforms.

Generally, a media form is a description of the type, content or communication you are using to create the content, whereas a media platform is the technology used to deliver and access the content. For example, television can be the form by which we create a new situation comedy, but it can be delivered via an internet platform to a PC/Mac, a cable platform via a set top box, a broadcast platform via an aerial.

Media Skills

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate competence in a range of media skills. These include:

- **Pre-production/planning skills:** storyboarding, poster design, print advertising design, scripting for television, film and radio, treatments for television programmes and films, flat plans for magazines and newspapers, news selection, mock-ups for comic panels, scheduling, sketching etc.

- **Production Skills:** photography to create still image work, video/digital cameras to create moving image work, recording equipment for sound media, editing techniques to produce finished products, desk-top publishing packages to create finished newspapers, magazines, comic extracts or advertising examples etc.
- **Evaluation:** candidates are expected to be able to effectively evaluate their production work in light of media practices.

Assessment Objectives

Four Assessment Objectives are expected to be covered:

- **Knowledge and Understanding (AO1)**
- **Analysis and Response (AO2)**
- **Research, Planning and Presentation (AO3)**
- **Production and Evaluation (AO4)**

Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE specifications in media studies must enable candidates to:

- develop enquiry, critical thinking and decision-making skills through consideration of issues that are important, real and relevant to them and to the world in which they live
- develop their appreciation and critical understanding of the media and its role in their daily lives
- develop their practical skills through opportunities for personal engagement and creativity
- understand how to use the key media concepts to analyse media products and their various contexts.

3.1 Unit 1: Investigating the media

Unit Learning Outcomes

Candidates will be expected to:

AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. (10%)
AO3	Demonstrate research, planning and presentation skills. (5%)
AO4	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills. (5%)

The aim of this unit is to enable candidates to develop their critical understanding of the role of mass media in society. This unit is worth 40% of the GCSE and 20% of the Double Award.

This unit is externally assessed. The external assessment takes the form of a one and a half hour examination and is timetabled. Candidates are not permitted to take anything into the examination room except drawing and colouring materials.

The topic for external assessment will change each year and will be advised to centres. Guidance for teachers will be issued on the AQA website twelve months in advance of the examination. The external assessment will take the form of unseen tasks based on the media topic and exemplified in the pre-released stimulus materials.

The external assessment is targeted at the full range of GCSE candidates and thus is not tiered.

Unit Content

The external assessment will take a case study approach and build upon media knowledge and skills developed and demonstrated in Unit 2. Each year the case study will be based on a specific media topic and this will be published annually and posted on the AQA website. The external assessment will take the form of a contextualised simulation and candidates will be expected to respond in role.

The brief will be pre-released four weeks prior to the external assessment date, giving candidates time to research and plan for the examination. Centres must allow candidates time for research and preparation prior to sitting the external assessment. During this time the teacher may advise but formal teaching should cease.

In preparation for the external assessment candidates will be expected to have studied a wide range of examples. Candidates will need to consider aspects of style, presentation, values, audience and representation and show their understanding of the relevant codes and conventions. Candidates need to show awareness of new technologies involved in the production and consumption of the media. Candidates need also to be aware of any current debates and audience issues, as well as issues of bias and representation. Production skills will be expected with candidates showing effective practical skills such as storyboarding, scripting, selection and editing and other design skills appropriate to the topic. Candidates will be expected to spend an equal amount of time on each task.

3.2 Unit 2: Understanding the media

Unit Learning Outcomes

Candidates will be expected to:

AO2	Analyse and respond to media texts/topics using media key concepts and appropriate terminology. (10%)
AO3	Demonstrate research, planning and presentation skills. (10%)
AO4	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills. (10%)

The aim of Unit 2 is for candidates to develop an understanding of how and why media texts are produced as they are. Unit 2 is worth 60% of the GCSE and 30% of the GCSE Double Award.

In Unit 2 candidates will produce **one** introductory assignment, **one** assignment that requires candidates to look closely at cross-media platforms which more closely reflects the media industry today and **one** Practical Production and Evaluation, each chosen from a different bank of assignments.

This unit will be assessed by means of controlled assessment. Centres should note the following:

Each task is specified by AQA. For each assignment candidates must complete one assignment from Assignment Bank 1, one from Assignment Bank 2 and one from Assignment Bank 3. The supervision of candidates by centres must ensure that candidates complete tasks as set by AQA.

Research may be undertaken with limited supervision. Candidates need not be under the direct supervision of staff at all times. However candidates are required to complete all of the work **other than research** under informal supervision. This means that the centre must ensure that:

- plagiarism does not take place
- the sources used by candidates are clearly recorded
- each candidate's preparation for the final production of the work is his/her own.

Teachers may provide guidance and feedback to candidates and the nature of any guidance and the details of any feedback must be clearly recorded. Candidates may be guided as to the approach they might adopt but the outcome must remain their own. Likewise feedback may evaluate progress to date and propose suggested broad areas for improvement but the detailed correction or annotation of work for feedback purposes is not allowed.

The work of individual candidates may be informed by working with others, for example in undertaking research, but candidates **must** provide an individual response as part of the task outcome. For Assignments 1 and 2 all work submitted for assessment will be the candidate's own. For Assignment 3, groups of candidates, as explained below, may collaborate in the construction of the media product but **their evaluative responses must be their own and their individual contribution clearly identified.**

Candidates' access to resources is determined by those available to their centre.

Controlled assessment advisers will be available to provide guidance to centres.

Candidates must produce **three** assignments, each from a different Assignment Bank. They must cover **three** discrete media forms/platforms. For instance, work on newspapers for Assignment 1 would prohibit work on newspapers in both Assignment 2 and Assignment 3. In view of this, centres are advised to plan Assignments 1 and 2 with Assignment 3 in mind.

It is anticipated that the assignments will be tackled in chronological order but this is not mandatory. A candidate who joins the course late may be unable to attempt the tasks in sequence and a centre or candidate who chooses to do so may wish to revisit earlier assignments.

No work submitted for Controlled Assessments in Unit 2 may cover the External Assessment topic for Unit 1 for that year. Detailed guidance can be found on the AQA website.

Assignment 1 Introduction to the Media

This assignment aims to introduce candidates to the analysis and interpretation of media texts through the analysis of media language and the application of media terminology and techniques. The consumption of media texts by different audiences should be considered. Understanding will be demonstrated through a pre-production activity.

For Assignment 1, centres will select **one** assignment from a bank of assignments in Assignment Bank 1. These will be updated periodically and centres will be informed through the AQA website.

Candidates will be required to produce an analysis of one or more texts within a particular medium and provide an explanation of their analysis and pre-production work. The responses to media texts, including explanation, should total approximately **500 - 700 words**. Candidates will be expected to engage primarily with the key concepts of media language and audience. They may also discuss representation and institutions.

Working in the same medium, candidates will present a pre-production task. They will need to explain their intentions, with particular reference to their use of media language and how it will appeal to the target audience.

Assignment Bank 1 Introduction to the Media

Topic	Analytical Task including Explanation (500–700 words)	Research, Planning and Presentation Task
Radio	Analyse the opening three minutes of a specific talk based radio show paying particular attention to codes and conventions. How does the show engage the interest of its audience?	Prepare a script for a talk based radio show aimed at a specific audience. This could include idents, inserts, bedding music and any other appropriate features.
Moving Image	Analyse the opening three minutes of a specific film or television programme. How does the film or programme engage the interest of its audience?	Present ideas for the opening of a film or television programme. You can submit ideas in the form of a script for the opening or as a ten frame storyboard using drawings, writing or photographs to represent what is seen on screen.
Advertising and Marketing	Analyse **two** television **or** print **or** viral advertisements. How effective are they in selling their products?	Design your own advertisement for a product targeted at a specific audience. For a TV or viral advertisement you can submit ideas in the form of a script or as a ten frame storyboard, using drawings, writing or photographs to represent what is seen on screen. For a print advertisement you should design the advertisement itself.
Print	Analyse the front cover or front page of **two** magazines or **two** comics or **two** newspapers. How do the covers/pages engage the interest of their audience?	Design the cover for **one** edition of a magazine or comic or the front page of a newspaper. The publication should be aimed at a specific audience.
Web-based Media	Analyse the home pages of **two** entertainment websites (eg film, music, lifestyle). How does each site engage the interest of its audience?	Design a home page for an entertainment website. This must be targeted at a specific audience.
Packaging of DVDs	Analyse the DVD covers for **two** films or television programmes. How does each cover engage the interest of its audience?	Design a DVD cover for a film or television programme. This must be targeted at a specific audience.
Promotion of Music	Analyse a music video or **two** CD covers. How do they engage the interest of their audience?	Present your own ideas for an extract for a music video for a song aimed at a specific audience **or** design the front and back cover of a CD aimed at a specific audience. Ideas for a music video should be presented as a ten frame storyboard using drawings, writing or photographs to represent what is seen on screen.
Gaming	Analyse the opening of a video game. How does the game engage the interest of its audience?	Present ideas for the opening of a new game. This might be presented as a treatment including information about gameplay and game mechanics **or** as a ten frame storyboard using writing, drawings or images to represent what is seen on screen.

For any assignment chosen, a brief explanation must be included of how the Research, Planning and Presentation Task addresses Media Language and Audience.

Guidance notes

Analytical responses might involve some of the following activities:

- applying media terminology; considering the effect of media language
- applying analytical techniques such as denotation and connotation
- identifying how genre is established
- discussing how narrative is suggested
- making judgements about who the target audience might be
- identifying a possible secondary audience or considering how the product might be consumed.

Responses may be submitted in a variety of formats such as annotations, charts, bullet points, continuous prose, or a combination of any of these.

Assessment Criteria for Unit 2	**Assignment 1**
Analyse and Respond	***(AO2 10 marks)***
Level 6	**9–10 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are **convincing and effective**. Media terminology is used **extensively and accurately**. A **clear** understanding of media language and of the consumption of texts by specific audiences is demonstrated. Responses are **cogent, concise and well-structured** with **precise and accurate** use of language and arguments **clearly supported** by evidence.	
Level 5	**7–8 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are of **good quality**. Media terminology is used **appropriately**. A **sound** understanding is shown of media language and of the role of audiences in the consumption of media texts. Responses are **clear, concise and well-organised** with **generally accurate** use of language and **evidence used** to support points.	
Level 4	**5–6 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are **satisfactory**. Candidates are able to use media terminology **occasionally**. **Some** understanding of media language and of the role of audiences in the consumption of media texts is demonstrated. Responses are **well-organised** with **reasonably accurate** use of language and arguments are **usually supported** by evidence.	
Level 3	**3–4 marks**
Candidates show a **basic** grasp of textual analysis. If an explanation of their pre-production work is offered, comments are likely to be very straight-forward. There is **a basic understanding** of media language and of how a media product appeals to a particular audience. Responses are **reasonably well-organised** and points are **sometimes supported** by evidence.	
Level 2	**1–2 marks**
Candidates **tend to describe** media texts and demonstrate **limited** understanding of forms and conventions. There may be **some awareness** of media language or of how a media product might appeal to its audience. An **attempt** has been made to organise responses.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Research, Planning and Presentation	*(AO3 5 marks)*
Level 6	**5 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates demonstrate **flair and creativity.** They produce work which is **convincing, fit for purpose and engaged,** would capture the interest of a potential audience and uses **appropriate** forms and conventions **throughout**. Material is presented **skilfully**.	
Level 5	**4 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates demonstrate **competence and a clear understanding** of the requirements of the task. Their work is **clearly fit for purpose,** would be likely to appeal to a potential audience and uses **many appropriate forms and conventions.** Material is presented **effectively**.	
Level 4	**3 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates produce a **satisfactory** response which demonstrates **an understanding** of the requirements of the task generally. Work is appropriate, might interest a potential audience and **mostly uses appropriate forms and conventions**. Material is **well presented**.	
Level 3	**2 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates offer **basic** responses. Their work shows **some understanding** and engagement with the task, might have some **limited** appeal to a potential audience and uses **some appropriate** forms and conventions. There has been an attempt to present the work appropriately.	
Level 2	**1 mark**
In their pre-production work candidates offer some ideas that are at least **partly relevant** or appropriate to the task. Some forms and conventions may be employed. Presentation of the material is **limited**.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Assignment 2 Cross-Media Study

This assignment aims to encourage candidates to consider the interdependence of media texts and how producers seek to achieve synergy where a particular text can be seen to appear on different media platforms. The release of a new film, for instance, will result in a media-wide campaign with material generated across different forms such as Television, Magazines, Radio, Newspapers and the Internet. Candidates will be expected to consider the relationship between different forms and how the form itself influences the nature of the product.

Candidates will be required to study a particular topic across **two** media forms. The key concepts of Representation and Institutions must be addressed while candidates may also engage with other key concepts.

Candidates will study **one** media topic from Assignment Bank 2. These will be updated periodically. Candidates will submit a response or responses analysing aspects of the two texts from different forms. This will include some consideration of the nature of representations found therein. This analysis and explanation should total **approximately 1000 - 1200 words**. Working in the same topic area, candidates will present **two planning tasks** based on a common idea but across different forms and explain how these would deal with issues of representation and institution.

Assignment Bank 2 Cross-media study

Topic	Analytical Task including Explanation (1000-1200 words)	Research, Planning and Presentation Task
	Analyse a single product as it is presented across **two** different media platforms. Choose **one** print or web-based media text and **one** audio-visual media text. (Not applicable to print topic)	Based on your research, plan and prepare **two** linked media texts. You should choose **one** print or web-based media text and **one** audio-visual media text.
Moving Image Promotion	Compare the impact of **two** promotional methods used by **one** film or television programme across **two** different media platforms. Audio visual: • a cinema, television, radio or internet trailer • a radio or television interview Print or web-based: • a poster • a magazine article • a web page.	Present your ideas for promoting a film or television programme across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a ten frame storyboard to represent a trailer appropriate for either cinema, television, radio or internet • a script for a radio or television interview Print or web-based. A mock-up designs for: • a poster • a magazine article • a web page.
Promotion of Music	Explore the way in which **one** band or artiste is represented and promoted across **two** different media platforms. Audio visual: • a music video • a radio or television interview Print or web-based: • a magazine article • a poster advertising a tour • a web page • the sleeve for a CD or vinyl release.	Present your ideas for promoting a band or artiste across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a ten frame storyboard of an extract from a music video • a script for a radio or television interview Print or web-based. A mock-up design for: • a magazine article • a poster advertising a tour • a web page • a sleeve for a CD or vinyl release.
News	Compare how **one** news provider offers a service across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • the opening three minutes of a television news programme • a radio news broadcast Print or web-based: • a website home page • an app for a mobile device.	Present your ideas for **one** news service across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • ideas for the opening of a television news programme presented as a ten frame storyboard • a script for a radio news broadcast Print or web-based. A mock-up design for: • a website home page • an app for a mobile device.

3

Topic	Analytical Task including Explanation (1000-1200 words)	Research, Planning and Presentation Task
Print	Compare **one** magazine or newspaper with its on-line equivalent.	Present your ideas for the launch edition of **one** new magazine or newspaper across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual. Devise part of a promotional campaign for the new magazine or newspaper in the form of: • a ten frame storyboard for a television advertisement • a script for a 30-second radio advertisement Print or web-based. A mock-up design for: • the front cover/front page • the internet home page • a viral advertisement.
Advertising and Marketing	Compare **two** advertisements for the **same** product or service across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a television or radio advertisement Print or web-based: • an advertisement for a magazine, newspaper or billboard • a viral advertisement.	Present your ideas for advertising a single product or service across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a ten frame storyboard for a television advertisement • a script for a 30-second radio advertisement Print or web-based. A mock-up design for: • an advertisement for a magazine, newspaper or billboard • a viral advertisement.
Promotion of Gaming	Compare the impact of **two** promotional methods used in the launch of **one** game across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a television advertisement Print or web-based: • a web page • a download • an advertisement for a magazine, newspaper or billboard • a magazine article.	Present your ideas for the launch of **one** new game across **two** different media platforms. Audio-visual: • a ten frame storyboard for a television advertisement Print or web-based. A mock-up design for: • a web page • a download • an advertisement for a magazine, newspaper or billboard • a magazine article.

For any Assignment chosen, a brief explanation must be included of how the Research and Planning and Presentation Tasks address Representation and Institutions.

Guidance notes

Analytical tasks will depend on the topic or title chosen but would involve responses to such questions as:

- what are the typical codes and conventions of the respective media product?
- what devices and techniques have been used to produce them?
- how has the product been adapted to suit a particular platform?
- how would the product appeal to its audience?
- what audience might that be?
- what images of people, groups or places are represented?
- what different production processes have been required?
- how have the texts been financed, scheduled, produced and/or distributed?

Research and Planning tasks should be presented as effectively as possible. Candidates must present **one** print or web-based/new media task and **one** audio-visual planning task. These will be connected and representative of a cross-media campaign. Candidates should explain in no more than 200 of the 1000 - 1200 words allocated, how their two research, planning and production tasks are connected and how effective they are. They should also comment on how they have addressed representational and institutional issues.

3

Assessment Criteria for Unit 2	**Assignment 2**
Analyse and Respond	***(AO2 20 marks)***
Level 6	**17–20 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are **convincing and effective**. Media terminology is used **extensively and effectively**. The nature and impact of media representation is explored **convincingly.** There is a convincing and clear understanding and appreciation of institutional aspects of media production. Responses are **cogent, concise and well-structured** with **precise and accurate** use of language and arguments **clearly supported** by evidence.	
Level 5	**13–16 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are of a **good quality**. They are able to use media terminology **appropriately**. Candidates show a **sound** understanding of issues of media representation and a **sound** understanding of institutional aspects of media production. Responses are **clear, concise and well-organised** with **generally accurate** use of language and **evidence used** to support points.	
Level 4	**9–12 marks**
Candidates' analyses of media texts and the explanation of their pre-production work are **satisfactory**. Candidates are able to use media terminology **occasionally**. Candidates demonstrate **some** understanding of representation and **some** understanding of institutional aspects of media production. Responses are **well-organised** with **reasonably accurate** use of language and arguments are **usually supported** by evidence.	
Level 3	**5–8 marks**
Candidates show a **basic** grasp of textual analysis. If an explanation of their pre-production work is offered, comments are likely to be very **straightforward**. Candidates show **basic** understanding of the representations offered by media texts and a **basic awareness** of institutional aspects of media production. Responses are organised and points are **sometimes supported** by evidence.	
Level 2	**1–4 marks**
Candidates **tend to describe** media texts and demonstrate **limited** understanding of forms and conventions. There may be **limited awareness** of representations offered by media texts or of institutional aspects of media production. An **attempt** has been made to **organise** responses.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Research, Planning and Presentation	*(AO3 10 marks)*
Level 6	**9–10 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates demonstrate **flair and creativity.** They produce work which is **convincing and engaged** and uses **appropriate** forms and conventions throughout. The two **responses clearly complement** each other. Material is presented **skilfully**.	
Level 5	**7–8 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates demonstrate **competence** and a **clear** understanding of the requirements of the task. Their work is **clearly fit for purpose** and uses **many appropriate** forms and conventions. The two **responses complement** each other. Material is presented **effectively**.	
Level 4	**5–6 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates produce a **satisfactory** response which demonstrates an understanding of the requirements of the task. Ideas are **apt** and **mostly use appropriate** conventions. There is a **recognisable relationship** between the two **responses**. Material is **well presented.**	
Level 3	**3–4 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates offer **basic** responses. Their ideas show **some** understanding and engagement with the task and use **some appropriate** forms and conventions. Two responses **have been offered** and a connection between them is **evident**. There is a **basic** attempt to present the work appropriately.	
Level 2	**1–2 marks**
In their pre-production work candidates offer **some ideas** that are at least **partly** relevant or appropriate to the task. **Some** forms and conventions may be used. Where two responses have been offered a connection between them **may be evident** although this may be implicit. Presentation of the material is **limited**.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Assignment 3 Practical Production and Evaluation

Candidates are required to undertake a practical production which addresses all four key concepts, from conception to realisation, together with an evaluation of **700-800 words**. They will choose **one** of the following production tasks from Assignment Bank 3. These will be updated periodically.

Candidates may work individually or in small groups (as defined within the task description). If the candidate is working as a member of a group, their individual contribution must be clearly identified as indicated below. Each candidate must submit their own individual evidence of research and planning and their own evaluation.

For all of these productions the aim should be to strike a balance between creativity and the application of appropriate codes and conventions and media language. Original material should be used wherever possible. If found material is used it must be manipulated in a suitable fashion such that the candidate's own creativity is evident. For radio production it is important that candidates adhere to the 'talk-based' brief, but if 'songs' are to be included they should be faded in and out almost immediately in order to give a flavour of the music included without relying on the music to act as a 'filler'.

The timings for audio-visual tasks should be seen as a guide which will help to ensure that productions are concise and that candidates adhere to the relevant codes and convention.

Assignment Bank 3 Practical production and Evaluation

Topic	Production Task	Collaboration
Moving Image	A trailer or opening sequence of approximately two minutes duration for a feature film or television programme aimed at a specific audience.	No more than four. Each student should contribute to all stages of the production.
Radio/Sound	An audio sample of approximately three minutes for a talk-based radio show aimed at a specific audience.	No more than four. Each student should contribute to all stages of the production.
Web based technologies/ new media	Four pages per student (including the home page) for a website aimed at a specific audience.	No more than two students producing four pages each.
Print	Four pages per student (including the front cover or front page) for a magazine or newspaper aimed at a specific audience.	No more than two students producing four pages each.
Advertising and Marketing	An advertising campaign realised as either three 30-second television or three 30-second radio advertisements or three full page magazine or billboard advertisements (or a combination of any three).	No more than four students should contribute to Audio Visual work. A three page magazine/billboard campaign should be tackled individually. Where a combination is undertaken it is important to ensure that each student should produce or contribute to three advertisements.
Promotion of Music	A three minute music video to accompany all or part of a particular track or a promotional campaign for a band or artiste consisting of at least three print or web-based advertisements.	For moving image work no more than four. Each student should contribute to all stages of the production. For print and web-based campaigns – three advertisements per student.
Gaming	A playable demo or first level(s) of a game designed to engage a specific audience. This must include at least two minutes of unique gameplay.	No more than two. Each student should contribute to all stages of the production.

Guidance notes

Planning and research

Candidates should plan and research their production thoroughly. Evidence of research into existing products of a similar nature and into their potential audience should be submitted, perhaps in the form of annotated analyses of existing texts, charts, surveys or questionnaires. Candidates will need to submit evidence of planning, perhaps in the form of briefs, sketches, scripts, storyboards, mock-ups, drafts, contact sheets, flat plans etc.

No more than 12 pages of material should be submitted for moderation as evidence of research and planning.

Practical Production

Moving image

For trailers and opening sequences, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- careful framing of shots
- editing appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to lighting, mise-en-scene and sound.

Codes and conventions could include narration, titles, narrative clues and a selection of fast cuts of different scenes.

Radio/sound

For radio, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- use of an appropriate microphone and/or mixing equipment to ensure that sound is clear and appropriate
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to the selection and sequencing of material.

Radio conventions could include a theme tune, idents, announcements, signposting ('Later in the show…'), flagging ('In the studio I have with me…'), inserts (such as jingles), bedding music and sound effects.

Print

For magazines and newspapers, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- appropriate integration of text and illustration (whether original or found material)
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to use of fonts, type size and colour
- possible creation of a house-style.

Magazine/newspaper conventions could include page design and layout, use of direct address, columns, straplines, box-outs, cross-heads, headings and headlines.

Web-based technologies/New Media

For websites, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- appropriate integration of text and images (whether original or found material)
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to use of fonts, type size and colour
- possible creation of a house-style.

Web-site conventions could include page design and layout, links, scrolling text, video, sound or animation.

Advertising and Marketing

For television advertising, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- careful framing of shots
- integration of copy, slogans and voice-over
- editing appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to use of lighting, mise-en-scene and sound.

For radio advertising, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- use of microphone and/or mixing equipment to ensure that sound is clear and appropriate
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience.

For print advertising, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- appropriate integration of text and illustration (whether original or found material)
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to use of fonts, type size and colour.

Advertising and Marketing conventions could include slogans, imperatives, direct address, copy, logos, narration, voice-over or call to action.

Promotion of Music

For music video, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- careful framing of shots
- editing appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to lighting, mise-en-scene and sound.

For print and web-based promotion, confidence in handling technology can be demonstrated by:

- appropriate integration of text and illustration (whether original or found material)
- language, register and content appropriate to the nature of the production and audience
- evidence of consideration being given to use of fonts, type size and colour.

Music video conventions could include performance, narrative, interpretation, direct address, animation, symmetrical framing or cross-cutting.

Print and web-based promotion conventions could include slogans, imperatives, direct address, copy, interactivity and logos.

Evaluation

Each candidate must produce a **700–800 word** evaluation which should reflect upon:

- how the aims of the production have been met
- how the product applies appropriate codes and conventions and uses appropriate media language
- how the product represents people, places or events
- where and when the product would be exhibited
- what regulations and controls might be applied to the product and how these have been taken into consideration
- the strengths and weaknesses of the product in terms of meeting the needs of its audience.

Assessment Criteria for Unit 2	Assignment 3
Research, Planning and Presentation	***(AO3 15 marks)***
Level 6	**13–15 marks**
Candidates demonstrate a high level of ability to research and plan **independently and effectively**. They demonstrate **flair and creativity** through their pre-production work which is **convincing, fit for purpose and engaged** and uses **appropriate** forms and conventions **throughout.** Material is presented **skilfully**. There is a **clear understanding** of how audiences are identified and how production is tailored to audience needs and expectations.	
Level 5	**10–12 marks**
Candidates demonstrate clearly their ability to research and plan **successfully**. There is evidence of engagement in the pre-production work which is **clearly fit for purpose** and uses **many appropriate** forms and conventions. Material is presented **effectively**. Audiences are identified, their needs are taken into consideration and awareness is demonstrated of how this has shaped the ideas.	
Level 4	**7–9 marks**
Candidates demonstrate they have researched and planned their pre-production work **appropriately**. Ideas are **apt** and **mostly** use **appropriate** forms and conventions. Material is **well presented**. Candidates are able to identify and target audiences. They indicate how this has informed their plans and ideas.	
Level 3	**4–6 marks**
Candidates offer **some** evidence of research and planning. Their ideas show **some** understanding and involvement with the task and use **some appropriate** forms and conventions. There is a **basic** attempt to present the work in a **straightforward** way. **Some** understanding of appealing to a potential audience is evident.	
Level 2	**1–3 marks**
Candidates offer **minimal** evidence of research and planning. They have **some** ideas that are at least **partly relevant or appropriate** to the task. **Some** forms and conventions **may be** employed. Presentation of the material is **limited**.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

3

Of the 30 marks allocated for this component, 20 should be awarded for Construction and 10 for Evaluation. This can be arrived at by placing each in an appropriate level according to the descriptors. Where both are in the same level a mark out of 30 can be arrived at but where there is a disparity allocate a level for each and then determine the appropriate mark out of 20 or 10 as in the table below.

Construct and Evaluate	***(AO4 30 marks)***
Level 6 (Construct 17-20, Evaluate 9-10) Candidates' demonstrate **flair** and **creativity** to construct an **impressive** product which would **engage** a potential audience. They demonstrate the ability to handle technology **confidently,** including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre **creatively and convincingly**. They evaluate their production making **cogent and critical** connections between the experience of carrying out the production and all the key concepts. The evaluation is **concise** and **well-organised**, using **accurate** spelling, punctuation and grammar.	**25–30 marks**
Level 5 (Construct 13-16, Evaluate 7-8) Candidates demonstrate **competence** to construct an **effective** product which would be likely to **appeal** to a potential audience. They handle technology **competently,** including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre **effectively**. The evaluation shows an **informed understanding** of the key concepts. The evaluation is **concise and well-organised**, using **mainly accurate** spelling, punctuation and grammar.	**19–24 marks**
Level 4 (Construct 9-12, Evaluate 5-6) Candidates demonstrate **appropriate** skills to construct a **satisfactory** product which a potential audience might find **interesting** or **engaging**. They utilise technology, including ICT, and use **appropriate** techniques and conventions of their chosen medium and genre. They meet all of the requirements of the task. When evaluating their products they are **able to discuss** how some of the key concepts have informed their production. The evaluation uses **some accurate** spelling punctuation and grammar.	**13–18 marks**
Level 3 (Construct 5-8, Evaluate 3-4) Candidates demonstrate **some appropriate** skills and mostly meet the requirements of the task to construct a product which might have some **limited** appeal to a potential audience. Some conventions of their chosen medium and genre are evident. The evaluation may be **largely descriptive** but some key concepts may be addressed. In the evaluation, communication, including spelling, punctuation and grammar, may **not be wholly effective**.	**7–12 marks**
Level 2 (Construct 1-4, Evaluate 1-2) Candidates construct a **recognisable** media product. In their evaluation, they provide a **simple review** of the production. Communication, including spelling, punctuation and grammar, may be **limited**.	**1–6 marks**
Level 1 (Construct 0, Evaluate 0) No work worth the award of a mark.	**0 marks**

3.3 Unit 3: Exploring media industries

Unit Learning Outcomes

Candidates will be expected to:

AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. (10%)
AO2	Analyse and respond to media texts/topics using media key concepts and appropriate terminology. (10%)

The aim of this unit is to encourage candidates to explore media industries and how they operate. This unit is worth 20% of the Double Award.

Candidates will explore a range of organisations that make up different sectors of the media industries. Candidates will gain a broad understanding of:

- how media industries operate and within what constraints
- what products they make and the audiences for those products
- the types of roles and employment opportunities available within the media
- ownership, control and finance within the media industries
- developments in media technology and their effects on production and consumption.

It is important for candidates to develop an understanding of the work and impact of media organisations in their area. This will help them to appreciate some of the complexity of the media industries.

If possible, links with media organisations should be made with the potential to support candidate learning. Visits to media organisations can be extremely beneficial, as can visits from media professionals. Opportunities for candidates to experience working practices at close hand will have a positive impact on understanding. However, it is recognised that not all areas have an appropriate concentration of media activity and it will be particularly important for teachers to research alternative organisations.

A further aspect for candidates to appreciate is that 'the media' are not static. Developments in digital communications technology continue to offer phenomenal opportunities for the media industries and the global marketplace has led to the consumer having access to media products worldwide. The changing size, composition and ownership of media organisations has led to media conglomerates with ambitions way beyond the domestic market.

Candidates will select **two** media industries from the following:

- Print/Electronic Publishing
- Advertising and Marketing
- Television
- Film
- Radio
- Popular Music
- Web-based Technologies/New Media

For **each** of the industries they choose, candidates will investigate:

- how the industry creates a range of products to sell to particular audiences
- how the industry and the products they make are influenced by ownership and control
- the job roles and working practices within the organisation
- how the organisation is financed and regulated
- the effects of developments in technology within this industry.

Work in this unit will help candidates to identify the ways in which the media industries 'produce' media products and will provide them with the necessary background knowledge needed for Unit 4 *Responding to a Media Brief*.

The unit is externally assessed to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of media industries and provide opportunities for them to apply that knowledge and understanding to a realistic stimulus. The external assessment will take the form of a written test of 1 hour 30 minutes duration. Section A consists of short answer questions, while Section B requires five longer responses to a stimulus.

The external assessment is targeted at the full range of GCSE candidates and thus is not tiered.

3.4 Unit 4: Responding to a media brief

Unit Learning Outcomes

Candidates will be expected to:

AO3	Demonstrate research, planning and presentation skills. (15%)
AO4	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills. (15%)

The aim of this unit is for candidates to produce a campaign across **two** media forms/platforms in response to an industry-related brief. This unit is worth 30% of the Double Award.

This unit will be assessed by means of controlled assessment. Centres should note the following:

Each task is specified by AQA. Candidates must respond to the industry-related brief for that year as set by AQA. The supervision of candidates by centres must ensure that candidates complete tasks as set by AQA.

Research may be undertaken with limited supervision. Candidates need not be under the direct supervision of staff at all times. However candidates are required to complete all of the work **other than research** under informal supervision. This means that the centre must ensure that:

- plagiarism does not take place
- the sources used by candidates are clearly recorded
- each candidate's preparation for the final production of the work is his/her own.

Teachers may provide guidance and feedback to candidates and the nature of any guidance and the details of any feedback must be clearly recorded. Candidates may be guided as to the approach they might adopt but the outcome must remain their own. Likewise feedback may evaluate progress to date and propose suggested broad areas for improvement but the detailed correction or annotation of work for feedback purposes is not allowed.

Each controlled assessment task should take an amount of time which approximately corresponds to the marks available for that assignment. The response for Unit 4 is marked out of 90.

The work of individual candidates may be informed by working with others, for example in undertaking research, but candidates must provide an individual response as part of the task outcome. The production itself may be individual or group work. However, teamwork is an important part of media production so if candidates choose to work on their own, they must be sure that they will be able to meet fully the demands of the brief. In either case, candidates must record their individual contribution to the final outcome. Each candidate must produce their own individual research and evaluation.

Candidates' access to resources is determined by those available to their centre.

Controlled assessment advisers will be available to provide guidance to centres.

Candidates will need to produce a campaign across **two** media forms/platforms in response to an industry-related brief set by AQA. The brief will be available on the AQA website in June of the previous year. Candidates will simulate industry practice by following the production process from the 'ideas stage' through to production and post-production work. They will need to gather and respond to audience feedback. They will need to show an awareness of the importance of research, planning, working to deadlines and having a clear sense of the target audience and their needs, including the limited time which they allocate to receiving media messages.

Candidates will choose **two** different media forms/platforms from the following categories:

Forms/Platforms

- **Print and Electronic Publishing** including newspapers, comics, magazines etc.
- **Moving Image:**
  - **Television** including genre study, franchises, scheduling etc.
  - **Film** covering features, shorts, trailers, production, distribution and exhibition as well as genre study
  - **Video** including promotional, training and corporate
- **Radio** including commercial, network, public broadcasting, community etc.
- **Web-based Technologies/New Media** including Internet, web design, social networking, weblogs, vblogs, podcasts, gaming etc.

It is noted that the following can be found across the media forms/platforms listed above:

- **Advertising and Marketing** – including advertisements in print publications, on radio, on television, in the cinema, film trailers, billboards etc.
- **Popular Music** – including Artistes & Repertoire (A & R), promotion, marketing etc.
- **News** – including television, newspapers, internet, radio etc.

Candidates are required to develop **two** ideas (one in each media form/platform) in response to the brief through to treatment stage. The term 'treatment' is used across all the media forms and platforms to which it refers to designate a short, accessible proposal capable of communicating the key ideas of a project to an interested party such as a commissioning editor or potential financial backer. The two pieces must be fully realised as a linked campaign, and then evaluated carefully.

Generally, a media form is a description of the type, content or communication you are using to create the content, whereas a media platform is the technology used to deliver and access the content. For example, television can be the form by which we create a new situation comedy, but it can be delivered via an internet platform to a PC/Mac, a cable platform via a set top box, a broadcast platform via an aerial.

For this unit, candidates need to produce the following for assessment:

1. Research, Planning and Presentation
2. **Two** production pieces
3. Evaluation (500–800 words)

Guidance on Evaluation

Each candidate must produce a **500 – 800** word evaluation which should reflect upon the individual's role within the group collaboration and how successfully:

- the two media products are linked
- research has been used to fulfil the brief and meet the needs of the client
- the products apply appropriate codes and conventions
- the products target the appropriate audience
- representational issues have been addressed
- the production process is organised and scheduled
- considerations of any rules and regulations have been applied.

To produce a successful campaign, candidates will need to draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through their work on units 1, 2 and 3 of this specification. Research, planning, production and evaluation skills should be developed further from those in other units.

Further guidance on the approximate quantity of work required in each medium, on collaboration and on how confidence in the use of technology can be demonstrated, can be found on pages 14-16 of this specification.

Assessment Criteria for Unit 4

3

Research, Planning and Presentation	*(AO3 45 marks)*
Level 6	**37–45 marks**
Candidates research **independently and effectively** drawing on a wide range of sources and techniques. Candidates demonstrate **flair and creativity** through their pre-production work which is **convincing and engaged** and uses **appropriate** forms and conventions. They draw on relevant products, concepts and contexts. Material is presented **skilfully**. There is a **clear understanding** of how audiences are identified and how production is tailored to audience needs and expectations. They present **appropriate and independent** ideas to a client **effectively**, using a range of presentational skills, with well planned opportunities for feedback and discussion. They plan and present work which responds **directly and efficiently** to the needs of the target audience to produce a **coherent and integrated** campaign.	
Level 5	**28–36 marks**
Candidates research **successfully** using a range of sources and techniques. They demonstrate evidence of **imagination** in the pre-production work which is **clearly fit for purpose** and uses **many appropriate** forms and conventions. Material is presented **effectively**. Audiences are identified, their needs are taken into consideration and awareness is demonstrated of how this has shaped the ideas. They present appropriate ideas to a client **successfully**, using a selection of presentational skills, with opportunities for feedback and discussion. They plan and present work which responds **successfully** to the needs of the target audience to produce an **integrated** campaign.	
Level 4	**19–27 marks**
Candidates have researched **appropriately**. Ideas are **apt** and **mostly** employ appropriate forms and conventions. Material is **well presented**. Candidates are able to **identify and target** audiences. They indicate how this has informed their plans and ideas. Candidates present ideas to a client **appropriately**, using a selection of presentational skills, and gather some feedback. They plan and present work which **clearly acknowledges** the needs of a target audience.	
Level 3	**10–18 marks**
Candidates show **evidence** of research. Their ideas show **some understanding** and involvement with the task and use **some** appropriate forms and conventions. There is a **basic attempt** to present the work in a **straightforward** way. **Some understanding** of appealing to a potential audience is evident. They present **some apt** ideas to a client in a **straightforward** fashion. They plan and present work with **reference** to the needs of a target audience.	
Level 2	**1–9 marks**
Candidates use **minimal** research. They have some ideas that are at least **partly relevant or appropriate** to the task. Some forms and conventions **may be** employed. Presentation of the material is **limited**. They present **some** ideas which may be **partly relevant or appropriate** to a client in a **limited** fashion. They plan and present work with **some reference** to the needs of a target audience.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Production	*(AO4 35 marks)*
Level 6	**29–35 marks**
Candidates construct their product(s) using production skills **appropriately and effectively**. They handle technology **confidently**, including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre **creatively**. They deploy the codes and conventions of relevant media or medium with **originality and suitability** to the demands of the task set out in the brief. They meet the needs of the target audience fully and effectively and fulfil the terms of the brief **in all respects**.	
Level 5	**22–28 marks**
Candidates construct their product(s) using production skills **clearly and appropriately**. They handle technology **competently**, including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre **effectively**. Candidates make effective use of relevant media resources with **some originality** and **some evidence of creativity**. They deploy the codes and conventions of relevant media or medium with awareness of the demands of the task set out in the brief. They meet the needs of the target audience and fulfil the terms of the brief **in most respects**.	
Level 4	**15–21 marks**
Candidates construct their product(s) using **appropriate** production skills. They utilise technology, including ICT, and use **appropriate** techniques and conventions of their chosen medium and genre. They demonstrate **understanding** of the codes and conventions of relevant media or medium. They acknowledge the needs of the target audience and fulfil the terms of the brief **in many respects**.	
Level 3	**8–14 marks**
Candidates construct their product(s) using **some appropriate** skills. There is evidence of **some appropriate** techniques, including ICT, and conventions of their chosen medium and genre. They make some explicit reference to the codes and conventions of relevant media or medium. They make some explicit reference to the needs of the target audience and **begin to fulfil** the terms of the brief.	
Level 2	**1–7 marks**
Candidates attempt to use practical processes, techniques and technologies, including ICT, to create a **recognisable** media product. They make some reference to the codes and conventions of relevant media or medium. They make some reference to the needs of the target audience and **try to address some** of the terms of the brief.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

Evaluation	*(AO4 10 marks)*
Level 6	**9–10 marks**
Candidates offer a focused, **cogent and critical** evaluation of their contribution to the production process. They draw on **convincing evidence and valid criteria** to assess the degree of success of the completed media production in fulfilling the terms of the brief and meeting the needs of the target audience. Responses are communicated using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.	
Level 5	**7–8 marks**
Candidates offer a **successful** evaluation of their contribution to the production process. They draw on **some convincing evidence and valid criteria** to assess the degree of success of the completed media production in fulfilling the terms of the brief and meeting the needs of the target audience. Responses are communicated using mainly accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.	
Level 4	**5–6 marks**
Candidates **discuss** their contribution to the production process. They draw on **some relevant evidence** to show how successful the completed media production has been in fulfilling the terms of the brief and meeting the needs of the target audience. Responses are communicated using some accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.	
Level 3	**3–4 marks**
Candidates **describe** their contribution to the production process and **comment** on the success of the completed media production in fulfilling the terms of the brief and meeting the needs of the target audience. Communication, including spelling, punctuation and grammar, may not be wholly effective.	
Level 2	**1–2 marks**
Candidates provide a **simple review** of their contribution to the production process and may offer **some ideas** on the success of the completed media production in fulfilling the terms of the brief and meeting the needs of the target audience. Communication, including spelling, punctuation and grammar, may be limited.	
Level 1	**0 marks**
No work worth the award of a mark.	

3

4 Scheme of Assessment

4.1 Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE specifications in media studies should encourage candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare candidates to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

GCSE specifications in media studies must enable candidates to:

- develop enquiry, critical thinking and decision-making skills through consideration of issues that are important, real and relevant to them and to the world in which they live
- develop their appreciation and critical understanding of the media and its role in their daily lives
- develop their practical skills through opportunities for personal engagement and creativity
- understand how to use the key media concepts to analyse media products and their various contexts.

4.2 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The assessment units will assess the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject Content).

Assessment Objectives		% Weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed	20–30
AO2	Analyse and respond to media texts/topics using media key concepts and appropriate terminology	20–30
AO3	Demonstrate research, planning and presentation skills	20–30
AO4	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills	20–30

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

GCSE specifications which require candidates to produce written material in English must:

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

Candidates are required to use accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation in extended written answers. In this specification QWC will be assessed through AO1 and AO3 in Unit 1, through AO1 and AO2 in Unit 3, and in Units 2 and 4 through AO2 and AO4 as appropriate.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for the GCSE

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)		Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	
AO1	20		20
AO2		20	20
AO3	10	20	30
AO4	10	20	30
Overall weighting of units (%)	40	60	100

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for the GCSE Double Award

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE Double Award units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)				Overall weighting of AOs (%)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	
AO1	10		10		20
AO2		10	10		20
AO3	5	10		15	30
AO4	5	10		15	30
Overall weighting of units (%)	20	30	20	30	100

4.3 National criteria

This specification complies with the following.

- The Subject Criteria for Media Studies including the rules for Controlled Assessment
- Code of Practice
- The GCSE Qualification Criteria
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria
- The requirements for qualifications to provide access to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualification Framework.

4.4 Prior learning

There are no prior learning requirements.

However, any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres.

4.5 Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

GCSEs often require assessment of a broader range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any candidates regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with groups who represented the interests of a diverse range of candidates.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Further details are given in Section 5.4.

5 Administration

5.1 Availability of assessment units and certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of Units				Availability of Certification	
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	GCSE	GCSE Double Award
June 2012	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Jan 2013						
June 2013	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Jan 2014						
June 2014	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Ofqual's revisions to the Code of Practice mean that from June 2014: assessments (both external assessments and moderation of controlled assessment) will only be available once a year in June with 100% of the assessment being taken in the examination series in which the qualification is awarded.

5.2 Entries

Please refer to the current version of *Entry Procedures and Codes* for up to date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification.

Unit 1 – Investigating the Media (48101)
Unit 2 – Understanding the Media (48102)
Unit 3 – Exploring Media Industries (48103)
Unit 4 – Responding to a Media Brief (48104)

GCSE in Media Studies (4812)
GCSE Double Award in Media Studies (4814)

Candidates have to enter all the assessment units at the end of the course, at the same time as they enter for the subject award.

5.3 Private candidates

This specification is not available to private candidates.

5.4 Access arrangements and special consideration

We have taken note of equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications.* This is published on the JCQ website **(http://www.jcq.org.uk)** or you can follow the link from our website **(http://www.aqa.org.uk)**.

Access arrangements

We can make arrangements so that candidates with special needs can access the assessment. These arrangements must be made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment.

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this, it is given **after** the examination.

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

5.5 Language of examinations

We will provide units for this specification in English only

5.6 Qualification titles

Qualifications based on this specification are:

- AQA GCSE in Media Studies,
- AQA GCSE Double Award in Media Studies.

5.7 Awarding grades and reporting results

The GCSE qualification will be graded on an eight-grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

The GCSE Double Award qualification will be graded on a fifteen grade scale: A*A*, A*A, AA, AB, BB, BC, CC, CD, DD, DE, EE, EF, FF, FG, GG. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade GG will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark for each grade, for each unit, when we issue candidates' results. We will report a candidate's unit results to centres in terms of uniform marks and qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades. For each unit, the uniform mark corresponds to a grade as follows.

Unit 1 (maximum uniform mark = 80)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	72–80
A	64–71
B	56–63
C	48–55
D	40–47
E	32–39
F	24–31
G	16–23
U	0–15

Unit 2 (maximum uniform mark = 120)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	108–120
A	96–107
B	84–95
C	72–83
D	60–71
E	48–59
F	36–47
G	24–35
U	0–23

Unit 3 (maximum uniform mark = 80)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	72–80
A	64–71
B	56–63
C	48–55
D	40–47
E	32–39
F	24–31
G	16–23
U	0–15

Unit 4 (maximum uniform mark = 120)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	108–120
A	96–107
B	84–95
C	72–83
D	60–71
E	48–59
F	36–47
G	24–35
U	0–23

We calculate a candidate's total uniform mark by adding together the uniform marks for the relevant units. we convert this total uniform mark to a grade as follows.

GCSE Award (maximum uniform mark = 200)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	180–200
A	160–179
B	140–159
C	120–139
D	100–119
E	80–99
F	60–79
G	40–59
U	0–39

GCSE Double Award
(maximum uniform mark = 400)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*A*	360–400
A*A	340–359
AA	320–339
AB	300–319
BB	280–299
BC	260–279
CC	240–259
CD	220–239
DD	200–219
DE	180–199
EE	160–179
EF	140–159
FF	120–139
FG	100–119
GG	80–99
U	0–79

5.8 Examination series

Candidates have to enter all the assessment units at the end of the course, at the same time as they enter for the subject award.

As a consequence of the move to linear assessment, candidates will be allowed to carry forward their controlled assessment unit result(s) following the initial moderation and aggregation during the lifetime of the specification. Candidates will be allowed to carry forward unit results where those units have already been used to aggregate to a GCSE single award and a candidate wishes to re-use the unit result to aggregate to a double award in the same subject.

6 Controlled Assessment Administration

The Head of Centre is responsible to AQA for ensuring that controlled assessment work is conducted in accordance with AQA's instructions and JCQ instructions.

6.1 Authentication of controlled assessment work

In order to meet the requirements of Code of Practice AQA requires:

- **candidates** to sign the Candidate Record Form to confirm that the work submitted is their own
- **teachers/assessors** to confirm on the Candidate Record Form that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under the conditions laid down by the specification
- **centres** to record marks of zero if candidates cannot confirm the authenticity of work submitted for assessment.

The completed Candidate Record Form for each candidate should be attached to his/her work. All teachers who have assessed the work of any candidate entered for each component must sign the declaration of authentication.

If teachers/assessors have reservations about signing the authentication statements, the following points of guidance should be followed.

- If it is believed that a candidate has received additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for the relevant specification, the teacher/assessor should award a mark which represents the candidate's unaided achievement. The authentication statement should be signed and information given on the relevant form.
- If the teacher/assessor is unable to sign the authentication statement for a particular candidate, then the candidate's work cannot be accepted for assessment.

If, during the external moderation process, there is no evidence that the work has been properly authenticated, AQA will set the associated mark(s) to zero.

6.2 Malpractice

Teachers should inform candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice.

Candidates must **not**:

- submit work which is not their own;
- lend work to other candidates;
- allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their own independently sourced source material (this does not mean that candidates may not lend their books to another candidate, but candidates should be prevented from plagiarising other candidates' research);
- include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement and attribution;
- submit work typed or word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement.

These actions constitute malpractice, for which a penalty (for example disqualification from the examination) will be applied.

If malpractice is suspected, the Examinations Officer should be consulted about the procedure to be followed.

Where suspected malpractice in controlled assessments is identified by a centre after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the Head of Centre must submit full details of the case to AQA at the earliest opportunity. The form JCQ/M1 should be used. Copies of the form can be found on the JCQ website (**http://www.jcq.org.uk/**).

Malpractice in controlled assessments discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to AQA, but should be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures. AQA would expect centres to treat such cases very seriously. Details of any work which is not the candidate's own must be recorded on the Candidate Record Form or other appropriate place.

6.3 Teacher standardisation

AQA will hold annual standardising meetings for teachers, usually in the autumn term, for controlled assessment. At these meetings we will provide support in contextualising the tasks and using the marking criteria.

If your centre is new to this specification, you must send a representative to one of the meetings. If you have told us you are a new centre, either by submitting an intention to enter and/or an estimate of entry or by contacting the subject team, we will contact you to invite you to a meeting.

AQA will also contact centres if:

- the moderation of controlled assessment work from the previous year has identified a serious misinterpretation of the controlled assessment requirements, *or*
- a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's marks.

In these cases, centres will be expected to send a representative to one of the meetings. For all other centres, attendance is optional. If a centre is unable to attend and would like a copy of the written materials used at the meeting, they should contact the subject administration team at **mediastudies@aqa.org.uk**

It is likely that during the lifetime of this specification AQA will move to **online teacher standardisation**.

6.4 Internal standardisation of marking

Centres must standardise marking to make sure that all candidates at the centre have been marked to the same standard. One person must be responsible for internal standardisation. This person should sign the Centre Declaration Sheet to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place.

Internal standardisation may involve:

- all teachers marking some trial pieces of work and identifying differences in marking standards;
- discussing any differences in marking at a training meeting for all teachers involved in the assessment;
- referring to reference and archive material such as previous work or examples from AQA's teacher standardising meetings.

6.5 Annotation of controlled assessment work

The Code of Practice states that the awarding body must require internal assessors to show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in the specification and that the awarding body must provide guidance on how this is to be done.

The annotation will help the moderator to see as precisely as possible where the teacher considers that the candidates have met the criteria in the specification.

Work could be annotated by either of the following methods:

- key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation either in the margin or in the text;
- summative comments on the work, referencing precise sections in the work.

6.6 Submitting marks and sample work for moderation

The total mark for each candidate must be submitted to AQA and the moderator on the mark forms provided, by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) or through the e-Portfolio system (only available for certain units/components) by the specified date (see **http://www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines.php**).
Centres will normally be notified which candidates' work is required in the sample to be submitted to the moderator (please refer to section 7.1 for further guidance on submitting samples).

6.7 Factors affecting individual candidates

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

If work is lost, AQA should be notified immediately of the date of the loss, how it occurred, and who was responsible for the loss. Centres should use the JCQ form JCQ/LCW to inform AQA Centre and Candidate Support Services of the circumstances.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, AQA must be informed through comments on the Candidate Record Form so that such help can be taken into account when moderation takes place.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes present a problem for a scheme of controlled assessment work. Possible courses of action depend on the stage at which the move takes place. If the move occurs early in the course the new centre should take responsibility for controlled assessment work. If it occurs late in the course it may be possible to arrange for the moderator to assess the work through the 'Educated Elsewhere' procedure. Centres should contact AQA at the earliest possible stage for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases.

6.8 Retaining evidence

The centre must retain the work of all candidates, with Candidate Record Forms attached, under secure conditions, from the time it is assessed, to allow for the possibility of an enquiry about results. The work may be returned to candidates after the deadline for enquiries about results. If an enquiry about a result has been made, the work must remain under secure conditions in case it is required by AQA.

7 Moderation

7.1 Moderation procedures

Moderation of the controlled assessment work is by inspection of a sample of candidates' work, sent by post or electronically through the e-Portfolio system from the centre to a moderator appointed by AQA. The centre marks must be submitted to AQA and to the moderator by the specified deadline (see **http://www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines.php**).
Centres entering fewer candidates than the minimum sample size and centres submitting through the e-Portfolio system should submit the work of all of their candidates. Centres entering larger numbers of candidates will be notified of the candidates whose work will be required in the sample to be submitted for moderation.

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

7.2 Consortium arrangements

If there are a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements (i.e. where candidates from different centres have been taught together but where they are entered through the centre at which they are on roll), the centres must inform AQA by completing the JCQ/CCA form.

The centres concerned must nominate a consortium co-ordinator who undertakes to liaise with AQA on behalf of all centres in the consortium. If there are different co-ordinators for different specifications, a copy of the JCQ/CCA form must be submitted for each specification.

AQA will allocate the same moderator to each centre in the consortium and the candidates will be treated as a single group for the purpose of moderation.

7.3 Post-moderation procedures

On publication of the results, we will provide centres with details of the final marks for the controlled assessment work.

The candidates' work will be returned to the centre after the examination. The centre will receive a report, at the time results are issued, giving feedback on the accuracy of the assessments made, and the reasons for any adjustments to the marks.

We may retain some candidates' work for awarding, archive or standardising purposes.

Appendices

A Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives (see Section 4) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the candidates' performance may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
A	Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of media products and concepts, and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. They use analytical techniques, underpinning concepts and a wide-ranging critical vocabulary to evaluate and compare media representations. They demonstrate an ability to respond in a logical and structured way, with precise and accurate use of terminology, supporting ideas and arguments with evidence. They research and plan their production work effectively. They draw on relevant products, concepts and contexts. They use a range of presentational skills effectively, showing understanding of how audiences are identified and how production is tailored to audience needs and expectations. They construct their product(s) using a broad range of production skills appropriately and effectively. They confidently handle technology, including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre creatively. They evaluate their product(s), making critical connections between the experience of carrying out the production and the key concepts.
C	Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of media products and concepts, and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. They identify the relationship between representations offered by media texts and the appeal of these texts to the audiences that they address. They demonstrate the ability to respond logically, with accurate use of terminology, supporting ideas and arguments with evidence. They research and plan their production work. They use a selection of presentational skills well, showing a sense of identifying and targeting audiences, and indicating how this has informed the production process. They construct their product(s) using appropriate production skills. They handle technology, including ICT, and use some appropriate techniques and conventions of their chosen medium and genre. They evaluate their product-making against straightforward production criteria.
F	Candidates recall and communicate limited knowledge and understanding of media products and concepts. They show a limited understanding of media forms and conventions, and can describe some aspects of media representation using some media language and conventions. They show a limited awareness of connections between the representations offered by media texts and their intended audience. They use minimal research and planning to inform their production work. They use few presentational forms with little sense of identifying and targeting audiences. They attempt to use practical processes, techniques and technologies, including ICT, to create a media product. They provide a simple review of the production.

B Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Sustainable Development, Economic and Cultural Issues, and Health and Safety Considerations

AQA has taken great care to ensure that any wider issues, including those particularly relevant to the education of students at Key Stage 4, have been identified and taken into account in the preparation of this specification. They will only form part of the assessment requirements where they relate directly to the specific content of the specification and have been identified in Section 3: Content.

European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Environmental Education

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report "Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education" 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoidance of Bias

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

C Overlaps with other Qualifications

There are no overlaps with other specifications.

D Wider Key Skills

The replacement of Key Skills with Functional Skills

The Key Skills qualifications have been replaced by the **Functional Skills**. However, centres may claim proxies for Key Skills components and/or certification in the following series: January, March and June 2012. The **Administration Handbook for the Key Skills Standards 2012** has further details. All Examination Officers in centres offering AQA Key Skills and Wider Key Skills have been sent a letter outlining the details of the end dates of these subjects. Copies of the letters have also been sent to the Head of Centre and Key Skills coordinator. This is a brief outline of that information. It is correct as at August 2011 and replaces the information on the same subject found in other documents on the AQA website:

- **Key Skills Levels 1, 2 and 3 Test and Portfolio** The final opportunity for candidates to enter for a level 1, 2 or 3 Key Skills test or portfolio was June 2011 with the last certification in 2012.
- **Key Skills Level 4** The last series available to candidates entering for the Key Skills Level 4 test and portfolio was June 2010 with the last certification in the June series 2012.
- **Basic Skills Adult Literacy Levels 1 and 2, Adult Numeracy Levels 1 and 2** AQA Basic Skills qualifications will now be available until, at least, the June 2012 series.

Funding

We have received the following advice on the funding of learners undertaking these qualifications:

- Currently the **Skills Funding Agency** funds Basic Skills in literacy and numeracy for adult, 19 plus, learners only. There are various support funds for learners aged 16-18 administered by the **Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)**. These include EMA (until the end of the 2010/11 academic year), Care to Learn and discretionary learner support hardship funding for learners living away from home.
- This information is correct at the time of publication. If you would like to check the funding provision post-June 2011, please call the **Skills Funding Agency** helpdesk on 0845 377 5000.
- **Wider Key Skills** The AQA Wider Key Skills qualifications are no longer available. The last portfolio moderation took place in June 2011.

Further updates to this information will be posted on the website as it becomes available.
http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/keyskills/wider_noticeboard.php

GCSE Media Studies and Media Studies (Double Award) Teaching from September 2012 onwards

Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/4425/4 and 500/4457/6 (Double Award)

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 5350.

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

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

To obtain free specification updates and support material or to ask us a question register with Ask AQA:

www.aqa.org.uk/ask-aqa/register

Support meetings are available throughout the life of the specification.
Further information is available at:

http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking

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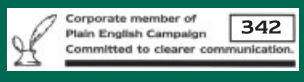

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