OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

AS LEVEL

Moderators' report

MEDIA STUDIES

H009
For first teaching in 2017

H009/02/03 Summer 2023 series

Contents

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Introduction

Our moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Online courses

We have created online courses to build your confidence in delivering, marking and administering internal assessment for our qualifications. Courses are available for Cambridge Nationals, GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016).

Cambridge Nationals
All teachers delivering our redeveloped Cambridge Nationals suite from September 2022 are asked to complete the Essentials for the NEA course, which describes how to guide and support your students. You'll receive a certificate which you should retain.

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GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016)
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Following this you will find a subject-specific course for your individual qualification, covering marking criteria with examples and commentary, along with interactive marking practice.

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General overview

This was the fourth session of H009/02/03. Centres have come out of pandemic measures and picked up where they left off in 2019. Communications between OCR and centres seems to have been effective with centres taking on board the messages from previous series. Most centres have engaged creatively with this component and candidates created some excellent products, demonstrating research into existing advertisements, their platforms, their audiences, and their messages. Many candidates demonstrated skill in the use of appropriate media tools and centres are encouraged to continue to create opportunities for candidates to learn and practice effective use of these tools. In the best work, knowledge and understanding of codes and conventions of all aspects of the media products was coupled with appropriate representations and intertextuality. There was still some work which did not follow the requirements of the brief, with inappropriate products and little or no evidence of research and planning.

In past series, many centres used blogs to present work for moderation. The number seems to have declined since the first two series. Even when work is uploaded to the OCR Repository, the use of a blog to present research and planning materials can be helpful as it allows both teachers and moderators to see the development of the candidate's work. To ensure the security of the work, it is permissible to lock online materials as long as a master password is sent to the moderator. Teacher commentary on the candidates' cover sheets is moving towards the preferred personalised comments reflecting the marking criteria and using the language of the brief. It is important that these comments are as clear as possible and refer to the candidate's work in relation to the appropriate mark descriptors. There were some excellent examples of teacher justification this series which helped the moderation process and was greatly appreciated by moderators.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
- developed their technical skills - applied their prior learning to the production of media texts - completed a range of appropriate research and planning activities and recorded their outcomes - read the brief carefully and applied all the requirements to their productions.	- did not develop their technical skills - did not apply their prior learning to the production of media texts - did not complete appropriate research and planning before production - read the brief but did not consider all of the requirements.

Statement of Intent

Statements of Intent continue to vary in quality. The most effective were written before planning and production and outlined specific intentions about how these would be achieved using appropriate media language. Less effective Statements of Intent were often written after production and were purely descriptive. Others, though written before production, were descriptive and did not translate into effective media products. Candidates who demonstrated a clear understanding of the requirement of the brief and outlined codes and conventions, representations, appeal to appropriate audience(s), and intertextuality often produced excellent products.

Research and planning

Research and planning is still an area of concern despite the continued requests of moderators. Many candidates are still neglecting these requirements of the specification. While research and planning materials are not assessed, it is a requirement that they be submitted for moderation. This allows both the teacher and moderator to authenticate the candidate's work. Where research and planning materials

were not submitted it often appeared from the candidates' products that little had taken place. While candidates were not marked down for non-submission of research and planning, many effectively self-penalised through products that did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding.

Where material was submitted in support of products, it was often not of the standard expected at this level and this was, once again, reflected in the final products. The most effective presentation of research and planning was online, demonstrating a clear sense of process. Many centres submitted a few printed pages, or PDFs, describing either the planning completed or the final production process. Many centres should still consider completing, and recording, more research and planning to inform better end products. Planning could also include opportunities to acquire and develop the skills required to accomplish the technical aspects of production. Research, in particular, is vital in informing a candidate's knowledge and understanding of what they are producing. Centres should encourage research into target audience and social groups, placement, regulatory context, intertextuality, and codes and conventions as relevant to the brief.

The Print brief

The Print brief seems to have declined in popularity for this series and is now on an equal footing with the Television brief. For this brief, candidates produced some creative bus stop advertising employing appropriate content for purpose and audience. Candidates working at the higher levels produced, and evidenced, a range of well-made original images created specifically for the task. Some centres had provided good opportunities for candidates to learn and practice photography skills, employing careful consideration of composition, mise-en-scène and lighting. They also encouraged candidates to practice using appropriate photo editing and desktop publishing software. Work at the lower levels tended not to pay a great deal of attention to typography and graphic design. Photography, layout, and post-production skills should be practised, perhaps using preliminary production exercises. While most candidates demonstrated an understanding of the brief, many did not fully consider all the unique conventions associated with bus stop poster advertisements. This could have been easily overcome with more focused research into professional products. It was clear that some candidates had not fully researched conventions, with some producing landscape posters that would be more appropriate to billboard advertising. The most effective advertisements clearly demonstrated that candidates had closely researched the conventions of bus stop advertising and company/product branding across a campaign.

The Television brief

Products for this brief continue to demonstrate a high degree of creativity. However, many candidates are let down by not having developed the production skills needed to translate their creativity into effective end products. TV advertisements for a new sports channel often tried to cater for the appropriate target audience, but struggled with conveying a unique brand identity. It was clear across all briefs that a greater focus on research into branding would be beneficial.

The application of production detail remains a concern for this brief. Centres seem to have focused on the requirement to include at least two different social groups, which overall has been successfully accomplished to the detriment of other requirements. Mise-en-scène was often not fully considered, with many products shot around centre sports halls/fields with candidates in uniform or wearing lanyards. The creation of an appropriate soundscape still needs greater consideration, mixing ambient sound, with music and voice-overs. Voice and written text were often neglected in favour of images. The most effective products demonstrated a clear understanding of all aspects of video production including editing, which in less successful productions often lacked the appropriate dynamism and precision. Some centres had provided effective opportunities for candidates to learn and practice film and editing skills with several devising creative preliminary production exercises. Others also highlighted the importance of the choice of fonts and other graphic elements within the advertisements.

The Radio brief

Once again, there were few candidates attempting this brief. Those who did, clearly have teachers who are radio specialists. Centres where teachers have expertise in this medium performed well with a wide range of research supporting the outcomes. The most effective products employed creative mixing of multi-track recordings that created a sense of excitement about the product. For this brief the centre should make sure that candidates can fully research the medium and practice the skills required to produce professional sounding products appropriate for purpose and audience.

Most common causes of centres not passing
• Too few opportunities to learn and develop skills in appropriate hardware and software.
• Not reading the brief carefully and missing out requirements and/or detail.
• Too little research into 'real' texts, platforms and appropriate audiences.
• Products not fully planned before production.

The Radio brief

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