

GCE

Media Studies

H409/01: Media messages

A Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the RM Assessor messaging system.

5. **Crossed-Out Responses**

Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed-out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed-out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM Assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. (*The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.*)

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.
7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your Team Leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.

10. For answers marked by levels of response:

To determine the level – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer

To determine the mark within the level, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

Subject-specific marking Instructions

Levels of Response targeting AO1 and AO2

Where a mark scheme targets marks at AO1 and AO2, there is no requirement for a response to be awarded in the same level for AO1 as for AO2, so for example a response could be awarded Level 3 for AO1 and Level 2 for AO2.

11. Annotations

Stamp	Description
	Blank page
N/A	Highlight
	Off page comment
	Tick
	Cross
	Unclear
	Omission mark
	Terminology
	Example/Reference
	Accurate
	Lengthy narrative
	Expandable vertical wavy line
	Vague
	Knowledge and understanding
	Not answered question
	No example
	Opinion
	Note but no credit given

- 1 Explain how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry.
Use *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021) to support your answer.

In your answer you must also consider how economic contexts can influence the film industry.

Assessment Objectives	AO1: 1a 1b – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media. AO1: 2a 2b – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. AO1 Total: 15 marks.
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Question	Indicative Content
1	<i>The content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all of the points listed.</i> AO1:1 Responses might refer to: • How processes of production, distribution, circulation and marketing of films have been influenced by changes in studio ownership; examples of how Disney's approach has changed as its ownership model has changed over the past 80 years. • The roles of independent ownership versus conglomerate influence and how this shaped the film industry; reference might be made to the effects of Disney working inhouse (more like an indie) in its earlier years versus using larger outsourced teams as its ownership model changed to a more conglomerate structure. • Significance of mainstream film production budgets being high risk for the film industry whenever they were produced; for Disney, the company's initial survival depended on <i>Snow White</i> whilst <i>Shang Chi</i> was expected to generate profits and merchandise for the Marvel brand (as well as potentially create a market in China). Some candidates may explore Hesmondhalgh's ideas about risk. • Impact of 'new' technologies and innovations for which organisations making films have often been at the forefront, particularly special effects; Disney as a company exemplifies changing production methods, experimentation and the influences they have had on the wider film industry. Both movies include examples of this in terms of groundbreaking techniques used. • The importance of branding to media organisations and the influence of this on the broader film industry; Disney codified 'family-friendly' branding (<i>Snow White</i> for families/ young children; <i>Shang Chi</i> for fans of comics, adults and martial arts/ Asian hybrid films). • The expanding reach of media organisations leading to cultural and global homogenisation of films; Disney represents the power of America and the Hollywood system in terms of how the organisation has evolved a global identity and partial dominance. • The importance of online platforms (such as Disney+, Netflix and YouTube) for distribution and circulation of films to generate long-tail profits and how this has changed the film industry in terms of driving audiences to streaming services rather than cinemas

Question	Indicative Content
	or DVD/ Blu-Ray; can be contrasted with traditional influence of organisations such as Disney (pre-Disney+) and vaulting methods. - Marketing strategies (including synergy) of films which are designed to make best use of the power and influence of cross-media conglomerates; the film industry as shifted into having a closer relationship with TV, gaming and social media as a result. - Any response that explores how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry. Responses should refer to both <i>Snow White</i> and Marvel's <i>Shang-Chi and the Legends of the Ten Rings</i> and might consider the following: - How the production techniques of each film were heavily influenced by the organisation's 'brand hype', e.g. Walt's attention to detail in <i>Snow White</i>, the use of set-piece martial arts and stunt scenes in <i>Shang Chi</i>: accept any valid response. - How Disney has grown from a small team of animators (as exemplified by <i>Snow White</i>) into a global conglomerate employing different departments within a range of industries, film being just one element (as exemplified by <i>Shang Chi</i> and the broader MCU). - How Disney as an organisation has innovated production techniques which have influenced the film industry; this might include production, distribution and/ or circulation - accept any valid example. For example, <i>Snow White</i> utilised animation techniques which had to be invented for the film whilst <i>Shang Chi</i> included CGI creating visuals which had hitherto never been seen before. - The differences in the marketing of each film and how this was affected by the Disney's budget and ideology at the time. - The significance of branding/ absorption of brands over the years and how Disney exemplifies changes in power in the film industry (e.g. acquisition of Lucasfilm, Fox and Marvel and the impact of this had versus the changing shift from the 'big six' to the 'big five'.) <i>Snow White</i> was commercially successful and critically acclaimed; there is a remake due in 2025 which might be linked to how organisations like Disney now depend upon nostalgia and remakes, a massive shift in how the film industry works. <i>Shang-Chi</i> sits as part of a franchise alongside other Marvel films, candidates might link this to how the film industry has come to depend upon franchises and familiarity as large media organisations are less keen to take risks. - The trailers and posters are very different and were distributed across a range of platforms, including television and YouTube, demonstrating shifting patterns in the industry; candidates may discuss differences and link to question. Responses might demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media processes, such as: - How media producers produce content (in this case films) to national and global audiences. - How producers are affected by technological, cultural and other social events which can affect how a film is received. - How films have been accessed through a range of different hardware, including cinema, VHS, DVD, consoles and mobile devices. AO1: 2 Responses might refer to: - Economic contexts of Disney having different budgets for production and marketing, given the different circumstances of release. - Economic contrast between film marketing budgets and other synergistic elements, e.g. theme parks, books, comics

Question	Indicative Content
	- How the processes of film production and marketing can be influenced by economic contexts (e.g. cost of promoting films – usually about equal to production budget, socio-economic issues such as the Great Depression, impending war, interest rates, Covid pandemic and its effect on cinema audiences, impact of online streaming sites, piracy, impact of positive or negative reviews etc.). - Appeal of staple “family friendly” films such as <i>Snow White</i> which are often built into marketing strategies. - Economic contexts and monetisation opportunities for producers, e.g. franchises, remakes, ground-breaking originals being a marketing strategy, cross-promotion tie-ins, etc. - Accept all valid responses.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
1	3	A comprehensive response to the set question. A comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry: - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the film industry. - Clear and precise explanation of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry. - Answer is supported by detailed and accurate reference to <i>Snow White</i> and <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i>. Comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of how economic contexts can influence film industry processes.	11-15
	2	An adequate response to the set question. An adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry: - Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the film industry. - Generally accurate explanation of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry - Answer is supported by generally accurate reference to <i>Snow White</i> and <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i>. Note: limit to mid-level 2 (8 marks) if only one text has been explored. Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of how economic contexts can influence film industry processes.	6-10
	1	A minimal response to the set question.	1–5

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
		A minimal demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry: • Knowledge of the film industry is minimal, demonstrating little understanding. • Explanation of how ownership of media organisations can influence the film industry is minimal and may not always be accurate or is largely descriptive. • Reference to examples from <i>Snow White</i> and <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i> to support the answer is minimal and may be inaccurate. Knowledge of how economic contexts can influence film industry processes is minimal and/ or descriptive, demonstrating little understanding.	
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

- 2 Explain how video game producers reflect the needs of mass and niche audiences. Use *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* to support your answer.

Assessment Objectives	AO1: 1a 1b – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media. AO1 Total: 15 marks.
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Question	Indicative Content
2	<i>Content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all the points listed.</i> AO1:1 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of video game audiences (exemplified by <i>ACNH</i>) and how the needs of these audiences are reflected by video game producers. Answers should be focused specifically on the how different audiences, mass and niche, are likely to have different needs from a game through how Nintendo (micro) and the industry (macro) have adapted their content to reflect the changing needs linked to video games. The primary focus might relate to elements of uses and gratifications, reception and identity theory, although these need not be specially mentioned. Answers might include consideration of: • Convergence between social media platforms (e.g. YouTube/ Facebook (mass) and online fan communities such as Twitch (niche)) has enabled <i>ACNH</i>'s audience to have an active voice in its on-going production through detailed feedback and commentary on DLC, patches and subsequent releases, thus meeting their needs – this is true of many gaming developers. • Ways that digitally convergent media platforms can impact on video game production, e.g. fewer master copies of games are required; easier for games to be ported across a number of convergent platforms or downloaded digitally, meeting needs of mass audiences while Android and the multitude of devices that support Android and/ or IOS allow niche audiences to access cut down/ alternative versions of games (e.g. the <i>Pocket Camp</i> version of <i>ACNH</i>). • The internet not being a single technology; its availability over a multitude of different platforms has acted as an enabler to video games companies in terms of how they distribute games, for example, vastly cutting down on distribution costs and attracting new types of gamers (e.g. older audiences at home during pandemic, a significant factor in the success of <i>ACNH</i>). Digital distribution initially appealed to a niche audience but now reflects the needs of the mass audience. • How the producers of video games can be heavily influenced by, and in some cases reflect the need of, prosumers and their reviews/commentaries on the game; this can be seen with <i>ACNH</i> with (for example) updates which included popular characters from previous games in the series. Accept any valid example. • How Nintendo considers itself as a brand/ gaming developer with a loyal audience (which could be considered mass in terms of general size since the Switch has sold many more than both X-Box and PlayStation) so chose not to create a multi-platform game (like other titles), rather focusing on its core audience instead; Nintendo is thus less likely to reflect the needs of a niche audience. • How digitally convergent platforms affect video game consumption; gaming has changed from predominantly single player to a multiplayer format which enables the gaming audience to experience online play with other players at the same time, irrespective of subscription-based models or not. The shift from single to multiplayer is reflected in <i>ACNH</i> having far more online functionality than previous games in the series, reflecting an understanding of the needs of the mass audience.

Question	Indicative Content
	• The fragmentation of audiences between ‘hardcore’ game consumers and casual/ social gamers; with <i>ACNH</i>, Nintendo created a game which reflected the needs of both audiences (given the many different ways in which it was used), helped somewhat by the pandemic. • How the institutions involved in the production of video games must constantly review their content to ensure that it meets the needs of a diverse range of audiences; <i>ACNH</i> was regularly updated over the first few years of release. • How different audience groups are likely to have different gratifications from playing a game, depending on geographic and demographic perspectives; the open-world gameplay of <i>ACNH</i> provides a wide range of experiences for multiple different audiences of many different backgrounds, both niche and mass. • Role of regulatory frameworks (such as PEGI) which reflect the needs of all audiences as well as the need to present an inclusive, family-friendly platform through the delivery of appropriate content (such as <i>ACNH</i>) to encourage investment from audiences. This is crucial for a company such as Nintendo, which aims to appeal to the broadest possible audience. • How video game content is produced to be appealing to the ‘types’ of audience that is defined by data, possibly linked to ideas related to Uses and Gratifications theory. • The ways in which categorisation of audiences can be used as a way of creating game content (e.g. to target, reach and maintain both mass and niche audiences). Responses should refer to examples from <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i> and might consider the following: • How the content of <i>ACNH</i> may be appealing to different audiences depending on the loyal, subscriber-based model or casual gamer approach. • The ways that specific features of <i>ACNH</i> might appeal to some types of audiences more than others, e.g. online communities, skins, islands, etc. Accept all valid responses that use relevant examples. • How audiences from different geographic locations might interpret the game, given its origins from Nintendo in Japan and the subsequent embracing of Asian culture by Western audiences. • Reward any other relevant examples which relate to reception or identity theory applied to <i>ACNH</i> using specific examples from the game.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
2	3	A comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of video game producers and audiences: • Clear, precise and balanced explanation of how video game producers reflect the needs of mass and niche audiences. • Answer is supported by detailed and accurate reference to <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons (ACNH)</i>	11–15
	2	An adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of video game producers and audiences: • Generally accurate explanation of how video game producers reflect the needs of mass and niche audiences. • Generally accurate reference to <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons (ACNH)</i>. If examples are not used from <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons (ACNH)</i>, answers are capped at 8 marks.	6–10
	1	A minimal demonstration of knowledge and understanding of video game producers and audiences: • Unbalanced explanation of how video game producers reflect the needs of mass and niche audiences. • Response may not use <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons (ACNH)</i> as an example. • References to support the answer may be minimal and may be inaccurate.	1–5
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

3* 'No matter where they are made, long form television dramas must be realistic to succeed.' How far do you agree with this statement?

In your response, you must:

- explain the contexts in which long form television dramas are produced and consumed
- explain how media contexts may have influenced representations of reality in the set episodes you have studied
- refer to academic ideas and arguments
- make judgements and reach conclusions about the reasons for similarities and differences in representations of reality between the two episodes.

Assessment Objectives	AO1: 2a 2b – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. AO1 Total: 10 marks. AO2: 1 – Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products, including in relation to their contexts and through the use of academic theories. AO2: 3 – Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions AO2 Total: 20 marks.
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Question	Indicative Content
3	<i>The content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all of the points listed.</i> AO1:2 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the contexts in which long form television dramas are produced and consumed, including (for example): Social Contexts • Changes in gender roles; gender, racial and ethnic inequalities; social attitudes to sexualities on television programmes. • Social anxieties and/ or contested social values, for example the perceived rupturing of the 'American dream' illustrated through allegorical representations of social anxieties such as lack of trust in politicians/ social leaders and fear of surveillance as well as more broadly through wider western social values towards security and family and home and the perceived breakdown of the 'nuclear' family. Cultural Contexts • Influence of national cultures, for example the cultural importance of television dramas in reflecting, re-interpreting and re-enforcing national cultural identities and representations of social groups, events and the individuals (and on occasion, challenging and subverting those representations to try and instigate cultural change and domestic conversations on representations and identity). • Influence of cultural globalisation and hybridisation; recognition that key character types may share certain generic traits in their representations across westernised television culture based on cultural imperialism, particular from US-produced products.

Question	Indicative Content
	Historical Contexts - The influence of key historical events (for example, Reagan's 'Star Wars' or the Cold War) and how these affected national psyches; the reflection and reinterpretation of this through global LFTVDs (for example, how the reunification of Germany influenced Europe). Political Contexts - Attitudes to politics and politicians, including how television programmes can reflect, reinterpret, amplify and satirise national political institutions and the mechanics of their working, including an understanding that Western programme makers have the freedom to criticise and satirise their own domestic politicians and political systems. - The need for the audience to have political knowledge to understand the basis of some representations in political dramas, or dramas which refer to political situations. Economic Contexts - The influence of high budgets on flagship television programmes, e.g. opportunities for character development in 'authored' high budget programmes allowing for more complex, individualised three-dimensional characterisation rather than stereotyping. - Responses may also show knowledge of the disparity between production budgets for US television dramas and European television dramas, their sources of funding and how budgets programme makers through allowing more or less choice when constructing representations, for example, with regard to locations, settings, costumes, filming, lighting, sound and editing technology. - The influence of economic contexts on society such as global financial crises or cost of living, and how these are reflected in LFTVDs. The content below is not a prescriptive list but a contextual guide and all valid points should be credited. AO2:1 Responses will explain how media contexts may have influenced representations of realism in the set episodes of the two long form television dramas studied. These will include one or more of the following: social, cultural, historical, political, or economic contexts. Social Contexts E.g. the influence of social anxieties and/or contested social values and the influence of changes in gender roles, and/or racial and ethnic inequalities, and/or social attitudes to sexualities on television programmes, e.g. Killing Eve - The episode reflects socially-contested gender and racial/ ethnic relations. It suggests a degree of gender equality, e.g. Eve and Villanelle are two strong women, a reflection of realistic changes in the modern world. Women have powerful roles within MI5 and MI6 although Martens and Konstantin and are represented as having similar agency in their exertion over Eve and Villanelle, suggesting the challenges still faced in a patriarchal culture. However, the narrative primarily follows the female protagonists in somewhat unreal scenarios, representing other gender roles as obstacles to progress. The episode also shows the influence of social

Question	Indicative Content
	anxieties about political assassinations taking place on UK soil and criminal gangs being able to operate unchecked, linking to real events. Stranger Things - The episode intertextually reflects realistic 1980s family and gender relations. It is set within a Spielbergian, mostly white, world of suburban family life, representing mothers as figures struggling to hold the family together, fathers as absent or insensitive and distracted, and young boys as establishing a fierce loyalty and masculine camaraderie in the face of a hostile world. For modern audiences, this could be seen as exaggerated despite reflecting the realism of the time. The inclusion of Lucas might be seen as tokenistic. Mike's sister, Nancy, is represented in contradictory ways: she countertypically excels at science while still fitting stereotypes of the teenage girl (reflecting theories such as Gauntlett) but also reflects the reality of girls in women in the 21st century. The episode shows the influence of real social anxieties about the consequences of scientific experimentation, albeit in an unreal, supernatural way. Mr Robot - The workplace is ethnically and gender mixed, realistically representing modern ideology and values. This diversity reflects the context of contemporary New York's self-presentation as a 'melting pot'. However, the corporation executives and 'The Conspiracy' members are all male, perhaps a deliberate strategy to negatively represent and critique the traditional patriarchal order which could be seen as an outdated, unrealistic trope. The episode shows the influence of social anxieties about the power of corporate conspiracies and digital technology which might resonate with real life examples such as Enron or (in the UK) Fujitsu/ Horizon. Atypical - The episode reflects socially-contested gender and racial/ ethnic relations but also focuses on neurodivergence, a condition which has received significant coverage in contemporary media. The drama represents a world in which being 'normal' is the only way to fit it; e.g. Sam is represented trying to learn the secrets of dating and speaking to women appropriately, a realistic challenge facing many young people. However, some scenes could be seen as unrealistic and more about servicing racial tropes. There is an equal balance of ethnicities working within parts of society: the Asian therapist, the male Hispanic barman, the Indian technical supervisor; some of these might be seen as simultaneously both stereotypical and countertypical and could be argued as being tokenistic. The episode explores the influence of social anxieties about speaking out about difference and autism, which are real-life concerns. Lupin - The episode reflects socially-contested gender and racial/ ethnic relations. The police management are white, reinforcing patriarchal/ colonial power, as is the main antagonist who also reflects traits representing an unjust colonial past. This reflects reality in contemporary France as well as providing a counterpoint to the expectation that the character of Lupin would be similarly 'establishment'. The narrative follows the agency of a male Global Majority protagonist who is resourceful and determined to seek justice; this represents the reality that members of the non-white communities are achieving better social representations whilst perhaps also being a little unreal given the struggles faced by the Global Majority (although <i>Lupin</i> does reflect these quite realistically). France is represented as an avowedly multicultural society with a high level of colonial migrants; Assane's father is exploited by Pellegrini's nefarious intentions regarding the necklace, which could reflect real examples of post-colonial exploitation (Babakar's fate is tragically realistic). The episode shows the influence of social anxieties about the protests and inequality within Global Majority communities, echoing BLM protests.

Question	Indicative Content
	• Money Heist - The episode reflects contested gender relations showing the impact of feminism on patriarchal society: Tokyo and Nairobi are strong female characters in the male-dominated business of crime. However, Tokyo also fits the traditional patriarchal stereotype of the 'hysterical' woman when her partner (at start and end of the episode) is shot. Masculinity is represented negatively, e.g. the exploitative teen who takes picture of 'the girl' in the toilet as well as Berlin and his overpowering exertion of power during the hostage situation. Spain is not represented as an avowedly multicultural society but one run by white men, in the context of Royal Mint and the heist; therefore, the issue of reality may be contested. • Deutschland 83 - The episode reflects the social contradictions in divided 1980s Germany. East Germany is represented as a rigidly controlled state that promotes women's equality, with Leonora as the powerful woman who sets up the spying operation, whereas in West Germany, which is less controlled, the military is represented as rigidly patriarchal. Both Germanies are represented as white; the representation of the racial integration of the American military appears to add to their 'otherness'. The episode shows the influence of social anxieties about facing up to Germany's divided past, a realistic reflection of German society. • Trapped - The episode reflects a mostly traditional society where patriarchy is only partially contested. The community is ruled by men – the mayor, the MP, the local businessmen, the police chief and the Reykjavik detectives – suggesting a persistence of traditional gender roles, but the female police officer is professional and has agency within the narrative. The episode shows the influence of social anxieties about the exploitation of Iceland by economically powerful outsiders. Cultural Contexts The influence of national cultures on television programmes or, conversely, the influence of cultural globalisation and hybridisation on television programmes, e.g. • Killing Eve - The episode reflects the American/ English cultural preference for altruistic, honest, trustworthy heroes amidst the backdrop of international red tape and espionage. The series is set in several locations across Europe and presents a binary opposite of Russia with the ideology and integrity of the West. Eve represents character traits of the dogged underdog hero battling for recognition in a male dominated society, which some may see as being done for comic effect given the use of thriller tropes rather than showing degrees of realism (indeed, the whole cultural context of the programme owes more to subversion of genre convention than realistic representation). • Stranger Things - The episode shows the influence of the culturally-iconic American small-town community championed by classical Hollywood cinema, not least in the 1980s. This representation has global recognition (by international audiences used to being positioned as to see the world from an American perspective), given the global successes of the Hollywood blockbusters of that era the LFTVD references and so has a veneer of realism. However, the scenario and narrative are both clearly unreal which is part of the show's USP.

Question	Indicative Content
	• Mr Robot - The episode shows the influence of postmodernism in US culture - it represents a world of 'simulation', of computer code, of constructed representations of self, where boundaries between delusions and reality are blurred (reflecting theories such as those of Baudrillard). Representations of urban alienation, exploitation and corporate domination, an all-powerful conspiracy and a hacking group undertaking 'the project' may or may not be a symptom of Elliot's alienation. Though this postmodernism is apparent in Hollywood films that have been cited as influences, postmodernism could be best described as a global phenomenon, especially in terms of its cultural hybridisation, which is by its nature global. This can therefore call into question what is represented as 'real' given the unreliable narrator. • Atypical - The episode shows the influence of American culture's reaction to neurodiverse individuals. The series uses various cultural tropes of high school teen drama which have been replicated in films and TV so often that for many audiences they have become the reality. Disability is used as a catalyst for comedy, there might be some debate about how realistic (or appropriate) this is. The show does explore universal cultural responses about how people should respond to autism in a culture where what is perceived as 'normal' might be open to interpretation, perhaps a realistic reflection of popular culture given the increased prevalence of neurodiverse characters in popular dramas such as <i>The Good Doctor</i>. • Lupin - The episode contains representations which have resonance for French culture such as the representation of migrants within the colonial identity of France and the way this seems at odds with the romanticism of LeBlanc's gentleman thief, Lupin. There are references to heists and capers (both culturally popular genres) whilst use of disguises is reminiscent of films like the <i>Mission Impossible</i> franchise, but the use of a BAME lead shows realistic progress and diversity. The robberies are constructed to look realistic, but some candidates may argue that the heist is unrealistic (as most fictionalised heists are). The crime thriller has global cultural resonance, which may be why this was the first long form non-English speaking drama to reach the top 10 in several countries. • Money Heist - The episode reflects realistic concerns in contemporary Spanish culture in its depiction of wealth and corruption by politicians which could lead to a cultural catastrophe; all the characters seem aggrieved by their situation which echoes a general sense of unrest globally in relating to cultural identity. Typical gender roles expected within the genre are reinforced, with men seeming to have more power over women both at work and within the heist team. The heist thriller has recognisable generic traits which may have contributed to the series' success rather than its reflection of realism. • Deutschland 83 - The episode reflects specific German debates about cultural amnesia/ remembering dating back to mid-20th Century history, but which also apply to the division and reunification of Germany, a realistic event within living memory explored in many media products which discuss the East German experience in a way that represents how the ambiguities of that experience were buried in the triumph of the West at reunification. However, the spy narrative is of global cultural resonance and helps explain the international success of the series, despite its poor audience figures in Germany; the activities of spies remain quite a realistic global concern. • Trapped - The episode shows the influence of Icelandic culture in its representation of a very close-knit small community at the margins of civilisation, at the mercy of the elements but held together by family and mutual aid which could be seen as very realistic. However,

Question	Indicative Content
	the setting provides a variation on the murder mystery narrative which is familiar from established international media products and therefore degrees of realism are questioned. Historical Contexts The influence of key historical events, e.g. • Deutschland 83 - The episode explores the historical trauma of German division and reunification. The episode represents the division of Germany in 1983: the East is poor, controlled and firmly ideological, the West is rich, free but self-doubting, and the complex and ambiguous representations in <i>Deutschland 83</i> reflect the difficulties faced by Germany in coming to terms with its divided past and the political and military tensions of the early 1980s in Germany – here reality is essential to gain authentication with audiences. • Lupin - The episode explores the realistic historical impact of immigration and those who were exploited by those with colonial ideology. The series also represents ideas taken from a romanticised and unrealistic historic crime novel series, with ideas from that series linked to French history being embedded within the narrative (the iconography associated with the classic Lupin, for example). • Stranger Things – the episode reflects 80s America and the Reagan era (Cold War finale), also represented through fashion and pop culture. The realistic period representations stand in counterpoint to the fantasy/ horror/ sci-fi genre features. Political Contexts The influence of attitudes to politics on television programmes and/or the requirement for political knowledge to understand representations in political dramas or dramas which refer to political situations, e.g. • Killing Eve - Politics is represented as an undertone to the events taking place between UK and Russia and the role of a proxy war using The Twelve as a catalyst. The series doesn't dwell on British politics but requires some understanding of international procedure which adds a degree of realism. • Stranger Things - The episode reflects anxiety about the power of the central state in relation to the local community. The episode represents a shadowy world of possibly sinister enforcement agents, suggesting an all-powerful secret state, whereas the local police, by contrast, are represented in a humanised way – they are good-natured but shown as lazy and complacent until forced into action. However, the representations are perhaps deliberately stereotyped for intertextual effect (recreating the world of 1980s films) which may suggest a polysemic reading and less realistic representations of characters. • Lupin - The episode reflects a cynical view of those in power and perhaps refers to the failures of government to take responsibility for those with the least amount of power: immigrants.

Question	Indicative Content
	• Money Heist - The episode reflects a cynical view of corruption in Spanish politics, explaining why the Royal Mint is a political target for retribution by those who feel let down; the show's themes resonated worldwide with populations disaffected with their governments (part of a broader global rejection of trust in/ respect for politicians). Economic Contexts The influence of high budgets on flagship television programmes in allowing opportunities for character development in 'authored' high budget programmes leading to more complex, individualised and realistic characterisation rather than stereotyping, e.g. • Killing Eve - The episode reflects the competitive market in which US cable and BBC collaborated to create a show with transatlantic appeal. Based on unbroken viewership, the show was recommissioned to promote more high-quality adult drama. It is likely that the less realistic characters/ situations were driven by the economic reality of TV drama at the time (dramedy being a popular sub-genre). • Stranger Things - The episode reflects the continuing success of streaming services such as Netflix who need to maintain their brand with innovative and original programming; it could be argued that its lack of realism is a fundamental element of <i>ST's</i> success. • Mr Robot - The episode reflects the reality of highly competitive US TV markets in which cable and satellite networks such as USA Network compete; one strategy available to such a network is to brand themselves as different (e.g. as 'We the Bold' – running shows with unlikely, boundary-pushing, high-risk heroes). There is also the realistic economic context of a world dominated by conglomerates such as E-Corp as well as the challenge to E-Corp's economic dominance represented by Elliot and his group. • Atypical - The episode reflects the economic context of Netflix as a wealthy company able to take risks and back projects that might not have been viable during the company's early originals. It also reflects the reality that narratives focused on neurodiverse characters have become economically viable, which could reflect the reality that society is growing more inclusive (or less prejudicial). • Lupin - The episode reflects the strong growth of streaming services such as Netflix whose initial business model is dependent on rapid growth and, in this case, the demand for foreign language dramas by a media-savvy audience. <i>Lupin</i> became a flagship for dubbed LFTV drama. The episode also reflects the economic reality of life for the immigrant community in France (although it could be argued that Assane's backstory is less realistic in this regard). • Money Heist - The episode reflects the economic context of a small private media company, Vancouver Media, which sold out to Netflix after the show's success. It also reflects the reality of the impact of global economic downturn and the effect on individuals. • Deutschland 83 - The programme reflects the highly competitive nature of US cable and satellite television in which channels such as Sundance Channel seek quality programming to maintain the brand, (e.g. by moving into international cooperation to produce and

Question	Indicative Content
	premiere foreign-language programming) and the reliance of German commercial broadcasters on international co-productions for prestige drama. • Trapped -The episode shows the influence of economic cooperation between European television industries to facilitate production of an expensive long form drama within a small country – this was Iceland’s most expensive television production at the time of transmission. AO2:3 Responses may also draw together knowledge and understanding of other areas of the theoretical framework and/or media contexts. Academic Theory • Given that this is a question on representations of reality, candidates are likely to mention Stuart Hall (representation and audiences) and other theorists who suggest gender or ethnicity might not always be accurately displayed (Van Zoonen, Gilroy, Butler, bellhooks). • Responses might also reference Hesmondhalgh’s ideas about minimising risk by opting for clear representations. However, reward all relevant examples. • Barthes’ ideas about semiotics and the use of signs offering different levels of connotation and meaning within a text allow for audiences to differentiate reality. • Hall’s ideas about using stereotypes as a powerful level of meaning and how this might influence audience reception of ideas. • The idea producers are reinforcing ideas of what ‘reality’ looks like (Gerbner) could be challenged or discussed. • Neale’s codes embedded by producers of LFTVDs – readings are often based on audience’s beliefs which are shaped by historical contexts and what has come before. AO2:3 Responses may also draw together knowledge and understanding of other areas of the theoretical framework and/or media contexts. Responses will make judgements and reach conclusions about the reasons for the differences in representation of reality between the two episodes. These may include: • making judgements and reaching conclusions about the relative influence of different national contexts in creating representational differences • consideration of whether these are truly national contexts or contexts that have been subsumed by globalisation • making judgements and reaching conclusions about the extent to which the same international contexts may be inflected differently by television producers from different countries • making judgements and reaching conclusions about the significance of other areas of the theoretical framework, for example:

Question	Indicative Content
	Representation Responses may make judgements and reach conclusions about the reasons for the differences in representations in relation to realism. These may include: • making judgements and reaching conclusions about the relative influences of other media texts and viewpoints on representations of realistic characters and places. • making judgements and reaching conclusions about the extent to which the representations may be accurate or are mirroring the codes and conventions of serial dramas from different countries. Media Language Responses may make judgements and reach conclusions about the ways in which media language is used to create a sense of realism which is designed to attract different audiences both nationally and globally. These may include: • through characterisation, e.g. protagonists may display familiar characteristics (e.g. the obsessive investigator (Eve, Guedira); the police officer with a broken marriage (Andri), the socially-awkward IT genius (Elliot); the neurodivergent, anxious teen (Sam); the young protagonist stereotypically flawed by lack of self-control and commitment (Martin); the innocent victim child (Will)) which may subvert or reflect dominant codes and conventions of other long form TV dramas. • through camera work, editing and <i>mise-en-scene</i> which may influence representations of reality, e.g. Spielbergian small-town setting of <i>Stranger Things and Atypical</i>; Affluent and fashionable Paris; Cold and Gritty London; stylistic features of <i>Deutschland 83</i>; presentation of Spanish diversity in <i>Money Heist</i>. Media Industries Responses may make judgements and reach conclusions about the effects of media industries relying on accurate representations to influence the show's success, e.g.: • highly regulated publicly funded media industries such as DR or RUV may be more constrained in their presentation of national identity other than unregulated streaming services such as Netflix or American cable television which can sometimes homogenise non-western cultures or create conflict within their belief system. • production values enhanced by larger budgets of western TV companies helps codify LFTVD as an alternative to film consumption and use of special effects (e.g. <i>Stranger Things</i> episode budget greater than entire series of <i>Trapped</i>) can affect the levels of realism within an episode. • the impact of individual producers and their ideology on the use of verisimilitude to convey representations, e.g. the parodic <i>auteristic</i> nature of the Duffer brothers – all have different visions moulded by their ideologies and the values of film and TV. Audience Responses may make judgements and reach conclusions about the effectiveness of realism when targeting different audiences, whether national or international. These may include:

Question	Indicative Content
	- the effect of targeting international audiences using recognisable codes and conventions of genres, thus presenting stereotypes based on other similar texts within the genre, events or countertypes - the effect of targeting sophisticated, 'media-savvy' audiences versus mainstream mass audiences in allowing a range of readings on contextual events and thus increase differentiation in realistic representations Answers in the top mark band will reach a clear conclusion about whether realism is essential for LFTVDs to succeed. Reward any reasons supported by evidence from analysis of both media products. Answers may weigh the importance of media contexts against one or more areas of the theoretical framework. They may argue either for the significance of contexts, or of one or more areas of the framework, or for both, or that the contexts and areas of the framework are so intricately interlinked that they cannot be separated. Responses will draw judgements and conclusions considering how far they agree with the statement: - Candidates may conclude that accuracy of representations of reality does not affect the success of LFTVDs for either local or global audiences. - Candidates may conclude realism of representations can influence the success of the show with some audiences but that this is dependent on a range of factors, such as the theoretical framework ideas outlined above. - Candidates may conclude that, due to the nature of genre and the umbrella of fiction, that the accuracy of reality is a key convention of LFTVDs and must be present for success, using a range of examples or similar, as outlined above. - In contrast, some candidates may argue that accurate reflections of reality are not important and that narrative, cast, budget, etc. are more important - Some candidates may argue that having accurate representations of reality is just one factor of importance and highlight other factors other than historical and cultural influence within LFTVDs, this might not be seen as successful or effective and would be a niche response.

Question	Level	AO1	Mark	AO2	Mark
3*	3	A comprehensive response to the set question. Comprehensive and accurate knowledge and understanding of the influence of media contexts on representations of reality within long form television dramas.	7–10	A comprehensive response to the set question. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework, media contexts, and media theory to analyse two set products from long form television drama. - Convincing, perceptive and accurate analysis of representations of reality in the set episodes for two long form television dramas which consistently provides logical connections and a good line of reasoning. - Highly developed and accomplished judgements and conclusions in relation to the question. <i>The response demonstrates a highly developed and detailed line of reasoning which is coherent and logically structured. The information presented is entirely relevant and substantiated.</i> <i>Responses that do not draw together knowledge and understanding from the full course of study including different areas of the theoretical framework and media contexts are limited to a maximum of 16 marks for AO2.</i>	14–20
	2	An adequate response to the set question. Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the influence of media contexts on representations of reality within long form television dramas.		An adequate response to the set question. - Adequate and generally successful application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework, media contexts, and media theory to analyse two set products from long form television drama. - Adequate and generally successful analysis of representations of reality in the set episodes for two long form television dramas which provides some logical connections and lines of reasoning, although may be descriptive in parts. - Adequate and generally well-reasoned judgements and conclusions in relation to the question.	7–13

Question	Level	AO1	Mark	AO2	Mark
				<i>The response demonstrates a line of reasoning with some structure. The information presented is in the most part relevant and supported by some evidence.</i>	
	1	A minimal response to the set question. Knowledge and understanding of media contexts is minimal, demonstrating little understanding of representations of reality within long form television dramas.	1–3	A minimal response to the set question. - Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework, media contexts, or media theory to analyse two set products from long form television drama. - Candidate may have only referred to one set episode in detail. - Analysis of representations of reality in the set episodes for two long form television dramas, if present, is minimal and/or largely descriptive and may not be relevant. - Judgements and conclusions, if present, are minimal with limited or no use of examples to support. <i>Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.</i>	1–6
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

- 4 Evaluate the usefulness of **one** of the following theories in understanding long form television drama:

EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories about Structuralism **OR** Baudrillard's theories about Post-Modernism.

Assessment Objectives	AO2: 2 – Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to evaluate academic theories. AO2 Total: 10 marks.
Question	Indicative Content
4	<i>The content below is not prescriptive and all valid points should be credited. It is not expected that responses will include all of the points listed.</i> AO2:2 Levi-Strauss Explanation that Lévi-Strauss's theories are sufficiently recognisable to be applied to all LFTVDs, especially in relation to representations of reality (although this is not a requirement of the question). For example: • Can be applied to any cultural product, including LFTVDs. • Can be used to analyse LFTVD narratives by considering how 'inside' and 'outside' oppositions are set up, asking the audience to identify with the 'inside' and in some cases subverting this opposition. This can often relate to real, relatable scenarios. • Likewise, there may be limitations to the theory because it is not a specific theory of LFTVDs; such dramas often have very complex and unique character functions that cannot always be classed as performative based on repetition or binary opposition. • Candidates might, however, explore the set episode using the binary opposite analogy, e.g. good versus evil, corruption versus justice, the real and the upside down, rich versus poor, East versus West, typical versus atypical, etc. • Reward all appropriate, exemplified responses that explore the theory. Some candidates might argue that another theory would be more suitable to understanding LFTVDs but this should not form the bulk of their evaluation and should be contextualised in relation to Lévi-Strauss's theories about Structuralism. Baudrillard Explanation that Baudrillard's theories are sufficiently recognisable to be applied to all LFTVDs. For example: • Can be applied to any cultural product, including LFTVDs. • The theory may be celebrated in LFTVDs that refuse any simple identification of 'the real' in the fictional world (e.g. <i>Mr Robot</i>) • The theory allows candidates to explore texts using theoretical language, e.g. hyper-reality, simulacra and simulation. • Candidates might also explore post-modern ideas like pastiche and parody, but in the context of Baudrillard's core ideas. • Does not strictly apply to LFTVDs as it is an extremely high level theory of the postmodern world so not specific to TV. Reward all appropriate, exemplified responses. Some candidates might explore another theory in their evaluation, but this should not form the bulk of their argument and should be contextualised in relation to Baudrillard's theories about Post-Modernism.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
4	3	Comprehensive application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to evaluate academic theories. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding of media industries to evaluate EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories. - Convincing, perceptive and accurate evaluation of the usefulness of EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories in analysing long form television drama.	7–10
	2	An adequate application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to evaluate academic theories. - An adequate and generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding of media industries to evaluate EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories. - Adequate and generally successful evaluation of the usefulness of EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories in analysing long form television drama. The response may not explore the limitations of either theory.	4–6
	1	A minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to evaluate academic theories. - A minimal application of knowledge and understanding of media industries to evaluate EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories. - Evaluation of the usefulness of EITHER Lévi-Strauss's theories OR Baudrillard's theories in analysing long form television drama is minimal or brief and is likely to be largely descriptive of the theory or contradictory.	1–3
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

Assessment Objectives (AO) grid

Component 02	AO1				Total AO1	AO2			Total AO2	Total Marks
	1a	1b	2a	2b		1	2	3		
Section A										
Question 1	10		5		15	0	0	0	0	15
Question 2	15		0		15	0	0	0	0	15
Section B										
Question 3*	0		10		10	10	0	10	20	30
Question 4	0		0		0	0	10	0	10	10
Total	25		15		40	10	10	10	30	70

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