

GCE

Media Studies

H009/01: Media today

AS 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.

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth two or more marks)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space).

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: Not applicable in F501

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

11. Annotations

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

12. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

Introduction

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. You should ensure that you have copies of these materials:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper and its rubrics
- the Mark Scheme.

You should ensure also that you are familiar with the administrative procedures related to the marking process. These are set out in the OCR booklet **Instructions for Examiners**. If you are examining for the first time, please read carefully **Appendix 5 Introduction to Script Marking: Notes for New Examiners**. Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

Information and instructions for examiners

The co-ordination scripts provide you with *examples* of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Team Leaders and will be discussed fully at the Examiners' Co-ordination Meeting.

The specific task-related indicative content for each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However, this indicative content **does not** constitute the mark scheme: it is material that candidates **might** use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. It is hoped that candidates will respond to questions in a variety of ways. Rigid demands for 'what must be a good answer' would lead to a distorted assessment. Candidates' answers must be relevant to the question. Beware of prepared answers that do not show the candidate's thoughts and which have not been adapted to the thrust of the question. Beware also of answers where candidates attempt to reproduce interpretations and concepts that they have been taught but have only partially understood.

Using the Mark Scheme

Please study this Mark Scheme carefully. The Mark Scheme is an integral part of the process that begins with the setting of the question paper and ends with the awarding of grades. Question papers and Mark Schemes are developed in association with each other so that issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed from the very start.

This Mark Scheme is a working document; it is not exhaustive and it does not provide 'correct' answers. The Mark Scheme can only provide 'best guesses' about how each question will work out, and it is subject to revision after a wide range of scripts have been seen.

The Examiners' Standardisation Meeting will ensure that the Mark Scheme covers the range of candidates' responses to the questions, and that all Examiners understand and apply the Mark Scheme in the same way. The Mark Scheme will be discussed and amended at the meeting, and administrative procedures will be confirmed. Co-ordination scripts will be issued at the meeting to exemplify aspects of candidates' responses and achievements; the co-ordination scripts then become part of this Mark Scheme.

Please read carefully all the scripts in your allocation and make every effort to look positively for achievement throughout the ability range. Always be prepared to use the full range of marks.

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.

Component 01: Media Today

	Assessment Objective
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: - the theoretical framework of media - contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes.
AO2	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 - make judgements and draw conclusions.

1 Explain how social contexts can influence video games. Use *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* in your answer.

[5]

Assessment Objectives	AO1:2 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. Maximum 5 marks.
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: 2 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how social contexts can influence video games such as: • how social factors, including different types of producers, prosumers and audiences can influence the design and popularity of a game; the global nature of the gaming industry may be significant here. • the influence of social contexts on contemporary methods of video game production and distribution, particularly the importance of online distribution and access to web-based platforms. • how convergence between social media platforms, e.g. YouTube, Facebook and online fan communities such as Twitch enables video game audiences to have an active voice in on-going productions through detailed feedback and commentary on DLCs, patches and subsequent releases. • understanding that in some cases the impact of digitally convergent media platforms has also increased the risks to video game production for video games companies, e.g. via leaked content that is playable across several convergent platforms and online piracy; poor reviews by prosumers; review bombing etc. • how digitally convergent platforms impact upon video game consumption, including development of multiplayer formats which enable gamers to experience online play with other players at the same time, including subscription-based models. Responses are likely to refer to examples of how social contexts influenced <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i>, such as: • the timing of the release being during the Covid-19 pandemic, when audiences had more time to play video games – this led to <i>ACNH</i> having a tremendous social impact (and indirectly led to the Nintendo Switch achieving a level of popularity and social currency not achieved by the preceding Wii-U console the company had released). • <i>ACNH</i>'s position as the next game in a popular gaming franchise demonstrating the increasing importance of sequels and franchises to the gaming industry as well as how there were already existing fan groups for the game, heightening anticipation of release. • the prominence of Nintendo as a 'safe' family-themed brand which produces high quality games and <i>Animal Crossing</i> as a franchise which exemplifies that social contract (compare to other more 'adult' consoles such as X-Box and PlayStation). • the use of social media to connect and share content – <i>ACNH</i> has a number of online communities dedicated to it. Accept all other relevant responses. <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i> should be referenced by candidates; any relevant examples linked to social contexts should also be credited. If candidates do not use <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i> in their answer, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 1.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
1	3	A comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how social contexts can influence video games. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant social contexts and their influence on video games. - Answer is well supported by detailed and accurate reference to <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i>.	4–5
	2	An adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how social contexts can influence video games. - Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of social contexts and their influence on video games. - Answer is supported by generally accurate reference to <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i>.	2–3
	1	A minimal demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how social contexts can influence video games. - Knowledge of social contexts and their influence on video games is minimal, demonstrating little understanding. - Reference to <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i> to support the answer is minimal, inaccurate, and descriptive or may be absent.	1
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

2 Analyse how the music video *Million Reasons* by Lady Gaga uses media language to create meaning.

[10]

Assessment Objectives	AO2:1 – Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products. Maximum 10 marks
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Question	Indicative Content
2	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. AO2:1 Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video, for example by: - analysing how media language is used in the music video to create meaning for audiences. - analysing the way producers and artists encode message for audiences through processes of selection and combination of visual and audio codes. Responses should analyse examples from Million Reasons by Lady Gaga. Answers should focus on how media language is used to create meaning. Answers might mention (but are not limited to) the following: - The construction of the musician attracting attention for being famous and in the spotlight through lighting/ cinematography. - An understanding of narrative told through sequencing of shots (editing), particularly the non-linear/ circular approach. - The use of setting, props and costume are all intertextual with pop ballad/ country and western. There are also a series of enigmas and narrative devices which create links to film texts – the extended opening and use of slow-motion is almost like a self-contained short film whilst the broader meaning of the narrative element is ambiguous and suggests deeper themes. - The emphasis on the artist being ‘gazed’ upon by audiences through camera shots and angles and the awareness of Gaga playing different roles can be seen as an intertextual nod to her own icons and idols; the use of bricolage and symbols such as religion are typical of similar artists like Madonna who regularly reinvented herself through art/ expressionism (iconography/ denotation/ connotation). Gaga’s stage name being on her top creates layers of self-referential interpretation. - Analysis of the way individuals, themes and social groups are given meaning in the <i>Million Reasons</i> music video through processes of selection and combination (for example, the focus on female characters). - Analysing how the narrative and genre of the music video references other famous texts, including through pastiche and similar concepts linked to intertextuality (for example, <i>Thelma and Louise</i> or the Western genre). - Discussion of the possible ‘meaning’ of elements which are given significance (the present, the cross) and how these connect with the lyrics to create a range of interpretations (is the relationship with a partner? Family? God?) - Any other relevant analysis exploring media language, including consideration of lyrics, visuals and audio from the video. As the analysis can be open-ended, accept any relevant answer which uses evidence and the media language focus. If candidates do not use <i>Million Reasons</i> in their answer, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 1.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
2	3	Comprehensive application of knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - Convincing, perceptive and accurate analysis of how the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga uses media language to create meaning, which consistently provides logical connections and a good line of reasoning.	7–10
	2	An adequate application of knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - An adequate and generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - Adequate and generally successful analysis of how the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga uses media language to create meaning, which provides some logical connections and lines of reasoning, although may be descriptive in parts.	4–6
	1	A minimal application of knowledge and understanding of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - A minimal application of media language to analyse the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga. - Analysis of how the music video <i>Million Reasons</i> by Lady Gaga uses media language to create meaning is minimal or brief and is likely to be largely descriptive or inaccurate.	1–3
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

- 3 Explain how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and distribution of films.
Use *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* to support your answer.

[10]

Assessment Objectives	AO1:1 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media Maximum 10 marks
Question	Indicative Content
3	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. AO1:1 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework (media industries). For example: • the relationship of recent technological change and media production and distribution • processes of production and distribution by organisations such as Disney • the impact of ‘new’ digital technologies on media producers. Responses should use examples from <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i> to discuss how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and distribution of films, such as: • The broader nature of film production especially in relation to special effects and new filming methods (for example, the use of CGI to enhance fight sequences or create elements such as the rings which are fundamental to <i>Shang-Chi</i>’s story). • The nature of franchises and expectations of high production values, which can affect production and distribution – the MCU depends upon technological convergence with e.g. Disney+ and video games; <i>Shang-Chi</i> contributes as an MCU film. • The nature of digital distribution and how simultaneous global releases are easier now than in the analogue age through online distribution to cinemas and streaming platforms like Disney+; <i>Shang-Chi</i> was released using these methods. • The swift release of <i>Shang-Chi</i> on home media (a gap of three months between cinema release; Disney+ followed a few weeks later followed by DVD/ Blu-Ray releases) compared to the far longer times between cinema and home releases pre-Covid (and the even longer timeframes pre-streaming); these would not be possible without new technologies. • How IMAX and other production technologies are changing the way producers plan to market and distribute a film – <i>Shang-Chi</i> was released in multiple formats including IMAX, REAL3D and Dolby Cinema as well as standard cinema. • Use of CGI to create models which has an impact on how actors, directors and effects teams work – e.g. the building fight sequence in <i>Shang-Chi</i> which required the virtual generation of the bamboo scaffolding. • Increased cost of CGI and other technologies leading to higher budgets and the need for greater vertical integration (not to mention environmental impacts caused by increased use of computers) – <i>Shang-Chi</i> cost around \$200M. • Use of YouTube or other online platforms to support the distribution of the film (e.g. through trailers, influencers) Any other examples explaining how technological developments can affect film production and distribution should be credited. If candidates do not use <i>Shang-Chi</i> in their answer, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 1. If candidates do not mention both production and distribution, they are limited to a maximum mark at the top of Level 2.

Question	Level	Mark Scheme	Mark
3	3	A comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and distribution of films. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and distribution of films. - Answer supported by detailed and accurate reference to <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i>.	7–10
	2	An adequate application of knowledge and understanding of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and distribution of films. - Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and/ or distribution of films. - Answer supported by generally accurate reference to <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i>.	4–6
	1	A minimal application of knowledge and understanding of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and/ or distribution of films. - Knowledge of how technological developments in the film industry have influenced the production and/ or distribution of films is minimal, demonstrating little understanding. - Response may not reference <i>Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings</i>.	1–3
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit	0

- 4*** In this question use your knowledge and understanding from your full course of study, including different areas of the theoretical framework and media contexts. Use **examples** from the set episode of the long form television drama you have studied.

‘Long form television dramas must rely on genre codes and conventions to be successful.’
Discuss how far you agree with this statement in relation to the set episode you have studied.

In your answer you must:

- explain how long form television dramas use genre codes and conventions to be successful
- analyse how genre codes and conventions have influenced the set episode you have studied
- use relevant academic ideas and arguments in your analysis
- make judgements and reach conclusions about how far you agree with the statement.

[20]

Assessment Objectives	AO1: 1a 1b - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media. 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: 2 - Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions. AO2 Total: 10 marks.
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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> AO1:1 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the genre codes and conventions of LFTVD. This might include: • The construction of stock characters, roles and functions within LFTVDs and how these might prove popular with a media-literate audience who are looking for new content within their chosen genre/ drama, which may or may not contribute to a show's success • The construction of familiar narratives and genre codes to appeal to a wider range of audiences who use streaming sites to actively look for recommendations based on feedback from other users and algorithmic recommendations focused on genre. • How genre elements of <i>mise-en-scene</i> (locations, staging, props, costume and makeup) and/ or the production values of LFTVDs might be constructed to be recognisable, or more varied or interesting to come across as ground-breaking (Neale) and original to attract a wider range of audiences which would improve a show's chance for success. • How camera work, sound and editing conventions are used in combination to create exciting narratives and representations or how these might be influenced by the development of genre-specific movie-style production values in LFTVDs.

Question	Indicative Content
	Responses may also draw together knowledge and understanding of other areas of the theoretical framework and/ or media contexts, for example how concepts of genre and repetition of codes and conventions might contribute to a show's success (or not) through: • An understanding of how big budgets and famous stars have become more widespread because of multi-platform distribution, since LFTVD audiences converge with those of films; these elements have almost become genre expectation of streaming-based LFTVDs. • Highlighting how different genres are linked through archetypical character functions (e.g. conventions of crime, thriller, political, supernatural/fantasy genres) to both meet and challenge audience expectations. • Considering how narrative theory would suggest that LFTVDs will contain the same fundamental genre tropes as any other drama/ story, and this might also be a reason for a show's success (or conversely its failure if it moves too far away from those expectations). • An understanding of economic factors which might influence codes and conventions, such as level of funding given to LFTVDs, by describing the importance of high production values including recruiting a range of Hollywood actors; using a wider variety of camera shots, post production effects, realistic studio sets and the use of a variety of outside locations which can help establish both the genre and narrative flow of long form television drama to rival production values of films but also develop alternative and experimental forms. • An awareness that many media products, particularly LFTVDs, are designed based on demographic/ psychographic data harvested by streaming services and drawn from prior consumption data, and that this can influence many aspects of production, including consideration of what genre codes should be featured to allow for alternative methods of fan sharing and distribution, e.g. 'the scariest moments from <i>Stranger Things</i>...' AO2:1 Responses will analyse how genre may have influenced key codes and conventions established in the set episode of the LFTVD, including: • Analysing how/ whether generic and countertypical character types/ functions are established in the episode: for example, archetypical characters whom audiences quickly understand and can identify with, or characters that are instantly recognisable from similar genre products but also exceptional, unconventional or enigmatic versus the real world. These can affect the popularity of a show across a range of platform. Given that content is largely streamed online, there is scope to produce abstract heroes and villains (society, companies, emotions) linked to use of Hollywood stars in a generic or unconventional manner – possible references to Propp, Levi-Strauss and/ or Barthes. This may preclude or invite evidence of genre codes being used, depending upon context. • Discussing the ways that producers conform to or subvert expectation with regard to the use of the A-list actors as a central element of this (or not) which can affect the genre appeal of a show and the desire of an audience to engage with it; analysing how multiple narrative strands are established in episode one through universal storytelling techniques such as enigma, flashback, voiceover, exposition, ellipsis, montage and POV shots and dialogue and dramatic devices such as melodrama; candidates may reference Todorov's theory of narratology in their analysis (for example, citing equilibrium, disruption and restoration and the three act structure) and the ways in which formulas are more readily applied to enhance (or subvert) genre expectations. • Analysing how elements of mise-en-scene can be enhanced through production budgets and help establish familiar genre codes and, where appropriate, impact upon reach of the show and profile of the star and co-stars (characters) and narrative development; candidates may reference Neale's theory of genre in their analysis. • Analysing how e.g. Neale, Hall or Gauntlett may explain how producers might meet or challenge genre expectations. • Candidates must refer to examples from one of the set long form television dramas in their response.

Question	Indicative Content
	With regard to the set episode of <i>Mr Robot</i>, responses may include reference to (but not limited to): • How the show uses recognisable conventions of a thriller which combines hybridity elements from other successful shows and films, e.g. <i>Fight Club</i>, <i>The Matrix</i> and other narratives that link to the idea of hacking • How the show was bought by Amazon because of its groundbreaking nature and used as a key selling point to improve their uptake of new customers to compete with other streaming giants at the time, like Netflix. • How LFTVDs can hook a range of A-list (Slater) and upcoming and rising stars who have come from other genres and films that have similar narratives or recognisable tropes that audiences might associate with that character, which could influence success. • The shows use of global themes and other narrative tropes could influence the success of the show; the use of cinematography to shape a dystopian version of David and Goliath style narrative; the influence of editing and sound techniques to mirror hacking genre tropes seen in similar products, which might affect success • The use of binary oppositions, cliffhangers and multiple disruptions are also all conventional for the genre. With regard to the set episode of <i>Killing Eve</i>, responses may include reference to (but not limited to): • The series drawing on tongue in cheek real-world security threats offers recognisable genre codes across thriller, drama and comedy; such a hybridity might have contributed to the success of the show. • The series' shared collaboration with American TV networks highlights the need to produce a programme which offers clear and recognisable genre conventions across cinematography, editing and sound given the need to appeal internationally. • The use of highly recognisable stereotypes (Russian agents) versus counter-typical protagonists (Eve) highlights how the show has spread its bets in terms of appealing to a wide range of audiences to guarantee success. • The use of BBC flagship programming to offer content that is distinctively British means the show must use clear generic codes and conventions to be both recognisable and successful. • Students may refer to <i>Killing Eve</i> being based on a popular book series and that this might be a contributing factor for success. • <i>Killing Eve</i> was a typical transatlantic collaboration designed to reach large audiences. Narratives (assassinations, foreign interference, etc.) provided familiar and topical narratives to create active audience discussion which could increase likelihood of success. With regard to the set episode of <i>Atypical</i>, responses may include reference to (but not limited to): • The show being a 'Netflix Original' comedy which mimics other teen comedy series, offering a set of recognisable genre tropes • The autistic protagonist might offer an element of difference (Neale) but also attracts a modern, younger audience (although this has almost become a sub-genre of drama in itself). The episode has clearly recognisable stereotypes which are typical of the genre. • The use of teen drama codes and conventions can be attributed to the show's success, particularly to the comedy tropes associated with similar films like <i>Superbad</i> etc. to attract mainstream audiences and may have influenced the form/ structure of the show. • The show being an 'original' on a streaming website may have led to an increase in experimental use of codes and conventions which might not have worked across 'traditional' platforms. This approach, acting as a USP (although it may also alienate 'casual'/ less media-literate audiences) is associated with the risks that streaming services can take with unconstrained content, as has been the case with many subsequent LFTVDs.

Question	Indicative Content
	With regard to the set episode of <i>Stranger Things</i>, responses may include reference to: • The diversity of stars in the episode might contribute to the success and ensuing connections audiences make to the genre each star is known for, e.g. Harbour, action/thriller; Ryder, horror/teen drama and potential for fan base or cult following across online communities). • The flagship programme is a hybrid of a multitude of genres. Some candidates might argue that this is why the show is successful, that nostalgia is more important, or narrative. The subsequent rise in fandom of the show was likely due to a combination of these factors. • The reference and diversity of the cast attracted a younger audience mixed with older generations for binge watching TV, which may have been part of the consideration when the show was devised. However, as stated, the genres are all varied and it might be argued that there is no core genre responsible for the success. • In terms of conventions to maximise engagement, the relatively unknown stars of the Netflix Original series yet pay homage to stars of 80s films (<i>ET</i>, <i>The Goonies</i>) – and Spielbergian culture. The presentation of Mike, Dustin and Lucas as de facto heroes, foreshadowed by the <i>D&D</i> game (intertextual references to other films and TV series) moves series away from A-list driven narrative but opens up several popular culture references which might attract or deter audiences. • The series' clear sense of homage to Spielberg, Lucas and JJ Abrahams (amongst others) creates a set of <i>auteuristic</i> conventions which can add to the look and feel of the programme, e.g. camera techniques, soundtracks, editing styles. AO2:2 Responses will draw judgements and conclusions considering how far they agree with the statement. • Based upon their analysis learners may conclude that reliance on genre codes by LFTVDs is essential to a show's success. • Based upon their analysis learners may conclude that reliance on genre codes by LFTVD producers is just one of many important factors that can lead to a show's success. • Based upon their analysis learners may conclude that the broader codes and conventions of LFTVDs are more important to appeal to a wide range of audiences rather than specific genre codes. • Some candidates may argue that originality, directorial style or narrative strands are more important influences and that genre codes are not a significant factor of influence of a show's success • Credit all noteworthy responses or arguments that analyse the statement effectively.

If candidates do not refer to relevant academic ideas and arguments in their answer, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 2 for AO2. If they do not use one of the set episodes they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 1 for AO2.

Question	Level	AO1	Mark	AO2	Mark
4*	3	A comprehensive response to the set question. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework in relation to the question set. - Use of subject specific terminology is relevant and accurate. <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 8 marks for AO1.</i>	7–10	A comprehensive response to the set question. - Comprehensive, detailed and accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the set episode. - Convincing, perceptive and accurate analysis of how LFTVDs may (or may not) rely on genre codes and conventions to be successful, which consistently provides logical connections and a good line of reasoning. - Precise and relevant reference to academic ideas and arguments to support analysis of the set episode. - Highly developed and accomplished judgements and conclusions regarding the extent to which the candidate agrees (or disagrees) with the statement, supported with appropriate reference to the LFTVD studied. <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>	7–10

Question	Level	AO1	Mark	AO2	Mark
	2	An adequate response to the set question. - Adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework in relation to the question set. - Use of subject specific terminology is mostly accurate.	4–6	An adequate response to the set question. - Adequate and generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the set episode. - Adequate and generally successful analysis of how LFTVDs may (or may not) rely on genre codes and conventions to be successful, which provides some logical connections and lines of reasoning, although may be descriptive in parts. - Adequate and generally appropriate reference to academic ideas and arguments to support analysis of the set episode. - Adequate and generally well-reasoned judgements and conclusions regarding the extent to which the candidate agrees (or disagrees) with the statement, supported with reference to the LFTVD studied. <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>	4–6

Question	Level	AO1	Mark	AO2	Mark
	1	A minimal response to the set question. • Knowledge of the media theoretical framework is minimal, demonstrating little understanding. • Use of subject specific terminology is minimal.	1–3	A minimal response to the set question. • Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the set episode. • Analysis of how LFTVDs may (or may not) be rely on genre codes and conventions to be successful, if present, is minimal and/or largely descriptive and may not be relevant. • Reference to academic ideas and arguments is minimal or brief, may not be relevant to the set episode or may be absent. • Judgements and conclusions, if present, are minimal with limited support. <i>Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.</i>	1–3
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

5* To what extent do **Source A** and **Source B** use stereotypes to influence audiences?

In your answer you must:

- analyse and compare the ways in which **Source A** and **Source B** use stereotypes to influence audiences
- use relevant contexts and academic ideas and arguments in your analysis
- draw judgements and conclusions in relation to the question.

[15]

Assessment Objectives	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: 2 - Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions. Maximum: 15 marks.
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Question	Indicative Content
5*	<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> AO2:1 Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of elements of media representations to analyse and compare how stereotypes have been used to influence audiences in Source A and Source B, including: • How the use of quotes combined with positioning next to the main images and headlines creates preferred or negotiated reading with regards to the news stories in question, e.g. Rishi seeming sad or the King looking loved and respected – interpretation will depend upon the stereotypical readings the audience finds within the anchorage. Accept any relevant example. • The placement, sizing and prominence of logos, images, headlines and quotes/ comments in the <i>Express</i> and the <i>Mirror</i> and in particular how these reinforce or challenge stereotypes, e.g. footballers should be muscular and serious-looking; dancers and celebrities must look happy and joyful; politicians and people in power must wear suits to look powerful. For example, the <i>Daily Mirror</i>'s positioning of its masthead and logo construct stereotypical working-class identity; the crest of the <i>Daily Express</i> in a traditional "royal" serif font with an English colour scheme sitting prominently above King Charles construct a patriotic stereotype. • The prominence of the main images contrast; the <i>Daily Mirror</i> is often satirical and cynical when representing politics, particularly Conservatives; the <i>Express</i> leads with political story which is dominated by men at different levels; Rishi being biggest highlights his importance. The <i>Mirror</i>'s story has more of a 'social commentary' feel than a serious, accusatory news headline; readers can be easily influenced towards a left-wing ideology and rejection of conservative hegemony through the implied social stereotype. • Both papers have a similar ratio of text to pictures and features and adapt a similar colour scheme to construct connotations of the monarchy and political parties, backing up stereotypical tropes (as well as stereotypical conventions of tabloids).

Question	Indicative Content
	- The wording and commentary used within each newspaper have different connotations which may or may not anchor meaning for audiences based on their knowledge, understanding and interpretation of stereotypes. - Both newspapers reflect their willingness to construct the identities of political parties and the Royal Family as either negative or positive depending upon their ideological position. Both reinforce and/ or challenge stereotypes depending on their audience. Candidates are expected to refer to academic ideas and arguments in their analysis that might include but are not exclusive to: - Barthes' theory of semiotics, by analysing the connotations of how the media language is used to create/ subvert stereotypes. - Gerbner's ideas of Cultivation Theory, suggesting an expectation that there is only a certain type of Conservative politician (<i>Mirror</i>) or Royal (<i>Express</i>) as two examples. Accept all other relevant responses linked to audience interpretation of stereotypes. - Hall's theories of representation, for example by analysing the encoding of a 'preferred representation' by means of the media language (considering the representation of Rishi Sunak in the <i>Mirror</i> compared to image of him in the <i>Express</i>). - Potentially representation theory including Gauntlett on identity and potentially Van Zoonen on patriarchy (neither are in the AS spec but might be referenced). Curran and Seaton's ideas about the press might be mentioned, given the platform. AO2: 2 Responses will draw judgements and conclusions considering how far the use of stereotypes Source A and Source B may or may not have influenced audiences. These might include: Arguments that stereotypes are influential: - The <i>Mirror</i> uses media language elements in combination to create stereotypes that reflect attitudes, values and beliefs consistent with its ideology, especially alignment to left wing values, whereas the <i>Express</i> front page promotes a more passionate, direct headline with the use of striking images in close up or mid-shot to support stereotypes of men in power. - Both papers use a limited amount of text, highlighting the impact stereotypical images can have on audiences - The contrasting designs reflect ideologies of newspapers which may be highlighted as being significant to the ensuing stereotypes. Arguments that stereotypes are not influential: - Both sources devote similar amounts of space to different stories, which means it is harder to shape opinion since multiple representations and stories occur. - Both front pages are dominated by candid and staged images which both offer different representations of the stereotypes. - Both newspapers have limited influence with audiences able to shape their views through online media and other platforms, making it harder for newspapers to have any influence over audiences.

If candidates do not refer to relevant academic ideas and arguments in their answer, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 2 for AO2. If candidates only use one source, they are limited to the top of Level 1.

Question	Level	AO2	Mark
5	3	A comprehensive response to the set question. - Comprehensive application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the unseen sources. - Convincing, perceptive and accurate analysis of how stereotypes have been used to influence audiences in both of the unseen sources, which provides logical connections and a good line of reasoning. - Precise and relevant reference to contexts and academic ideas and arguments to support analysis of the unseen sources. - Highly developed and accomplished judgements and conclusions regarding the extent to which stereotypes have been used to influence audiences in both of the unseen sources, supported with appropriate reference to relevant examples from both sources. <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>	11–15
	2	An adequate response to the set question. - Adequate and generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the unseen sources. - Adequate and generally successful analysis of how stereotypes have been used to influence audiences in both of the unseen sources, which provides some logical connections and lines of reasoning, although may be descriptive in parts. The response may focus more heavily on one source than the other. - Adequate and generally appropriate reference to contexts and academic ideas and arguments to support analysis of the unseen sources. - Adequate and generally well-reasoned judgements and conclusions regarding the extent to which stereotypes have been used to influence audiences in both of the unseen sources, supported with reference to examples from both sources. <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>	6–10

Question	Level	AO2	Mark
	1	A minimal response to the set question. - Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of the media theoretical framework to analyse the unseen sources. - Analysis of how stereotypes have been used to influence audiences the unseen sources, if present, is minimal and/or largely descriptive, may not be relevant to the sources and/or may refer to only one source. - Reference to contexts and academic ideas and arguments is minimal or brief, may not be relevant to the unseen sources, or may be absent. - Judgements and conclusions, if present, are minimal with limited support. <i>Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.</i>	1–5
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

6 Explain how political **and** cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences.

Use *The Daily Telegraph* in your answer.

- consider relevant political **and** cultural contexts that influence how newspapers categorise their audiences
- use your knowledge and understanding of relevant academic ideas and arguments
- use *The Daily Telegraph* in your answer to show how newspapers categorise their audiences.

[10]

Assessment Objectives	AO1: 1 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media. AO1: 2 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. Maximum: 10 marks.
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Question	Indicative Content
6	<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 will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how political and cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences, which could include: • how newspapers primarily categorise their audiences based on political ideology; all newspapers consider the political contexts which influence their audiences since this is a fundamental element of their content. • how newspapers make sure that content is curated to appeal to the political psychographic of target audiences; this will sometimes shift depending upon broader political contexts (e.g. <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> continued support of the Conservative Party at the end of the 2024 general election despite the increasing popularity of the Labour Party). • consideration of relevant cultural contexts which will be a significant factor for newspapers in terms of their audience categorisation – traditionally, tabloids will focus on ‘lowbrow’ culture (such as reality TV and soaps) whilst quality newspapers will focus on ‘highbrow’ culture (such as theatre and prestige films). • understanding that in some cases cultural contexts will transcend categories (for example, blockbuster film series such as the MCU, ‘event’ TV, sports such as football, certain video game releases) and that these will appeal to a broader audience than might traditionally be expected for newspaper audiences. • different models for monetising papers aimed at specific audience categories, e.g. paywalls, subscriptions, memberships, particularly given competition from local/ global sources – audiences likely to be categorised by wealth. • appreciating that cultural shifts affect how newspapers see their audiences, e.g. the rise in citizen journalism sending in pictures of celebrities/ breaking news has sometimes influenced cultural contexts – supported by relevant examples.

Question	Indicative Content
	Candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of academic ideas and arguments that might include but are not exclusive to: - news organisations altering their audience categorisation to fit with more current representations of identity (Gauntlett) which affects the audiences of papers. - news organisations retaining their oligarchic control over news sites and their political influence on audiences (Curran). - the catastrophic effects of loss of advertising revenue, e.g. the rise of office-based journalism and reliance on fewer, more mainstream, sources (Curran) which affects access to a range of audiences. Some candidates may explore cultural impact of a foreign buyer potentially being involved at some point (e.g. <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> nearly being sold to an Abu Dhabi-based organisation). - regulation scandals and reaction to IPSO and Leveson Enquiry – links to political context and changing approach to presenting stories (although less of an issue with <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> versus tabloid content) and how this could shift audiences from one paper to another. - oligarchic control over news sites on the internet due to their economies of scale, with relatively few independent news providers succeeding (Curran) and the impact this can have on audiences. - links to political contexts and changing approaches to reporting; the rise of news debates being played out across social media and anti-press rhetoric affecting content produced and engagement of audiences (Livingston and Lunt). Responses must refer to how political and cultural contexts influence how <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> categorises audiences including: <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> mirroring the same cultural and political content as its online editions as both a reflection of technologically driven cultural change and to ensure it can offer a diverse range of traditional and online media to reach its core readership – candidates might comment on how an offline audience might be categorised differently given the dynamic nature and more organic approach to online news (more pictures, video and reader comment) but also comment on an strategy to diversify and attract new readers in a global context. <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> will get a share of data taken from <i>Telegraph Online</i> which will influence content (including cultural and political) which is designed to attract audiences to the print edition from the website and (crucially) vice versa – the primary data derived from the website will allow <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> to categorise audiences based on clicks, allowing it to curate content which will appeal to those specific audiences, feeding back into the website. - By supporting right-wing, Conservative values, <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> continues to produce content based on meeting the demands of such audiences, perhaps gathered from audit bureau of circulation (ABC) although new legislation changes ways newspapers have to declare sales figures and other data. Specific stories from <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> can be used to exemplify how audiences have been categorised and targeted; stories might relate to political figures or events of cultural significance (including so-called ‘culture wars’-based articles) which will demonstrate audience targeting.

Question	Indicative Content
	AO1: 2 Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how political and cultural contexts influence the categorisation of newspaper audiences: - the political context of newspaper production – print newspapers still have political ‘traction’ as they are seen as legitimate voices in democratic debates; this is the same whether print or online editions are being considered. - the recent political landscape has moved more into extremes of Left (Greens, hard-line Labour) and Right (ERG/ “Hard Brexiteers”) whilst <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> has tried to maintain a more centre-right agenda; this may have caused friction with some of its core readership, particularly on the right regarding the fallout of Brexit, response to Covid and the election. - it may be that candidates do not have specific examples such as those above but are able to contextualise their answers based on their knowledge of <i>The Daily Telegraph’s</i> political and cultural positions - Any other response (including reference to both specific examples from and general points relation to <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> that explain how political and cultural contexts can influence the categorisation of newspaper audiences should be credited. If candidates refer to only one context, they are limited to a maximum mark of the top of Level 2. It is not expected that candidates will write an equal amount about each. If candidates do not use <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>, they are limited to the top of Level 1.

Question	Level	AO1	Mark
6	3	A comprehensive response to the set question. A comprehensive application of knowledge and understanding of how political and cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences: - comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding how newspapers categorise their audiences - clear and precise explanation of how political and cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences - answer is supported by detailed and accurate reference to the set newspaper.	7–10
	2	An adequate response to the set question. An adequate application of knowledge and understanding of how political and cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences: - adequate and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of how newspapers categorise their audiences - generally accurate explanation of how political and/ or cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences - answer is supported by generally accurate reference to the set newspaper.	4–6
	1	A minimal response to the set question. A minimal application of application of knowledge and understanding of how political and cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences: - knowledge and understanding of how newspapers categorise their audiences is minimal, demonstrating little understanding - explanation of how political and/ or cultural contexts influence how newspapers categorise their audiences is minimal, may be largely descriptive and may not always be accurate - reference to the set newspaper to support the answer is minimal and may be inaccurate.	1-3
	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

Assessment Objectives (AO) grid

Component 01 Media today	AO1		AO1 Totals	AO2		AO2 Totals	Total Marks
	AO1a1b	AO1 2a2b		1	2		
Question 1	0	5	5	0	0	0	5
Question 2	0	0	0	10	0	10	10
Question 3	10	0	10	0	0	0	10
Question 4	10	0	10	5	5	10	20
Question 5	0	0		10	5	15	15
Question 6	5	5	10	0	0	0	10
	25	10	35	25	10	35	70

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