



A-level MEDIA STUDIES 7572/1

Paper 1 Media One

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks																		
01	Figure 1 is an advertisement for the National Trust. The National Trust is a conservation charity which protects important buildings and the countryside. Analyse how words provide anchorage to the meanings of the advertisement in Figure 1. AO2 1 Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products (8 marks). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td><td>7–8</td><td> - Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> - Good analysis of the product that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Good use of the theoretical framework. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>3–4</td><td> - Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Satisfactory use of the theoretical framework. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>1–2</td><td> - Basic analysis of the product that engages with more straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Basic, if any, use of the theoretical framework. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Level	Marks	Descriptor	4	7–8	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	5–6	- Good analysis of the product that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Good use of the theoretical framework. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	3–4	- Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Satisfactory use of the theoretical framework. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	1	1–2	- Basic analysis of the product that engages with more straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Basic, if any, use of the theoretical framework. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	8
Level	Marks	Descriptor																		
4	7–8	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																		
3	5–6	- Good analysis of the product that is clear and sometimes engages with the nuanced aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Good use of the theoretical framework. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																		
2	3–4	- Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Satisfactory use of the theoretical framework. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																		
1	1–2	- Basic analysis of the product that engages with more straightforward aspects of how words provide anchorage to the meanings. - Basic, if any, use of the theoretical framework. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																		
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.																		

	Indicative content This question assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media language to analyse media products, particularly focusing on (though not limited to): • semiotics (specifically meaning – fixing functions: anchorage) • how the combination of elements of media language influence meaning. The question deals with the semiotic term ‘anchorage’ which describes the ways in which words fix the meaning of visual material. The following suggests a range of possible responses. Answers are not expected to cover all the points and credit should be given to alternative, valid answers. • Anchorage describes how the meanings of a visual text can be directed (often restricted but also extended) by titles/captions and other word uses. • Figure 1 has three verbal elements and any of them can be used to demonstrate the required analysis (only one will be needed to fulfil the rubric): these are a title/caption/tagline: ‘what will take your breath away?’, the name of the advertiser National Trust and what is probably their current slogan ‘Time well spent’. • Each of these can be analysed firstly in terms of their ‘presentation’ (positioning, pitch, grammatical features) which might have an impact on their influence: eg some might argue an order of importance/intervention or even a sequence/narrative rounded off with ‘Time well spent’. • ‘What will take your breath away’ offers a reading of both the breath-taking (Nature, beauty, openness, range, exhilaration, spectacle) and the breath-expendng (hill-walking, the scale of the view, the walkers in the foreground). This is a body and soul pitch: exercise for the body and beauty for the soul! • The juxtaposition of ‘National’ and ‘Trust’ points to a (small c) conservatism which projects itself into the text, offering a two-way relationship between the reader and the view which links a kind of faith (in England’s green and pleasant land) with a kind of responsibility; a stewardship that NT (thankfully) administer on our behalf. • There is a kind of understated modesty about ‘Time well spent’ which appeals to our sense of proportion and well-being. Even taking in the view as a representation can be understood in this way. • Most responses will probably focus on the way the advertisement promotes the great outdoors/nature in terms of beauty, health and adventure.	
--	---	--

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks												
02	Explain how representations of places within media products reflect political and historical contexts. Refer to the Close Study Product <i>Ghost Town</i> and Figure 1 in your answer. AO1 1b, AO1 2a and AO1 2b Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (4 marks). Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (4 marks). Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (4 marks). <table border="1" data-bbox="284 846 1326 1973"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td><td>10–12</td><td> - Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is usually supported by mostly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Some satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products but inconsistently effective. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Level	Marks	Descriptor	4	10–12	- Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	7–9	- Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is usually supported by mostly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	4–6	- Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Some satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products but inconsistently effective. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	12
Level	Marks	Descriptor												
4	10–12	- Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												
3	7–9	- Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is usually supported by mostly appropriate and effective reference to the set products. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												
2	4–6	- Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. - Some satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products but inconsistently effective. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												

1	1–3	• Basic understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by occasional appropriate explanation of representations of places in the products. • Basic knowledge and understanding of the influences of the political and historical contexts on media products that is generally unsupported by appropriate reference to the set products with limited effect. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content

This question assesses understanding of the theoretical framework of representation and knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):

- the way the media through re-presentation construct versions of reality
- how media representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media representations
- the effect of historical context on representations
- the way in which representations make claims about realism.

Political and historical contexts

- The political contexts are largely determined by the ‘Town and Country’ dichotomy (which is in itself a set of stereotypes): here is urban and rural life juxtaposed to reflect certain kinds of poverty and abundance.
- The historical contexts are even more contradictory as the music video is historical (but not a limiting idea of ‘History’) and **Figure 1** is both contemporary and yet timeless.
- Both texts are properly political but whereas *Ghost Town* is upfront about this, **Figure 1** tries for a mannered neutrality (even Nature is compliant). Some may see the latter as properly unpolitical, which is a point of view.

In relation to the two products

- The texts are a contrasting pair chosen for that reason but do not need to be compared (or equally considered).
- They allow specific reflections on both contexts (though the CSP is prepared and **Figure 1** a speculation).
- The question asks for a consideration of both historical context and political intentions (but not of both or of both equally).
- It might be interesting to consider how the human figures add to the sense of place and how meaning might be changed if they were reversed.

	Note: There is no requirement to cover both products equally or to be comparative. However, responses which fail to address both products should not normally be awarded marks above the top of Level 2 (6). Figure 1 • This is a contemporary marketing poster for the NT but it could be any ‘campaign group’ promoting the countryside: there is some evidence of a ‘health and well-being’ theme which may be read as political as an ideological promotion of these places. • More significantly this text is only roughly grounded historically: it is in other senses timeless. • The NT is a traditional institution, politically conservative (though not without controversy) and ideologically active though protesting a ‘natural neutrality’. This is all evident even if the candidate only responds to National Trust as familiar English words. • The image is misleadingly inclusive, promising open spaces uncomplicated by ideas like ‘property’, ‘access’ and ‘trespass’. • What might indeed ‘take one’s breath away’ is the amount of England’s ‘green and pleasant land’ that is in private hands (the NT often ‘buys back’ national treasures). • The three walkers pictured are well-equipped and white, confirming a potential stereotype of English rural life. • No prior knowledge is needed of the National Trust to deal with the representation of place here. CSP Ghost Town • This is more overtly political, a conscious reproach to Thatcher’s Britain. • A booming City and south-east, juxtaposed with the post-industrial collapse of the economy everywhere else, drew up lines of opposition across the 1980s. • The video provides a guided tour of deprivation anchored by a literate protest lyric. • There is also a political message in the multi-racial composition of the band, which is part of the connotations of place here, in a Britain beset by the mobilisation of the hard right. These representations are evocative of a certain kind of urban existence in inner cities. • These lads are in their habitat (as are the walkers in Figure 1) and of their time.	
--	--	--

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks															
03	To what extent does the meaning of the Close Study Product <i>Old Town Road</i> depend upon intertextuality? AO2 1 and AO2 3 Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to: - analyse media products (6 marks) - make judgements and draw conclusions (3 marks). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is perceptive, insightful, and informed by a detailed knowledge and understanding of media language. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant analysis. </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with the generally obvious or straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is reasonable and straightforward, and informed by a generally sound knowledge and understanding of media language. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by satisfactory analysis. </td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>1–3</td><td> - Basic, if any, analysis of the product that engages with the very straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is superficial and generalised, and informed by little or no knowledge and understanding of media language. - Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by analysis. </td></tr> <tr> <td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr> </tbody> </table> Indicative content This question assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media language to analyse media products, particularly focusing on (though not limited to): - the processes through which meanings are established through intertextuality - how the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings.	Level	Marks	Descriptor	3	7–9	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is perceptive, insightful, and informed by a detailed knowledge and understanding of media language. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant analysis.	2	4–6	- Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with the generally obvious or straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is reasonable and straightforward, and informed by a generally sound knowledge and understanding of media language. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by satisfactory analysis.	1	1–3	- Basic, if any, analysis of the product that engages with the very straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is superficial and generalised, and informed by little or no knowledge and understanding of media language. - Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by analysis.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	9
Level	Marks	Descriptor															
3	7–9	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is perceptive, insightful, and informed by a detailed knowledge and understanding of media language. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant analysis.															
2	4–6	- Satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with the generally obvious or straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is reasonable and straightforward, and informed by a generally sound knowledge and understanding of media language. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by satisfactory analysis.															
1	1–3	- Basic, if any, analysis of the product that engages with the very straightforward ideas about intertextuality and how they relate to the CSP. - Analysis of the set product is superficial and generalised, and informed by little or no knowledge and understanding of media language. - Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by analysis.															
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.															

	Responses are expected to apply knowledge and understanding of ideas about intertextuality, to analyse the specified product. • Responses in the higher bands will clearly engage with the ‘to what extent’ part of the question when it comes to understanding the music video and draw conclusions that are substantiated by effective analysis of the product. • Responses in the middle band will show some engagement with this element of the question and use examples in a straightforward way to support conclusions. • Responses in the lower bands may not engage with this element of the question, may not draw conclusions that are substantiated by analysis, or may simply describe aspects of media language and/or the set product. There is no requirement to argue any particular version of the required judgment; candidates might equally argue that ideas about intertextuality clarify everything or indeed nothing. Various approaches are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through analysis of the Close Study Product. It might be possible, for example, to argue that the repetitive simplicity which characterises the song is implicitly a critique of/satire on post-modern cut-ups/bricolage. In applying their knowledge and understanding of intertextuality, students may refer to the following: • intertextuality refers to the act of making references to other texts and popular culture artefacts as part of the signification process. To create meaning, intertextuality relies on audiences recognising and understanding intertextual references • clearly, intertextuality depends primarily on the reader so it’s hard to argue that the meaning of even a highly allusive text like this one DEPENDS on intertextuality • for intertextuality to be in play there is a need for an audience’s understanding of parodic references to country and western culture within the mise en scene and the lyrics (eg Lil Nas X line dancing in his Hank Williams-inspired black-fringed western shirt or references to the iconic Marlboro Man character alongside modern commercial brands normally associated with hip-hop culture like Gucci, Maserati and Fendi) • clarifying an approach to meaning will help here: working from the premise that meaning is encoded leads to a different (but equally valid) response than if you adopt a semiotic approach which sees meaning as negotiated • some may use the idea of ‘preferred reading’ or indeed ‘dominant/negotiated/oppositional’ readings (Hall). CSP Old Town Road • It seems likely that the intertextual elements are central to the intention and impact of Lil Nas’ take on the song and country music and its cultures. • Clearly there are elements of pastiche (imitations which are stylised, faithful and neutral) but also more obviously parody here (imitations which disrupt or subvert). • The video offers a journey through both the ‘sound and vision’ of country with a twist.	
--	--	--

	• The intertextuality is both generic (rap/country) and stylistic and it sets out to explore the representations of people of colour within those classic American traditions, 'The Western' and country music. • Everything here is in and out of generic focus: Lil Nas is firstly an unconvincing bank robber (the fact his pursuers are also from the Global Majority reinforces the 'alienation'/critical edge) and then having joined up with country legend Billy Ray Cyrus pursued by an angry father. • His arrival in 2019 reinforces the intertextual tension: as the very antithesis of the Gangsta Rapper (complete with horse). • The text depends edgily on an intelligent and nuanced 'promenade' through deliberately stereotypical 'rednecks' and square dances while never shying away from the political and cultural connotations. This certainly adds a depth other music videos often lack. • Intertextuality also allows an exploration of the hybridity which is being musically and visually explored, which is far-reaching. The fact that the song was kicked out of the country chart but not the hip-hop versions adds to this notion of transgression. • It is important to note that this exploration cuts both ways, with staged versions of 'the ghetto' and 'the redneck barn dance' which Lil Nas with the help of Billy Ray Cyrus (decked out like a rhinestone cowboy) negotiates. • The ending is very much a 'hybrid' with Lil Nas paired up with an elderly white woman. There is enough good-humoured discomfort to allow this to make its point.	
--	---	--

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks									
04	Judith Butler claims that gender is a subversive performance. How valid is this claim? Refer to the Close Study Products <i>Score</i> and <i>Sephora</i> in your answer. AO1 1b, AO2 2 and AO2 3 Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (8 marks). Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to: • evaluate academic theories (8 marks) • make judgements and draw conclusions (4 marks). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td><td>16–20</td><td> • Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate and detailed consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. • Excellent application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is insightful and very well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are perceptive and fully supported with detailed reference to specific aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>11–15</td><td> • Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Good use of the theoretical framework. • Good application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is sound and well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Level	Marks	Descriptor	4	16–20	• Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate and detailed consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. • Excellent application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is insightful and very well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are perceptive and fully supported with detailed reference to specific aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	11–15	• Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Good use of the theoretical framework. • Good application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is sound and well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	20
Level	Marks	Descriptor									
4	16–20	• Excellent and accurate understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate and detailed consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Excellent and judicious use of the theoretical framework. • Excellent application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is insightful and very well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are perceptive and fully supported with detailed reference to specific aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.									
3	11–15	• Good understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by frequent appropriate consideration of Butler's ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Good use of the theoretical framework. • Good application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler's ideas that is sound and well-informed. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler's ideas are logical and well supported with reference to relevant aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.									

2	6–10	• Satisfactory understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate consideration of Butler’s ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Satisfactory use of the theoretical framework. • Satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding produces an evaluation of Butler’s ideas that is sensible. In places this may lapse into application of the theory rather than evaluation. • Judgements and conclusions regarding the validity of Butler’s ideas are sensible and supported with some appropriate reference to relevant aspects of the advertising CSPs. • Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.
1	1–5	• Basic understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by occasional appropriate consideration of Butler’s ideas about gender as a subversive performance. • Some use of the theoretical framework. • Basic application of knowledge and understanding produces a response to Butler’s ideas that is generally descriptive rather than evaluative. • Judgements and conclusions are not developed and mostly unsupported by reference to the advertising CSPs. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

There is no requirement to compare the products but both must be addressed. Responses which fail to address both CSPs should not normally be awarded marks above the middle of Level 3 (13).

Indicative content

This question assesses knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of representation, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):

- Butler’s ideas and theories on gender performativity
- the effect of historical context on representations
- the way the media through re-presentation construct versions of reality.

Students should refer to the advertising and marketing CSPs *Score* and *Sephora* to support their points.

Responses are required to evaluate Butler’s claim that gender is both performative and subversive.

	Responses in the higher bands will clearly engage with the evaluation of the validity of the claim and will support their points with effective reference to the CSPs.	
	- Responses in the middle band will show some engagement with this element of the question and use examples in a straightforward way to support conclusions. - Responses in the lower bands may not engage with this element of the question, may not draw conclusions that are supported by appropriate reference to the CSP, or may simply describe aspects of Queer and Feminist theory. There is no requirement to argue that the argument is valid; students might equally argue that the argument is not valid at all, or that it is only valid to a certain extent. Various conclusions are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through reference to the set products. As there is a clear historical dimension, it is obviously likely and proper for candidates to compare what was with what is (in any way they wish). This does NOT imply a need to compare the CSPs though they clearly provide evidence that would be useful in a 'now and then' argument. This is an extended response question. In order to achieve the highest marks, a response must construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning, which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured. Indicative content relating to relevant theory: - the essence of Butler's approach (as addressed at this level) is that gender is performative but also that there is no original/blueprint against which to perform so every gendered performance is discrete and potentially challenging - Butler argues that not only is gender culturally constructed but that this also colours our understanding of sex (biological difference) - this clarifies that all attempts to prescribe and proscribe gender are essentially ideological (so gendered acts operate in an ideological manner) - thus she emphasises the instability of gender as a category and calls for binary divisions of male and female to be subverted - she is one of the major theorists of 'non-binary gender' - this question applies 'Gender Trouble' to the CSP <i>Score</i> in order to explore the validity of Butler's ideas across fifty or so years - this invites both a historical and contemporary reading of <i>Score</i> as a way to ground the theoretical debate. The combination of these texts complements the question in that: - both are centrally concerned with the representation of gender - they represent snapshots of historical moments sixty years apart - they both raise issues around gender representation with different degrees of intention. Indicative content relating to CSP: <i>Score</i>	

	• <i>Score</i> acts as a useful reference point however it is read. It was ‘written’ at the epicentre of a period of social upheaval particularly for women predicated on sexual liberation (a permissive society ‘on the pill’).	
	• It can be read as advocating traditional gender roles (or modernised versions of old stereotypes), the women are displayed as things to be looked at by men, serving the superior sex (and he is in a number of senses ‘on top’ and that’s how it should be). • Of course this isn’t the only reading and could be seen as simplistic and ‘tongue-in-cheek’: it might be read as a playful postmodern indication that patriarchy is a bit of a joke and all bets are now off. • References to these themes are delivered through costume and props with the ‘hero’ carried shoulder high but in a cartoonish way through an unconvincing jungle: this is a performance short on validation while the short skirts reference what was going on in the streets in 1967 (the mini-skirt became a much more important symbol of a freedom hitherto unenjoyed). • This ad was selected for its obvious sexism which is only partly historical, but it does engage in a conversation between the context of its production (1967) and of its current reception. • This is not what life was like in the sixties for men and women but it does, in a fairly crude way, help understanding of underlying currents and contemporary notions of gender fluidity and non-binary gender identities which, in Butler’s view, are desirable and inevitable. Indicative content relating to CSP: <i>Sephora</i> • <i>Sephora</i> acts as a useful reference point however it is read. It was ‘written’ in the teeth of contemporary debates around issues of social justice (MeToo, Black Lives Matter). • It can be read as advocating a greater diversity in representations and understandings of gender but also keeping with traditional tropes around beauty. • These ‘performances’ are clearly renegotiating the blueprint: though there are a couple of men featured, this is about ‘women only’ spaces: a celebration. • Despite a couple of beauty-conscious (and in context possibly gay) men, these performances are not done for men (these are “styles we can’t wait to post”): it’s all about the culture, hybridity, exuberance and extravagance: the sheer concentrated range makes performing gender wrong less plausible: this is exorbitant (literally leaving the orbit of mainstream beauty conformity). • Like <i>Score</i> these themes are delivered through costume and props with a kind of bricolage of viable versions arguing for what Fiske years ago called ‘semiotic resistance’: here the genre of gender is exposed for what it is (and that which Butler confirms) – a law of anomaly. • This ad was selected for its obvious contemporary flavour and progressive ideological stance but in its playful exuberance it also displays aspects of the post-modern turn, dripping with Jouissance (a particular kind of joy). • It also represents a ‘queering’ of this particular corner of representation which in Butler’s view is desirable and inevitable.	

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks
05	Briefly explain the following terms which relate to ‘End of audience’ theories. AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (6 marks). Award up to TWO marks per option as indicated below. This question tests knowledge of: ‘End of audience’ theories. a) Digital natives There are two elements here, each worth a mark. MARK ONE: Context A person who: • is brought up with digital technology from an early age, OR • has spent nearly their entire life surrounded by computers, digital devices and the world of social media, OR • has grown up in the information age (eg millennials or members of Generation Z). MARK TWO: Implication As a result of the above: • using technology comes naturally to them, OR • technology is an active element in their lives, OR • they are more susceptible to/open to/welcoming of changes in this area. 0 marks for answers that are too vague or imprecise such as: • someone who uses a computer • social media • watching streaming services. b) Convergence There are two elements here, each worth a mark. MARK ONE: Action/Process • The coming together of technologies and institutions. OR Example-based but explanatory: • smartphones, which combine camera, music, Internet, books, and other media together	6

	• online radio, which converges radio with the Internet • e-books, which converge paperbacks with the digital technology • news websites and apps, which converge print and broadcast media with the Internet • podcasts, which converge audio and video media with the Internet. MARK TWO: Implication • Convergence creates new platforms, new product or media experience, OR • Convergence increases and innovates content and the capabilities for all concerned (audiences as producers). 0 marks for answers that are too vague or imprecise such as: • when things come together (no media context) • any unqualified example (eg radio, smartphones, websites etc). c) Prosumer There are two elements here, each worth a mark. MARK ONE: Definition • A merging of producer and consumer, OR • The state of being a contemporary consumer with the opportunity also to create and modify media content. MARK TWO: Action • It describes those people who create and adapt existing media content, OR • It describes those who distribute their adaptations via social media and the Internet. • Example such as bloggers or influencers. 0 marks for answers that are too vague or imprecise such as: • consumer • producer • active audience. Other valid points must be credited.	
--	---	--

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks															
06	Explain how the cultural contexts of radio programmes provide resonance for audiences. Refer to the Close Study Product <i>Newsbeat</i> in your answer. AO1 2a and AO1 2b Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (3 marks). Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (6 marks). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to the idea of resonance that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products that is sometimes effective. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>1–3</td><td> - Basic knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is generally unsupported by appropriate reference to the set products with limited effect. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr> </tbody> </table> Indicative content This question assesses knowledge and understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes particularly focusing on: - Gerbner’s ideas and theories on cultivation theory - how media organisations reflect the different needs of mass and specialised audiences, including through targeting	Level	Marks	Descriptor	3	7–9	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to the idea of resonance that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	4–6	- Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products that is sometimes effective. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	1	1–3	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is generally unsupported by appropriate reference to the set products with limited effect. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	9
Level	Marks	Descriptor															
3	7–9	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to the idea of resonance that is consistently supported by highly appropriate and effective reference to the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.															
2	4–6	- Good knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is sometimes supported by generally appropriate reference to the set products that is sometimes effective. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.															
1	1–3	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the influences of cultural contexts on media products with reference to resonance that is generally unsupported by appropriate reference to the set products with limited effect. - Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.															
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.															

	• how media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated. Resonance occurs when a media message is especially noteworthy to an individual because it somehow coincides with a viewer's lived experience. Resonance is part of cultivation theory, which suggests that long-term exposure to media inculcates us into their cultures and agendas. Using <i>Newsbeat</i> as a Case Study: • <i>Newsbeat</i> has a specific audience profile which is defined by age and outlook, and editorial choices aim to select 'resonant' material • it does have though, and always has had, a very clear pitch and voice and assumption about its audience: this register is a key technique • <i>Newsbeat</i> achieves this through editorial choices which define what young people are interested in (music, sport, other young people) • one criticism has always been that it is trivial and anti-intellectual and bland, also apolitical • <i>Newsbeat</i> has a predictable format which gives the audience a security of expectation • <i>Newsbeat</i> has an auditory style all of its own which works through distinctive musical imaging • <i>Newsbeat</i> offers opportunities for audience interaction, participation and self-representation.	
--	--	--

Question	Marking guidance	Total marks												
07	‘Media industries are driven by the need to minimise risk and maximise profit.’ How far do you agree with this statement? Refer to the Close Study Product <i>Blinded by the Light</i> in your answer. AO1 1a, AO1 1b and AO2 3 Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (4 marks). Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (8 marks). Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to make judgements and draw conclusions (8 marks). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td><td>16–20</td><td> - Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>11–15</td><td> - Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>6–10</td><td> - Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples from the set products. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Level	Marks	Descriptor	4	16–20	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	11–15	- Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	6–10	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples from the set products. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	20
Level	Marks	Descriptor												
4	16–20	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by consistently appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Consistent highly appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												
3	11–15	- Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated via frequent appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Good judgements and conclusions that are often supported by relevant examples from the set product. - Frequent appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												
2	6–10	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by generally appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. - Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples from the set products. - Generally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology throughout.												

1	1–5	• Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework that is demonstrated by occasional appropriate evaluation of the validity of the claim in relation to the film industry. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples from the set products. • Occasional appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content

This question assesses knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media industries, particularly focusing on (though not limited to):

- the significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding, to media industries and their products.

Although not specifically required, students can also refer to:

- cultural industries as summarised by Hesmondhalgh.

Responses are required to consider the extent to which contemporary debates around how the film industry tackles the notion of risk vs profit are reflected in the kinds of films being produced and of the CSP being a significant case study in this respect.

- Responses in the higher bands will clearly engage with the consideration of how significant this claim might be and will support their points with effective reference to the CSP.
- Responses in the middle band will show some engagement with this element of the question and use examples in a straightforward way to support conclusions.
- Responses in the lower bands may not engage with this element of the question, may not draw conclusions that are substantiated by reference to the CSP, or may simply describe aspects of media production and distribution and/or the set product.

There is no requirement to argue that the claim is valid at all or indeed that the CSP supports this claim; candidates might equally argue that this is not the case. Various conclusions are acceptable, provided they are substantiated through valid references to the CSP.

Arguments which support the validity of the statement using *Blinded by the Light* as a case study:

- *Blinded by the Light* is a co-production between independent production companies and a major Hollywood conglomerate; co-productions between media companies are a typical way of minimising risk
- the participation of Warner Bros, a powerful media conglomerate with diverse cross-media elements including facilities for media production, distribution and circulation (vertical integration) means they have the structures and the

	financial capability to reach large mainstream audiences, thus minimising risk and maximising profit • with a budget of \$18m <i>Blinded by the Light</i> is a low- to medium-budget Hollywood film, an industry category which has recently been recognised for its profit potential; fragmentation of audiences and accessibility through broader access to the Internet have made lower-budget productions potentially less risky and more profitable • the concept of ‘risk-taking’ (Hesmondhalgh) in terms of both production scale and niche focus on subject matter eg the story of a Springsteen-obsessed Pakistani boy growing up in Thatcher’s Britain, coupled with links to contemporary concerns and debates about racial identity and multicultural tolerance in the UK and US • brand synergy with <i>Bend it Like Beckham</i>, Bruce Springsteen and Mansoor’s bestselling book <i>Greetings from Bury Park</i> all help to create a sense of audience recognition for the product which minimises the high levels of risk associated with an unknown or completely original film concept • financial risk is also minimised by eventually reselling the film onto subscriber streaming services such as Netflix as well as the ability to recoup ‘pay per download’ audience revenue on sites such as Amazon Prime. Arguments which challenge the validity of the statement using <i>Blinded by the Light</i> as a case study: • social realist subject matter – a dialogue-heavy coming of age tale of a Pakistani boy growing up in 80s Britain). This renders the product somewhat culturally specific in nature and it may not play as well or resonate with global audiences, therefore <i>Blinded by the Light</i> can be seen to embody the idea of risk-taking in feature film production • although based on an existing property (Manzoor’s book <i>Greetings from Bury Park</i>), this was not an international bestseller and therefore this product can be seen to represent a risky or ‘niche’-focussed project for studio investment as it is not part of an iconic franchise with a large transnational, ready-made fan base • the decision to delay the launch of the product in order to create a ‘buzz’ on the festival circuit (presumably to create the opportunities to pick up awards as a marketing strategy), essentially backfired as a ‘rival’ film with a similar subject matter and much higher production values was released first and seemed to make <i>Blinded by the Light</i> appear like a weak derivative even though it was actually finished first • this demonstrates that even if producers take steps to minimise risks, this can actually backfire in what is a highly unpredictable and commercially volatile industry.	
--	--	--