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# **GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2023**

**A LEVEL  
MEDIA STUDIES - UNIT 3  
1680U30-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

## WJEC GCE A LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES – UNIT 3

### SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The awarding of marks must be directly related to the marking criteria. The generic assessment grid is designed to establish the quality of a response whilst the indicative content will provide guidance on the scope of acceptable responses and the likely content of a candidate's response. Examiners should use the full range of marks available to them.

#### Band Descriptors

There is an assessment grid for each question, covering both options where there is a choice of questions. When awarding a mark, examiners should select the band that most closely describes the quality of the work being assessed.

- Where the candidate's work completely meets the descriptors, the highest mark should be awarded.
- Where the candidate's work securely meets the descriptors, a mark in the middle of the band should be awarded.
- Where the candidate's work just meets the descriptors, the lowest mark should be awarded.

If an answer demonstrates different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band. The strengths of the candidate's response should be then used to determine the mark to be awarded within the band. For example, if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

#### Indicative Content

The mark scheme instructs examiners to reward valid alternatives where indicative content is suggested for an answer. Indicative content outlines some likely areas candidates may explore in their responses. This is not a checklist for expected content or a 'model answer'.

Where a candidate provides a response that contains aspects or approaches not included in the indicative content, examiners should use their professional judgement as Media Studies specialists to determine the validity of the response in light of the examples chosen and the question asked. All questions provide opportunities for candidates to make informed, independent responses, and such opportunities need to be upheld in the marking. Valid alternatives should be rewarded where deemed appropriate, in line with the banded levels of response in the generic assessment grids.

## Section A: Television

Answer **one** question in each section.

Either,

- 1 | 1** How does the crime drama genre reflect historical contexts? Explore examples from *Hinterland* and the **historical** crime drama you have studied. [30]

Or,

- 1 | 2** How does the crime drama genre reflect social contexts? Explore examples from *Hinterland* and the **historical** crime drama you have studied. [30]

Band	AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and critical perspectives of media	AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of media studies to analyse media products
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts</li> <li>Excellent use of appropriate subject specific terminology and accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent application of knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts to analyse the set crime dramas</li> <li>Perceptive and detailed exploration of examples from the set crime dramas</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good, accurate knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts</li> <li>Good use of appropriate subject specific terminology and mostly accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good application of knowledge and understanding of narrative structure or genre and social contexts to analyse the set crime dramas</li> <li>Detailed exploration of examples from the set crime dramas</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfactory and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts</li> <li>Satisfactory use of appropriate subject-specific terminology and generally accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts to analyse the set crime dramas</li> <li>Straightforward exploration of examples from the set crime dramas</li> </ul>
2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts</li> <li>Basic use of appropriate subject specific terminology and some errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic application of knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts to analyse the set crime dramas</li> <li>Tendency to describe examples from the set crime dramas</li> </ul>

<b>1</b>	<b>1-3 marks</b>	<b>1-3 marks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts</li> <li>• Minimal use of appropriate subject specific terminology and many errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts to analyse the set crime dramas</li> <li>• Limited, if any, consideration of set crime dramas</li> </ul>
	<b>0 marks</b>	<b>0 marks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>

### Question 1.1 and 1.2:

#### Indicative content

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.

If only one television product is considered, assess the quality of the response in relation to the descriptors in all five bands and divide the marks by two.

#### AO1 (1.1 and 1.2)

Responses are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of genre and social/historical contexts

In the higher bands, there is likely to be explicit knowledge, understanding and application of genre and social/historical contexts as appropriate. Responses in the middle band will include knowledge, understanding and application of straightforward aspects of genre and social/historical contexts, whilst responses in the lower bands may only engage implicitly with of genre and social/historical contexts.

#### AO2

Responses may refer to:

- genre codes, conventions and iconography
- principles of repetition and variation of a repertoire of elements
- the significance of genre to the television industry and television audiences
- principles of repetition and variation of a repertoire of elements
- hybridity and intertextuality
- the significance of challenging and/or subverting genre conventions
- how genres reflect their social and historical contexts
- the significance of genre to the television industry and television audiences
- how different audience interpretations reflect social and cultural circumstances
- the way in which products can relate to broader social and cultural contexts
- the way in which recent crime dramas use the conventions of earlier crime drama traditions whilst exploring contemporary social, cultural and political issues.

How does the crime drama genre reflect historical contexts? Explore examples from *Hinterland* and the **historical** crime drama you have studied. [30]

### ***Hinterland***

- This is a take on the *Scandi-Noir* which was made a Welsh response to the modern sub-genre established in Europe.
- Issues of child abuse and historical cover-ups are reflective of the era the show was broadcast, and the revelation of the 'culprit' is not morally clear cut. This ambiguity is typical of modern crime drama.
- Despite featuring indexical codes which locate the television show within the mid-2010s, the use of genre codes and evocative use of location give the show an anomalous feel which is a USP to other contemporary Crime Dramas, a feature highlighted by the show's title.

### ***Prime Suspect***

- The ideology of *Prime Suspect* not only challenges the social context of the era, but also the Crime Drama genre itself; by positioning a female lead as a protagonist.
- Within the archetypes of Crime Drama, each generic character (the accused, the detective, the victim) has a part to play within the ideological aspirations of the show: the featured crime is one against a woman and has been facilitated by patriarchy.
- The narrative structure of the show is generic however, conforming to the established arrangement of how information is apportioned within crime shows (the audience are given clues, etc). The brutal nature of the crime is reflective of the increasingly permissive nineties.

### ***Touching Evil***

- The two lead detectives are equals in rank. Two equal partners of different genders was unusual in the historical context of 1990s television. However, Robson Green is given higher billing than Nicola Walker and his character is the central protagonist, which is still perhaps typical of the genre (when viewed alongside *Hinterland*).
- Similar to Mathias, Creegan fulfils the typical genre stereotype of troubled, but brilliant, loner.
- Within the historical setting, audiences would have recognised and expected men to dominate within the police force: this is reflected within the show by the mainly male cast.

### ***Cracker***

- Using the events of Hillsborough as a backdrop, audiences may have an emotional and immediate response to this show, which filters social context through generic tropes and structures.
- The writer Jimmy McGovern draws from specifically historical contexts and explores social issues within his work. The crimes of Albie are strongly suggested to be motivated by social context and how Albie sees his masculine identity fitting in within this environment.
- The dark mise-en-scène and shocking violence of the show is reflective of the nineties context.
- The men in the show are often casually misogynist (even the anti-hero, Fitz). However, the deliberate highlighting of such behaviour is a way of challenging patriarchal hegemonies.

### ***Morse***

- The expected narrative resolution facilitates a historical ideology: that male establishment figures constitute authority.
- Unlike other crime dramas of the era, which were often set in threatening urban environments, the chocolate box environs of Oxford refer to an escapist, old fashioned tradition. However, the plot is predicated upon the discovery of pornographic images, which is more reflective of the nineties.
- The reveal of a female villain is complex and reflects the third wave feminism of the nineties: Karen is as much a victim of male abuse as she is a villain.

**1 2** How does the crime drama genre reflect social contexts? Explore examples from *Hinterland* and the **historical** crime drama you have studied. [30]

### ***Hinterland***

- *Hinterland* is a specifically Welsh variation on the established genre of Nordic Noir
- Welsh mythology is used to imbue the narrative with an explicit cultural identity, which may in some ways be recognisable to domestic audiences but allows for an exotic USP where other territories are concerned.
- The narrative locates typical genre iconography within spectacular representations of Wales; which has made the programme attractive to foreign distribution.

### ***The Disappearance***

- The stereotypical intimate French café culture milieu is used as an ironically threatening environment where anyone could be a suspect
- The initial disappearance gives way to an exploration of explicitly middle-class fears surrounding family and teenagers. The superficially aspirational lifestyles of the characters are subverted.
- Throughout the show there is a narrative tension between the opposition of adults and their children; the central crime arises from this social context.

### ***The Killing***

- The programme's themes of isolation and loneliness are enhanced by the Danish cinematography of glum weather, gothic city streets and shadows.
- Like *Hinterland*'s criticism of certain institutions, *The Killing* has implicitly political ideologies that question certain aspects of Danish authority.
- The dramatic aspects of *The Killing* are rooted in cultural depictions of Denmark: class and family, in particular.

### ***Arne Dahl***

- The narrative trigger is based on an attempt by the Polish government to retain cultural status following criminal elements identified in their health care system.
- There is a distinct othering constructed by the representation of Polish asylum seekers hiding within Sweden.
- The impeachable authority of A Unit assumes a cultural trust in authority.

### ***The Bridge***

- The central narrative conceit of the show, involving the border of Denmark and Sweden, creates representational tension between the two cultures forced to co-operate.
- Genre iconography is fashioned from the idiosyncratic setting of the show.
- The murder victims -a politician and a prostitute- creates a cultural juxtaposition of class which the show goes on to explore.

## Section B: Magazines

Either,

**2 1** Van Zoonen argues that the display of women’s bodies as ‘objects to be looked at’ is a core element of western patriarchal culture.

Explore this idea in relation to the **mainstream** and **historical** magazines you have studied. [30]

Or,

**2 2** David Gauntlett states that the media today offer us a diverse range of stars, icons and characters from whom we may ‘pick and mix’ different ideas.

Explore this idea in relation to the **mainstream** and **historical** magazines you have studied. [30]

Band	AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and critical perspectives of media	AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of media studies to analyse media products
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of representation and Van Zoonen or Gauntlett’s ideas</li> <li>• Excellent use of appropriate subject specific terminology and accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent application of knowledge and understanding of representation to analyse the set magazines</li> <li>• Perceptive and detailed exploration of examples from the set magazines</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good, accurate knowledge and understanding of representation and Van Zoonen or Gauntlett’s ideas</li> <li>• Good use of appropriate subject specific terminology and mostly accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good application of knowledge and understanding of representation to analyse the set magazines</li> <li>• Detailed exploration of examples from the set magazines</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of representation and Van Zoonen or Gauntlett’s ideas</li> <li>• Satisfactory use of appropriate subject-specific terminology and generally accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of representation to analyse the set magazines</li> <li>• Straightforward exploration of examples from the set magazines</li> </ul>



2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic knowledge and understanding of representation and Van Zoonen or Gauntlett's ideas</li> <li>• Basic use of appropriate subject specific terminology and some errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic application of knowledge and understanding of representation to analyse the set magazines</li> <li>• Tendency to describe examples from the set magazines</li> </ul>
1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal knowledge and understanding of representation and Van Zoonen or Gauntlett's ideas, if any</li> <li>• Minimal use of appropriate subject specific terminology and many errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of representation to analyse the set magazines</li> <li>• Limited, if any, consideration of mainstream and non-mainstream/historical magazines</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>0 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>0 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>

2 1

Van Zoonen argues that the display of women's bodies as 'objects to be looked at' is a core element of western patriarchal culture.

Explore this idea in relation to the **mainstream** and **historical** magazines you have studied.

[30]

### AO1 (2.1 and 2.2)

Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media industries and representations, such as:

- how social and cultural groups (including gender, ethnicity and sexuality) are represented
- how selection and combination of aspects of media language construct representations
- how and why particular social groups, in a national and global context, may be under-represented or misrepresented
- how and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively
- how representations embody values, attitudes, beliefs, ideologies and discourses, which may be reinforced across a range of media
- the effect of social and cultural contexts on representations
- the impact of industry contexts on the choices media producers make about how to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups
- how audiences may be positioned by representations and may respond to and interpret them
- how audience responses to and interpretations of media representations reflect social and cultural circumstances.

### AO2 (2.1)

Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of representations to the magazines studied, such as:

Cosmopolitan <http://www.cosmopolitan.co.uk/>

- This magazine is explicitly aimed at a media-savvy, female audience. Candidates may explore representations from this audience positioning.
- Cosmopolitan explicates a diversity of female beauty however the ideology of the product suggests achieving hegemonic standards as empowerment.
- The magazine, and contingent advertising space, depends on audiences at once identifying and aspiring towards the representations within.

Adbusters <https://www.adbusters.org/>

- This website's USP is that it contravenes and satirises conventional media hegemonies, including representations of women.
- The representations involved within Adbusters depend upon a certain cultural competence: for the preferred reading, the audience should know just what the magazine is satirising.
- Representations of women are in fact scarce within the product, but the ills of western patriarchal culture is an overriding theme of the product.

Hello <http://www.hellomagazine.com/>

- The representation of women in *Hello* is drawn from a consumerist culture and presents aspirational images to its target audience of ABC1 women.
- Images of celebrities and representations of fame are the dominant mode of *Hello*, an approach which supports Van Zoonen's view.
- Women are celebrated for stereotypical attributes such as being a wife and bearing children, a conventional representation that defines women within patriarchal paradigms.

Attitude <http://attitude.co.uk/>

- The representation of women within Attitude is, by the nature of the product, not sexualised in the way that compliments Van Zoonen's ideas.
- The representation of men is a gendered counterpoint to Van Zoonen's theory: men are certainly constructed to be looked at here, and duly objectified.
- Female representation is scarce in *Attitude*, a model that provides a foil to Van Zoonen's ideas.

Men's Health <http://www.menshealth.co.uk/>

- The construction of male beauty within *Men's Health* would contradict Van Zoonen: men are presented within Olympian ideals.
- The 'sex' area of the website projects a vaguely conventional representation of women, which expound hegemonic ideals.
- Women are often positioned as a 'prize' or resolution to disequilibrium ('5 Ways to Improve Your Dating Life', anchored by an image of heteronormative coupling, accessed 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019) within *Men's Health*, which supports notions of patriarchal society.

Huck <http://www.huckmagazine.com/>

- Defined as chronicle of alternative lifestyles, the representations of women within *Huck* are a challenge to mainstream values.
- The magazine features in depth reads concerning women in diverse cultural situations (accessed 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019: Dana Kyndrová's portraits of the Soviet Bloc and an article featuring the Red Rebel Brigade), that display 'narrative arcs that champion triumph over adversity' to quote the magazine's advertised ideology
- The magazine invites guest 'curators' such as Kim Gordon and Cat Power, whose outlook and brand values are a reaction to the type of constructions Van Zoonen criticises.

Vogue <http://www.vogue.co.uk/>

- This magazine's ideology of style and diverse female beauty constructs females to be looked at, but whether these representations operate within a patriarchal context is up for debate.
- Images of fashionistas and aspiration are measured with a dedicated focus on female achievement ('The First All-Female Spacewalk Has Happened': accessed 19<sup>th</sup> October)
- The magazine, and contingent advertising space, depends on audiences at once identifying and aspiring towards the representations within.

Pride <http://pridemagazine.com/>

- The tagline of *Pride* 'Celebrating the Woman of Colour' suggests that the representations within will be constructed in order to honour women.
- The specifically niche audience would suggest that representations of women within are operating within specifically patriarchal culture.
- Nonetheless, the magazine, and contingent advertising space, depends on audiences at once identifying and aspiring towards the representations within.

**2 2** David Gauntlett states that the media today offer us a diverse range of stars, icons and characters from whom we may 'pick and mix' different ideas.

Explore this idea in relation to the **mainstream** and **historical** magazines you have studied. [30]

## AO2

Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of the concept of representation to the magazines studied, such as:

<http://www.cosmopolitan.co.uk/>

- The wealth of content within *Cosmopolitan* is often predicated along ideologies of self-improvement, with promises to resolve any perceived personal dissatisfaction.
- The references to audience's cultural competence (explicated by the first name references to celebrities) is flattering to the reader and allows the audience access to the clique ideology of the media product.
- The direct address which constitutes the magazine's mode of address pertains to self-facilitated actualisation: '9 hyaluronic acid serums to rehydrate *your* skin' (accessed October 21<sup>st</sup>)

<http://www.hellomagazine.com/>

- The defining representations of *Hello*, which are often women fulfilling mother/wife roles within an aristocratic context, are specifically aspirational to a certain audience.
- The repeated motifs of Royalty refers to the preferred cultural identity of the audience.
- The representation of issues within the magazine are generally positive, which reassures the conservative ideologies of the readership.

<http://www.menshealth.co.uk>

- The content within *Men's Health* is predicated along ideologies of self-improvement, with suggestions of how to resolve any perceived personal dissatisfaction.
- The insistent direct address which constitutes the magazine's mode of address pertains to self-actualisation.
- The absence of hard news/issues on the website, which has a wide circulation, would suggest that its audience access the products to consume the dominant reading: self-improvement.

<http://www.vogue.co.uk/>

- As with other magazines which rely on advertising revenue, there is a cause and effect synergy between advertising and substance: *Vogue's* content suggests links to the transformative properties of the cosmetics and clothes advertised within.
- However, there is also a more detailed coverage of issues within *Vogue*, which look at issues from a fourth wave feminist perspective and reinforce the audience's identity as socially aware consumers.
- As a global brand (the website includes a drop-down choice for the audience's national location), there is a diversity of information and representation within *Vogue*.

### *Vogue*

- The historical incarnation of *Vogue* similarly contains advertisements for beautifying products communicated using direct address.
- However, within the context of second wave feminism, the magazine also encourages female emancipation, notably through an extended essay on controlling finances.
- The exoticism of the various photo shoots flatter the cosmopolitan aspirations of the audience.

### *Woman*

- The representation of women within *Woman* positions the audience as home-makers who are not only perplexed by men (the article 'Extra Special on Men') but also their own identity, which is explained to them by Alfred Hitchcock.
- The article 'A Level Make Up' is a beginner's guide to applying cosmetics, a balance of assumptions and advice.
- The magazine reflects the aspirational nature of its C1/C2 readership with a centre spread on budgeted kitchens.

### *Woman's Realm*

- The magazine offers several opportunities for its readership to work towards the dominant hegemony of a mid-sixties mainstream woman
- The extensive problem page, with its family/female specific quandaries, assumes a vulnerability within the audience: a series of disequilibrium which the magazine's expert can resolve.
- The 'Sunday Cook' article is a forerunner of the domestic goddess archetype, and positions women as chief homemaker (an ideology explicitly consolidated by the main coverline)

## Section C: Video Games

Either,

**3 | 1** How do technological changes influence the video games industry? Explore with reference to the **two action-led** franchise games you have studied. [30]

Or,

**3 | 2** How important are other media industries to the video games industry? Explore with reference to the **two action-led** franchise games you have studied. [30]

Band	AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and critical perspectives of media	AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of media studies to analyse media products
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the video game industry</li> <li>• Excellent use of appropriate subject-specific terminology</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent application of knowledge and understanding of industry to analyse the two video games studied</li> <li>• Excellent application of knowledge and understanding of media contexts</li> <li>• Perceptive and detailed exploration of the video games studied</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the video game industry</li> <li>• Good use of appropriate subject-specific terminology</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good application of knowledge and understanding of industry to analyse the two video games studied</li> <li>• Good application of knowledge and understanding of media contexts</li> <li>• Detailed exploration of the video games studied</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory and generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the video game industry</li> <li>• Satisfactory use of appropriate subject-specific terminology</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory application of industry of audiences to analyse the two video games studied</li> <li>• Satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of media contexts.</li> <li>• Straightforward exploration of the video games studied</li> </ul>
2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic knowledge and understanding of the video game industry</li> <li>• Basic use of appropriate subject-specific terminology</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic application of knowledge and understanding of industry to analyse the two video games studied</li> <li>• Basic application of knowledge and understanding of media contexts</li> <li>• Tendency to describe the video games studied</li> </ul>

<b>1</b>	<b>1-3 marks</b>	<b>1-3 marks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal knowledge and understanding of the video game industry</li> <li>• Minimal use of appropriate subject-specific terminology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal application of knowledge and understanding of industry to analyse the two video games studied</li> <li>• Limited, if any, consideration of the video games studied</li> </ul>
	<b>0 marks</b>	<b>0 marks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response attempted or no response worthy of credit</li> </ul>

## Indicative content

### AO1 (3.1 and 3.2)

Responses will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of industry contexts such as:

- how processes of production, distribution and circulation shape media products
- the relationship between recent technological change and media production, distribution and circulation
- the impact of digitally convergent media platforms on media production, distribution and circulation
- the significance of patterns of ownership and control, including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification
- the links and synergies between the video games industry and other media industries, including film and online media such as video game websites or social media platforms (e.g. Facebook)
- the significance of economic factors to the video games industry and their products
- how the video games industry maintains, including through marketing, varieties of audiences/users nationally and globally
- how audiences can be reached, both on a national and global scale, through different media technologies and platforms
- the interrelationship between media technologies and patterns of consumption and response
- how users interact with video games and related online media

### AO2

Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of industry contexts, such as:

#### *Assassin's Creed* franchise

- The website for this product is a point of convergence for fans, who can post high scores, successes and even participate in polls which potentially shape the future of the franchise.
- The website allows for audiences to interact with each other and, to a certain extent, the institution behind *Assassin's Creed* (Ubisoft); whereas the producers can profile their audience via the user generated content of the platform.
- Fan community is maintained via a popular Facebook forum and online multiplayer gaming.

### *Grand Theft Auto franchise*

- *GTA*'s popularity is supported by the spectator sport of play throughs and modifications which feature on Twitch and YouTube.
- Gaming communities are sustained by online multiplayer modes where players can work together on missions. This sort of interaction facilitates various gameplay possibilities of competition or co-operation.
- The constant stream of digital updates released has ensured that *GTA V* is a perennial best seller, even seven years after its initial release.

### *Mass Effect franchise*

- As with most enduring video games, *Mass Effect* enjoys a lively online community who communicate through largely unofficial social media platforms.
- Gaming communities are sustained by online multiplayer modes where players can work together on gaming missions. This sort of interaction facilitates various gameplay possibilities of competition or co-operation.
- Following fan criticism of *Mass Effect: Andromeda*, Bioware released a series of downloadable patches which immediately remedied flaws perceived on release.

### *Tomb Raider franchise*

- Lara Croft is pop cultural icon who, perhaps more than most video game characters, exists beyond her initial medium: fan art appears on tumblr, Pinterest et al.
- The game does have a multiplayer co-op mode, but the dominant mode of play is not online. Players work through the singular narrative of the game.
- Online playthroughs are especially popular for the above reasons.

### *Wii Sports*

- Marketed as a family experience, *Wii Sports* is a pick up and play endeavour which is usually consumed within domestic contexts.
- There have been options for online interaction with other players, but these have not been as successful as the online profile of other games
- The niche nature of *Wii Sports*, and the lack of diversity within its distribution, is perhaps a signifier of the console's diminishing popularity.

### *Cooking Mama*

- The ludic qualities of this game does not facilitate co-operative playing.
- The game is only officially available on two platforms: Nintendo DS and iOS
- However, the iconography of the game and the simplicity of play has led to audiences fashioning unofficial versions of the game which are shared on different media platforms

### *Sims*

- The *Sims* franchise has been sustained by the regular release of expansion packs which allow gamers to situate their sims within different contexts: 'Discover University', 'Realm of Magic'
- The black Simming community is an active audience attempt to modify the game and rectify what is perceived as the game's white hegemony. These modifications are shared on social media platforms.
- The 'Sims Online' website is a platform of convergence, offering tutorials and downloadable content. The gameplay is dependent on extraneous media such as this.



### *Minecraft*

- The entirely online mode of the game, and the various platforms which *Minecraft* is available to, is so encompassing that there are very detailed official statements regarding web safety, evidence of the game's reliance on interactive digital platforms.
- *Minecraft* is a very popular game to watch on platforms such as YouTube: the creative aspects of the game give the product infinite applications and a large part of the experience is sharing your game with others.
- The purchase of *Minecraft* by Microsoft was regarded within the industry as Microsoft purchasing a 'social network', such is the interactive applications and prominence of UGC within the game

## **AO2 (3.2)**

Responses will apply knowledge and understanding of industry contexts, such as:

### *Assassin's Creed*

- A film was made in 2016, but, unlike the ongoing series of games, a sequel is unlikely as the film lost its studio \$100 million.
- However, the game does retain a recognisable brand identity that has been used to sell merchandise and exploit a pre-existing affinity with the game.
- The game has a media presence which relies on different media platforms- YouTube, Facebook- to advertise saleable products and mobilise the franchise.

### *GTA*

- As a countercultural brand, it is possible to buy merchandise based on the iconography of *GTA*, but even this opportunity is limited.
- The game has no cinematic or televisual adaptation, and infamously sold more copies of *GTA V* in the year of release than the total products sold within any other media.
- *GTA* is a paradigm shift in the sense that there is limited reliance on other forms of media: the interface of fans and audiences and product occurs within game or via dedicated social media.

### *Mass Effect*

- *Mass Effect* has spawned a uniquely viable industry of literature and comic books which is dependent on the main product. There are prestige publications that detail the artwork of the games while a series of novels and comic book both explore and contribute to the ongoing narrative of the game.
- There has been ongoing discussion of creating a motion picture based on the narrative; this did bear fruit, but within the niche confines of anime.
- The highly motivated fanbase has given rise to several fan films which have been taken seriously within both the community and by the producers of the game, proof of *Mass Effect's* potential for synergy.

### *Tomb Raider*

- Lara Croft has become a cultural icon, moving far beyond the specific video game culture of her origins. To date, three feature films have been made and released to varied success within the mainstream.
- The evergreen profile of Lara Croft as a media brand has superseded her ability to sell video games, which have received diminishing sales since 2015's *Rise of the Tomb Raider*. It is arguable that the name recognition of Lara Croft, proliferated through adjacent media, has sustained interest in the videogame product.
- Fan culture, which extends far beyond specific gaming culture, has sustained a burgeoning merchandise industry.