

GCE 2005  
*January Series*



# Mark Scheme

## Communication Studies

*(CMS6)*

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' 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.

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*Dr Michael Cresswell Director General*

**GCE COMMUNICATION STUDIES**  
**UNIT 6: ISSUES IN COMMUNICATION**  
**MARK SCHEME (JANUARY 2005)**

**Aims**

When you are marking scripts your aim should be:

1. to identify and reward the achievements of candidates;
2. to ensure compatibility of assessment for all candidates, regardless of question or examiner.

**Approach**

Please be *positive* when marking scripts, looking to reward relevant points that candidates make rather than penalise what they don't know.

A specification of this type must recognise the variety of experiences and knowledge that candidates will bring to the examination. The questions have been designed to provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate what they have learned about different aspects of Communication Studies.

**The Marking Grid**

The marking grid is organised according to the specification's Assessment Objectives which are printed above the descriptors. There are five broad levels representing different levels of achievement.

Each level reflects the weighting of Assessment Objectives in particular questions and across the examination as a whole.

**Using the Grid**

Descriptors in italics are generic and relate to all mark schemes drawing on that particular Assessment Objective. Descriptors in roman text are question specific.

You will need to give a mark for each Assessment Objective being tested in a particular question. These marks will then be totalled up for that question. To identify the mark for an Assessment Objective you are required to choose a level which best fits the candidate's response and then 'fine tune' this to give a specific mark from within the level that most accurately describes the candidate's level of achievement for that Assessment Objective.

To do this you will need to decide whether a script is displaying all the characteristics firmly (top of level) or just some (bottom of level) or a mixture (in the middle) as appropriate. If there is evidence of one level's descriptors and the beginnings of the level above, give a mark in the higher level.

To this end you should:

- indicate the marks for each Assessment Objective being tested at the end of the answer in the margin in sequence
- add up the marks for each Assessment Objective
- put a ringed total in the margin at the end.

**Mark Scheme: First Principles**

- The mark scheme is very much simpler than it looks. Most of each level descriptor consists of a lengthy italicised paragraph which lists the ‘skills’ of the course and describes their application as “Excellent”, Good”, “Satisfactory” etc.
- We are, in most cases, not marking coverage but rather ‘competence’ (‘how far’ not ‘how many’).
- We should, after two years, expect competence from the vast majority of candidates and, moreover, expect this cohort of candidates to perform across the range of this mark scheme which is intended only for them.

The other thing that is important is consistency in the sense of the integrity of the specification and our approach. This was the last of the units to start and will be the last, I suspect, to get ‘up to speed’, so it once again holds a pivotal role in the specification as a whole. We have managed, partly through the innovation of AO1, to give greater credit to candidates whose subject knowledge (and understanding) is more developed than their ability to analyse or even to construct efficient answers to our questions. This has resulted in a much more meaningful ‘E’ grade at both AS and especially A2 level. This must be maintained on CMS6 where the opportunity to ‘struggle with relevance’ is most acute.

In cases where relevance is an issue it may be useful to factor in a notional AO1 mark (out of 10) to prevent the mark scheme becoming ‘punitive’. A ‘limited’ ability to answer the question should not override ‘satisfactory’ subject knowledge, terminology and understanding.

**General Level Descriptors**

Level	Descriptor
<p>5 (25-30 marks)</p>	<p><i>Excellent evidence of ability to: communicate using categories, forms and uses of communication; demonstrate knowledge of communication concepts, conventions and theories and/or apply techniques of critical reading as appropriate. Candidates demonstrate an analytical grasp of the nature of perspectives, evaluate their significance in a given case and are able to place analysis in a wider theoretical context. Responses are perceptive, conceptualised, illuminating and open-minded and relate evaluation to both personal and cultural communication.</i></p> <p><i><u>EXCELLENT EVIDENCE</u> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</i></p> <p>Level 5 answers have weaknesses. However they are INTERESTING, INSIGHTFUL, ENGAGING, IMPRESSIVE, sometimes PROVOCATIVE, even POLEMICAL.</p> <p>At the bottom they are just the top of VERY GOOD.</p>
<p>4 (19-24 marks)</p>	<p><i>Good evidence of ability to: communicate using categories, forms and uses of communication; demonstrate knowledge of communication concepts, conventions and theories and/or apply techniques of critical reading as appropriate. Confident analysis of perspectives as contexts. Close detailed points. Integration of material from other units. Exploration of relevant key debates in relation to both personal and cultural communication.</i></p> <p><i><u>GOOD EVIDENCE</u> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</i></p> <p>Level 4 answers are ‘GOOD’ in terms of their DETAIL, KNOWLEDGE, REGISTER, RELEVANCE (the spot-on question material which argues terms STARTS here) and IDEAS.</p> <p>The top of this is VERY GOOD, the bottom is QUITE GOOD (always level 4 for more than competent).</p>

Level	Descriptor
3 (13-18 marks)	<p><i>Satisfactory evidence of ability to: communicate using categories, forms and uses of communication; demonstrate knowledge of communication concepts, conventions and theories and/or apply techniques of critical reading as appropriate. Candidates analyse perspectives within the context of key words in the question or task and engage with key debates. The response is supported on its own terms from the whole course. Some evaluative comments are tied to status of perspectives, with detailed analysis of some individual examples.</i></p> <p><u>SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE</u> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</p> <p>Level 3 answers are COMPETENT: they show clear if modest evidence of subject knowledge and/or experience; this is sometimes largely a matter of presenting ‘FACTS’ and THEORIES.</p> <p>At the top of this level this material is used to construct simple arguments and address issues. At the bottom is often that which shows BASIC COMPETENCE, the lowest level of performance which meets the standard at A2.</p> <p>PEDESTRIAN work is properly and clearly Level 3 since ‘flair’ is not a consideration at this level.</p>

Level	Descriptor
2 (7-12 marks)	<p><i>Limited evidence of ability to: communicate using categories, forms and uses of communication; demonstrate knowledge of communication concepts, conventions and theories and/or apply techniques of critical reading as appropriate. Some evidence of individual response to the question or task with general reference to perspectives. Some use of specific relevant content from other units. Broad statements of purpose and effects. Candidates begin to analyse perspectives. Points are illustrated from a range of sources. Broadly evaluative comments.</i></p> <p><u>LIMITED EVIDENCE</u> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</p> <p>Level 2 work is below the acceptable standard of work at this level so we should not expect to see a lot of it (statistically).</p> <p>Level 2 work is limited by its SUBJECT SPECIALISM (knowledge, skills and register), its LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE and sometimes by its SUBJECTIVITY (or lack of OBJECTIVITY).</p> <p>Much of this work is DESCRIPTIVE and ANECDOTAL.</p> <p>All work that merits ‘serious’ consideration should reach at least this level.</p>
1 (1-6 marks)	<p><i>Little evidence of ability to: communicate using categories, forms and uses of communication; demonstrate knowledge of communication concepts, conventions and theories and/or apply techniques of critical reading as appropriate. Limited understanding of the key words. Little understanding of the nature of personal and cultural communication. Simple/generalised/descriptive account. Paraphrasing. Dependent on unassimilated notes.</i></p> <p><u>LITTLE EVIDENCE</u></p> <p>Level 1 is reserved for work that is significantly short of merit of any kind or simply significantly short.</p>
0	No relevant response.

### Question Specific Mark Scheme

This unit tests Assessment Objective 5 (analyse and evaluate different theoretical perspectives in the study of communication).

#### Unit 6: Section A

**1 (a) Evaluate the strengths of the Process and Semiotic approaches to communication by applying them to a reading of an individual’s self-presentation. (30 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the keyword “self-presentation” and evidence the discussion with reference to theories. May focus on the variety of communication contexts and their impact.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to work through the Process and Semiotic approaches in theory with limited application.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to offer a largely insecure response to ‘Process’ and/or ‘Semiotic’ and/or ‘self-presentation’.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.
0	No relevant response.



- 1 (b) “I have been working in this field now for many years and am very conscious of the difficulties involved in any short book on so complicated and controversial a subject.”

*Source: 30 words from COMMUNICATIONS by R. Williams (Penguin 1968)*

Copyright © Raymond Williams, 1968

What do you consider to be some of the complications and controversies in Communication Studies? (30 marks)

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to focus on the issues of the discipline in terms of, e.g. ‘approach’, ‘functions’, ‘effects’, ‘intention’, ‘representation’ etc.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. There will be lists of learnt facts, perhaps and/or a list of ‘theories’. Assertion rather than argument.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on controversies and/or complications in a marginal or inappropriate way.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Uncritical explanation of the question. Little else offered.
0	No relevant response.

**Section B****2 (a) Does new communication technology always improve the quality of communication?**  
(30 marks)

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions. (e.g. establish criteria for evaluation.)
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to deal in a theoretical way with what can be improved (i.e. what communication is) and then move on to ‘how’.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to identify specific technologies to discuss (e.g. mobile phones, digital TV, laptops) followed by a trawl through their uses with a limited theoretical component.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus mainly on examples.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.
0	No relevant response.

**2 (b) Describe and assess the implications of ‘interactivity’ in new communication technology.**  
(30 marks)

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to focus on the issues of the question and offer a sharp analysis of some of the implications of interactivity in communication technology (flexibility, identity, control).
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on specific examples of interactivity, e.g. mobile phones and TV, computers and telephones.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on their own personal experiences of technologies.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Responses lack any real understanding of the terms of reference of the question.
0	No relevant response.

**Section C****3 (a) Evaluate the influences of the mass media on your socialisation.****(30 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the keywords “socialisation” and “mass media” and evidence the discussion with reference to theories/theorists. May focus on one aspect of the process like gender/ethnicity or family/media.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to identify specific examples and use them as a starting point for a discussion or use generalised examples to conduct a general ‘talkthrough’ (e.g. teenage pregnancy, anti-social behaviour).
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on the examples rather than the functions.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Struggles to understand what the question demands.
0	No relevant response.

- 3 (b) “Communication becomes gendered when sex or gender begins to influence your choices of what you say or how you relate to others.”

*Source: D.K. Ivy and P. Backlund, Genderspeak: Personal Effectiveness in Gender Communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (McGraw-Hill) 2003*

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By this definition how much of our communication is “gendered”? (30 marks)

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the issues of ‘gender’ and ‘communication’. Likely to offer feminist perspectives on these issues together with supporting examples which extend the discussion.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to lead with the realities of male-female communication and work back towards the question with broad, generalised examples. Largely confirms quote is right.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on stereotypes of male and female communication.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Struggles to cope with the demands of the question.
0	No relevant response.

**Section D**

- 4 (a) Celebrities often complain that they have been subjected to ‘trial by media’.**  
**What do you understand by ‘trial by media’ and can it ever be justified? (30 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the key phrase “trial by media” and offer a theoretical context for its argument (functions of media/rights of individual). An examination of the ‘meaning’ of ‘public figure/celebrity’ or ‘public interest’ will be rewarded here.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to identify specific cases and draw specific conclusions from them (e.g. Big Brother, ‘Posh and Becks’, Princess Diana).
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on the examples rather than the meanings/issues.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Uncritical response. Little else offered.
0	No relevant response.

- 4 (b) To what degree can possessions communicate information about group membership?**  
**(30 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to focus on the issues of the question (identity, role, consumerism, individuality) and/or offer a CMS5-style reading of specific texts.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on specific examples in some detail but with a limited theoretical context. The emphasis will likely be on the fact that they communicate rather than ‘how’.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to tell generalised personalised ‘stories’ of the importance of things.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Struggles to understand the demands of the question.
0	No relevant response.