



**General Certificate of Education  
January 2010  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination**

## **Communication and Culture**

**COMM1    Understanding Communication and  
              Culture**

## **Mark Scheme**

**PRE-STANDARDISATION**

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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

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## UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

### MARK SCHEME (Jan 2010)

#### 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 to penalise what they don't know.

A specification of this type must recognise the variety of experiences and knowledge that candidates 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 and Culture.

#### The Principles of 'Best Fit'

This paper requires candidates to make three extended responses in an essay format and to answer some short answer questions which test their understanding of the techniques of critical analysis. These short answer questions have their own marking grid since they are working within a single Assessment Objective (AO2): demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and critical debates relevant to the discipline of communication and culture.

In the case of the longer essay-style response a grid is used which, while recognizing the need to consider different aspects of each response (like its technical accuracy), also attempts to consider the work as a whole.

In this case, marks are notionally divided between two Assessment Objectives (AO1 and AO2) in the ratio 2:3. Individual mark ranges are suggested for each AO, but these are provided **for guidance only**. **Ultimately the response should be placed at a level that 'best fits' its qualities.**

#### The Marking Grid

The marking grid covers the generic qualities of all essays written as responses on this paper in terms of their ability to communicate in a technical register and the knowledge and understanding displayed of Communication and Culture concepts.

A set of question-specific prompts support the application of marks and are included after the grid.

#### Annotating Scripts

It is important that the way you arrive at a mark should be recorded on the script. This will help you with making accurate judgements and it will help any subsequent markers to identify how you are thinking, should adjustment need to be made.

To this end you should:

- identify points of merit
- write a brief summative comment at the end
- put a total in the margin at the end of each answer.

## Generic Marking Grid

Level	Total Mark for a Question	AO1: This tests the ability of candidates to communicate in the register of communication and culture	AO1 Marks	AO2: This tests the ability of candidates to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification	AO2 Marks
4	19 – 20	Work at this level both impresses and genuinely engages. It is both fluent and technical: accurate and specialist.	7 – 8	Sensitive to the scope of their own and others' knowledge and understanding. Evaluative. Sophisticated.	12
	18				11
	16 – 17	Material is well organised including concise use of a technical vocabulary. Written expression is well structured, accurate and precise. Work is confident and detailed.		Handles a range of content and concepts with skill. Knowledgeable and specialist.	10
3	14 – 15	Writing enhances the presentation of ideas and arguments. The candidate is clearly controlling the technical code of the discipline.	5 – 6	Very good range of specialist knowledge which evidences an engagement with the material. With knowledge comes understanding.	9
	13				8
	11 – 12	Material is clearly organised and usually incorporates neat and purposeful use of a technical vocabulary. Written expression is accurate and clear.		Sound understanding of relevant Communications and Culture content and concepts. Shows a good range of specialist ideas.	7
2	9 – 10	Competent written style: generally accurate and communicative. Beginnings of a technical register, including some evidence of the appropriate use of a subject specific vocabulary.	3 – 4	Competent understanding of Communications and Culture concepts and of the specified content. Ample evidence of a course of study.	6
	8				5
	6 – 7	Ideas sometimes supported by explicit or implicit reference to a subject specialist discourse. Written work features regular low level inaccuracies. Occasional use of technical terms.		Beginnings of awareness of the key content of the course. Sometimes supports views by reference to Communication and Culture concepts.	4
1	4 – 5	Written style has a number of lapses in accuracy and clarity. Assertion of ideas with little or no support from a subject specific context. Technical terms often misunderstood or applied without relevance.	1 – 2	Some comments on subject-related matters, mainly led by tasks and contexts. Rarely connects with subject specific content. Some 'lay' knowledge of themes and debates.	3
	3				2
	1 – 2	Little or no evidence that a course of study has been undertaken. Technical quality is significantly below what might be expected for AS level.		Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1

**UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)**

**MARK SCHEME (Jan 2010)**

**1 Culture is ordinary; it is about everyday life.**

**Use your own experiences and observations to explore one of the following statements about the culture of everyday life:**

**1 (a) The family is essential in teaching and in helping me to learn about the values of my culture. (20 marks)**

**OR**

**1 (b) Schools encourage us to accept cultural codes and ways of 'fitting in'. (20 marks)**

**OR**

**1 (c) My cultural values are influenced by my role models, the people I admire and respect. (20 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b>  A clear, concise response to the role of the selected 'institution' in cultural transmission. Explicit and convincing evidence that the concept of 'culture' in relation to the agencies of socialisation is thoroughly understood. Supporting examples are apposite and clearly linked to the chosen area.
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<b>Likely to lead with the keywords, whatever the selection and consider the theory of the issue before the practice. Awareness of key terms and their use.</b>  Reasonably convincing, if partially flawed, attempt to respond to the role of the selected 'institution' in cultural transmission and/or justify the chosen area. Some evidence that the concept of 'culture' in relation to the agencies of socialisation is understood. Examples are relevant and engaging.
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<b>Likely to work through practical answers with limited evaluation.</b>  The chosen area is described rather than explored or analyses offered are less than convincing. The concept of 'culture' in relation to the agencies of socialisation is only partially understood. For marks of 9 – 10, appropriate examples may compensate for conceptual shortcomings, or vice versa. For marks in the range 6 – 8, examples are limited or unsuitable.
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<b>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</b>  At this level, any justifications offered are inappropriate. Descriptions of the chosen 'institution' are limited. There are likely to be serious misinterpretations of 'culture'. Examples lack relevance or are, in the range 1 – 3 marks, absent.
0	No relevant response.

## UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

2 Use examples to illustrate the ways in which self-esteem might have an impact on one of the following:

2 (a) appearance (20 marks)

OR

2 (b) body movement (kinesics) (20 marks)

OR

2 (c) paralanguage. (20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>Clear, confident and critical explorations of the likely impact of self-esteem on one aspect of NVC. There is explicit evidence of conceptual understanding.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on keywords and address theory in advance of practice. Attention to detail is key here.</b></p> <p>Reasonably well-informed explorations of the likely impact of self-esteem on one aspect of NVC. Some evidence that key terms in the question, particularly ‘self-esteem’ are understood. In the range 11 – 12 marks, descriptive material may predominate over conceptual references.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. There may be a pre-prepared Case Study offered. Likely to come to easy conclusions without arguing through the case. Unfounded assertion through to competent responses.</b></p> <p>Likely to be a descriptive rather than analytical or evaluative account of the likely impact of self-esteem on one aspect of NVC. Limited or partial understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Uncritical explanation of the statement. Little else offered.</b></p> <p>Explanations are inappropriate or inept. Little or no understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
0	No relevant response.

## UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

- 4 Many everyday practices are concerned with establishing our individual identities in response to the expectations of others. This is chiefly a process of conformity (going along with these expectations) and resistance (challenging these expectations).

How do the everyday practices listed below reveal this process of conformity and resistance? You must choose examples from one or more of the following categories:

- talking
- moving about
- shopping
- the way we dress.

(20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to impress with ability to provide an overview of issues (eg explore and/or challenge theoretical positions).</b></p> <p>Active reading with evidence that relevant debates about culture are understood. Alternative explanations are convincingly rooted in conceptual understanding. Polemical responses may feature at this level if ideas are well supported by evidence and argument.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with an exploration of 'conformity' and/or 'resistance' and to relate this to one or more of the listed 'practices'.</b></p> <p>Competent understanding of the practices is evident with some analytical elements. Alternative explanations demonstrate some familiarity with the terms of debates about 'conformity' and 'resistance'.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to offer a reading of one or more of the 'categories' and to attempt to address the concepts in these. Likely to focus on the examples only (largely) or anecdotally.</b></p> <p>Responds to the text at a personal rather than analytical level. In the range 9 – 10 marks, comments indicate some awareness of relevant sections of the unit but in the range 6 – 8 marks are more likely to be based on barely substantiated assertions.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</b></p> <p>May be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the stimulus material and/or the task. Superficial account or one which is too brief to constitute a serious response to the question.</p>
0	No relevant response.

## UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

### Separate Marking Grid for Question 3 (AO2 only)

These questions are meant to test knowledge of critical techniques. They thus only address a single Assessment Objective and require a simpler, streamlined marking grid.

**TEXT:** This is the front of a flyer (complete with £1 off sticker).

**3 (a) Identify a dominant signifier in this flyer. Explain why the signifier you have chosen is dominant. (4 marks)**

**3 (b) What are the connotations of the different kinds of lettering used in this flyer? (6 marks)**

**3 (c) Briefly, offer two different readings of this text. (10 marks)**

		3(a)		3(b)		3(c)		
Level	Mark	dominant signifier	Mark	typography	Mark	readings	Mark	
4	4	A skilful response which demonstrates secure knowledge. Knowledgeable and specialist.	4	Handles the tasks in a mature fashion, teasing out the subtleties. Knowledgeable and specialist.	6	Fluent and detailed analysis of the ways in which the text operates. Knowledgeable and specialist.	8-10	
3	3	Sound understanding of the concept of 'dominant signifiers'. Sound choice and explanation.	3	The lettering on the text is clearly debated and presented.	4-5	Good understanding of relevant Communication and Culture content and concepts. Strong on knowledge or application. Two good readings provided.	6-7	
2	2	Beginnings of awareness of the key content of the course. Competent understanding of 'dominant signifiers'.	2	The lettering of the text is addressed. Communication and Culture concepts are generally understood even when not skilfully applied.	2-3	Competent engagement with representation, though not with the issues involved. At least one good reading offered (or two competent ones!)	3-5	
1	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1-2	
0	0	No relevant response						



