



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Level Examination  
June 2012

# Communication and Culture      **COMM3**

## Unit 3    Communicating Culture

Friday 1 June 2012    1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

**For this paper you must have:**

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

### Time allowed

- 2 hours

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is COMM3.
- Answer **two** questions: the compulsory question from Section A and one question from Section B.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

### Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- All questions carry equal marks.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- This paper tests the following **Assessment Objectives**:
  - your ability to communicate in the register of Communication and Culture (AO1)
  - your understanding of the content and concepts of Communication and Culture (AO2)
  - your ability to apply your knowledge in the context of the questions (AO3).
- The **Cultural Sites** referred to in this paper are:
  - Spaces and Places
  - Fictions
  - Objects of Desire.

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**Section A**

Answer the **one** compulsory question from this section.

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**Question 1**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 1 |
|---|---|

Online social networking has had an enormous impact on contemporary culture. There is a great potential for all of us with internet access to join communities of shared interest in every possible subject or just keep in touch with our friends. However, there are competing views on how to interpret the broader cultural implications of social networking. Some stress the positive and empowering aspects whilst others have highlighted negative effects on both the individual and culture at large.

Carefully read **Argument A** and **Argument B** (opposite) relating to social networking, before attempting the task below.

**Task:**

Use your knowledge of selected theoretical perspectives and key concepts to evaluate the contrasting views of social networking expressed by Argument A **and** Argument B.

*(40 marks)*

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**Section A (continued)**

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**Argument A**

Online social networking is a fine example of the way in which technology can respond to a real human need; in this case, the need for better, faster and more sophisticated interpersonal and group communication. Online networking does not just improve social connectivity; it enables knowledge to be pooled rapidly and efficiently so that businesses can work more effectively even if workers are geographically dispersed. Social network sites encourage creative self-expression. We can combine speech, music, writing and moving images to project ourselves as individuals and as groups.

**Argument B**

Increasingly, our identities are projected to others not by face-to-face contact but via our presence on online social networking sites. But social networks do not just help us to communicate; they are changing the ways in which we think. We experiment with our identities, but only in ways that are determined by consumer culture. We describe ourselves in terms of what we own and consume and become addicted to the giving and receiving of tiny pieces of unimportant information. As the information content becomes smaller and smaller, so our ability to concentrate on more demanding forms of communication like the book or play or film diminishes. The idea that we are part of communities enjoying real relationships is an illusion based only in the virtual world. In reality, social networking encourages an unhealthy obsession with the self.

**Turn over for Section B**

**Turn over ►**

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**Section B**

Answer **one** question from this section.

The **Cultural Sites** referred to in this section are: Spaces and Places, Fictions and Objects of Desire.

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**EITHER**

**Question 2**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 2 |
|---|---|

 Drawing on a detailed case study, show how **two** of the three sites of culture are interlinked. *(40 marks)*

**OR**

**Question 3**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 3 |
|---|---|

 Choose **one** of the three cultural sites. Which theoretical approach to this site have you found most convincing and why? *(40 marks)*

**OR**

**Question 4**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 4 |
|---|---|

 'Every building, every environment has a story to tell.'  
Explore the role of narrative in the understanding of **spaces and places**. *(40 marks)*

**OR**

**Question 5**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 5 |
|---|---|

 'Imaginary worlds teach us how to interpret the real world.'  
Do you agree with this view of **fictions**? *(40 marks)*

**OR**

**Question 6**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | 6 |
|---|---|

 'What I own is who I am.'  
Discuss this view of **objects of desire**. *(40 marks)*

**END OF QUESTIONS**