



General Certificate of Education

Communication Studies 6626

CMS6 Issues in Communication

Mark Scheme

2006 examination - June series

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.

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 do not 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 provided for clarification.

You will need to give a mark for each question. These marks will then be totalled up. To identify the mark 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.

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 level for each answer and the position of that answer within the level to the left of the margin as upper (+), lower (-) or middle (no designation) e.g. upper level three is written L3+, mid level four as L4 etc.
- 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 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
5 (25-30 marks)	<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. Are able to place analysis in a wider theoretical context. Responses are perceptive, conceptualised, illuminating and open-minded. Relate evaluation to both personal and cultural communication.</i></p> <p><i>EXCELLENT EVIDENCE</i> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</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>
4 (19-24 marks)	<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>GOOD EVIDENCE</i> of ability to: a) “communicate”, b) “demonstrate knowledge” and/or c) “apply techniques of critical reading”.</p> <p>Level 4 answers are ‘GOOD’ in terms of their DETAIL, KNOWLEDGE, REGISTER, RELEVANCE (the spot-on question stuff which argues terms STARTS here), IDEAS.</p> <p>The top of this is VERY GOOD, the bottom is QUITE GOOD (always Level 4 for more than competent).</p>
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 question or task. Engage with key debates. Response is supported on its own terms from the whole course. Some evaluative comments tied to status of perspectives. Detailed analysis of some individual examples.</i></p> <p><i>SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE</i> 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>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 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.</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>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.</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.

Mark Scheme

This unit tests Assessment Objective A05 (analyse and evaluate different theoretical perspectives in the study of communication).

Unit 6: Section A

1 (a) Does communication reflect reality or create it?

You are advised to support your answer with specific examples.

(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 keywords ‘reflect’ and ‘create’ and evidence the discussion with reference to theories. May focus on particular communication contexts.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to identify specific content/theories (e.g. the semiotic approach) to use as examples.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to lose focus on the examples and theories.
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) It has been claimed that it is impossible to define satisfactorily what communication is.

What are the particular problems associated with formulating a general theory, model or definition of communication?

(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 essential problems of theory: it is trying to cope with an extremely dynamic reality. Will identify issues.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. Likely to lead with examples rather than ideas.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to lose focus and move away from the question to their own.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Uncritical explanation of the question. Little else offered.
0	No relevant response.

Section B

- 2 (a) Discuss the view that advances in Information and Communication Technology have created an information underclass. (30 marks)**

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with issues/perspectives (e.g. technological determinist/humanist, fragmentation, cultural pollution, segmentation) or principles of communication (status of sender, effect on receiver/channel/function).
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to identify specific technologies to discuss (e.g. mobiles, digital TV, laptops) followed by a trawl through their uses with a limited theoretical component.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on examples only (largely).
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.
0	No relevant response.

- 2 (b) The school and college curriculum puts increasing emphasis on the role of Information and Communication Technology in all subjects.**

What are the significant implications of this emphasis on Information and Communication Technology? (30 marks)

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to focus on the issues of the question and offer a sharp analysis of some of these. The issues are broad and general but will likely be addressed directly (access, technological determinism, importance of context, issue of gender/identity etc.).
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on advantages and disadvantages in a straightforward way and provide ‘circumstantial’ evidence (perhaps at the start/end).
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to focus on their own personal experiences.
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) It has been said that, ideologically speaking, growing up is a dangerous business.

What are the ideological implications of growing up in Britain today?

(30 marks)

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the keyword ‘ideology’ 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’ (children’s toys or clothes or colours as unexplored ‘issues’).
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) Explore the different ways in which mass communication has an impact on the socialisation of young people.

(30 marks)

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the issues of ‘culture’, ‘gender’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘social class’. Likely to offer convincing examples which extend the discussion.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to lead with the ideological realities of mass communication and work back towards the question with broad, generalised examples. Largely confirms that the implication in the question 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) What are the implications of the cult of celebrity which pervades the media?**

You may wish to consider this from the point of view of producers, consumers, fans and/or the celebrities themselves. *(30 marks)*

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to lead with the keyword “ideology” and offer a CMS5-style reading of ‘cult of celebrity’.
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 extent is our identity determined or influenced by our friends? *(30 marks)*

Level	Descriptor
5 (25 – 30 marks)	Explores and/or challenges theoretical positions.
4 (19 – 24 marks)	Likely to focus on the issues of the question: the creation and maintenance of identity.
3 (13 – 18 marks)	Likely to focus on personal relevant experience. The emphasis will likely be on the fact that they influence rather than ‘how’.
2 (7 – 12 marks)	Likely to tell generalised ‘stories’.
1 (1 – 6 marks)	Struggles to understand the demands of the question.
0	No relevant response.