OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

GCE

Combined Mark Schemes
And Report on the Units

January 2006

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

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Advanced GCE Media Studies (7860)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Media Studies (3860)

MARK SCHEMES FOR THE UNITS

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

Mark Scheme 2731
January 2006

The unit is marked out of a total of 90. Each question is marked out of a total of 45 marks.

Assessment Level	Marks /45
Level 1	0-12 – Irrelevant, Incoherent or 'Short'
Level 2	13-17 - Minimal 18-23 - Basic
Level 3	24-29 - Competent 30-34 - Proficient
Level 4	35-40 – Very Proficient 41-45 - Excellent

Advice to Examiners

Judgement
Be prepared for the fact that there might be no correlation between a candidate's marks for each section. It is possible for there to be a disparity between answers to Questions 1 and 2; consider each question in isolation. The duration of the examination should be considered, especially when weighing up the depth and quality of a candidate's answer. Candidates are required to write two essays in 45 minutes each. Look for implicit as well as explicit evidence of knowledge and understanding.

Do not make a judgement too early on about the quality of a candidate's answer. Some candidates use a style that means that the early part of their answer is descriptive and confined to identification of technical aspects, but is later followed up by analysis and interpretation, as required. Early judgements of the candidate's work as 'descriptive' will result in their work being under-rewarded.

Whilst continuous prose is expected, candidates who use bullet points or sub-headings in their answer should not be directly penalised for this over and above the quality of the content of their answer. However, candidates who answer in bullet points (especially for Section A) usually have less detailed analysis to offer and therefore limit their own attainment. Where a candidate has run out of time, s/he might use note form at the end of an answer and examiners should credit any hard evidence of knowledge and understanding (as opposed to plans) provided.

The full range of marks should be used, as it is possible to attain full marks for an answer, especially at AS level. Likewise the full range of marks within a level should be used. Hesitancy often results in bunching marks together, so careful attention should be paid to differentiation between candidates' answers.

SECTION A – Textual Analysis

This section assesses Assessment Objective 1

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to understand how meaning is constructed through the language of specific media forms by applying techniques of textual analysis to a range of media.

General Mark Scheme

Level 1 (0-12 marks) - Irrelevant, Incoherent or 'Short'	**Section A**

- Shows no real understanding of the task.
- Offers no textual evidence from extract.
- No knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Use of terminology - mostly inaccurate.
- No textual analysis/interpretation of meaning – purely descriptive.
- Often mostly irrelevant to set question, incoherent or 'Short' (under half a side of answer booklet).

Level 2 (13-17 marks) - Minimal	**Section A**

- Shows minimal understanding of the task.
- Offers minimal textual evidence from extract.
- Minimal knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions – 'general-knowledge level'.
- Use of terminology - frequent inaccuracies.
- Minimal analysis/interpretation of meaning – mostly descriptive.
- Of minimal relevance to set question or brief (under one and a half sides of answer booklet).

(18 23 marks) – Basic

- Shows basic understanding of the task.
- Offers occasional textual evidence from extract.
- Basic knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Use of terminology - some inaccuracies.
- Basic analysis/interpretation of meaning – very descriptive with significant gaps.
- Some relevance to set question.

Level 3 (24-29 marks) - Competent	**Section A**

- Shows competent understanding of the task.
- Offers textual evidence from extract – award marks for appropriate choice/number of egs.
- Competent knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Use of terminology – competent, some inaccuracies.
- Attempts a balanced and competent analysis/interpretation of meaning – descriptive in places with some gaps.
- Mostly relevant to set question.

(30-34 marks) – Proficient

- Shows proficient understanding of the task.
- Offers frequent textual evidence from extract, occasionally detailed – award marks for appropriate choice/number of egs.
- Proficient knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Use of terminology – proficient, few inaccuracies.
- A sustained and proficient analysis/interpretation of meaning – mostly analytical, occasional gaps but award marks for degree of coverage/detail.
- Relevant to set question.

Level 4 (35-40 marks) – Very Proficient	Section A

- Shows very proficient understanding of the task.
- Offers frequent and detailed textual evidence from extract – award marks for appropriate choice/number of egs.
- Very proficient knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Use of terminology – very proficient and accurate.
- A fluent and very proficient analysis/interpretation of meaning - award marks for degree of coverage/detail, few gaps.
- Relevant to set question.

(41-45 marks) - Excellent

- Up to full marks should be given according to the degree of depth/detail and accuracy provided as well as coverage of most/whole of extract (ie comprehensive).
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of moving image languages and conventions.
- Candidate's analysis/interpretation of meaning is presented with confidence, skill and flair as reasonable at AS level.
- If a candidate has satisfied all of the above criteria, s/he should be awarded full marks; please do not flinch from using this mark band, as it is an attainable one at AS level.

Quality of written communication

No specific marks are allocated to the quality of written communication, but it should be sufficient at all levels to make meaning clear. It is possible, at the lower levels, that significant errors in detail and structure may impede or obscure meaning and thus indirectly penalise responses. At higher levels, information and ideas will be expressed accurately, concisely and fluently, although errors may still occur.

SECTION B

This section assesses Assessment Objective 3

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to show an understanding of how social groups are represented and represent themselves in the media, comparing messages, values and social signification in the media.

Rubric: If a candidate has omitted an aspect of this section's requirements (e.g. comparison or reference to specific editions/episodes), their answer should not be automatically judged and downgraded. Instead, careful consideration of what knowledge and understanding has been demonstrated by the candidate, should be made by the examiner, with some credit awarded where appropriate.

General Mark Scheme

Assessment Level	Marks /45
Level 1	0-12 – Irrelevant, Incoherent or 'Short'
Level 2	13-17 - Minimal 18-23 - Basic
Level 3	24-29 - Competent 30-34 - Proficient
Level 4	35-40 – Very Proficient 41-45 - Excellent

Level 1 (0-12 marks) - Irrelevant, Incoherent or 'Short'   **Section B**

- Shows no real understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers no textual evidence from two specific texts.
- No knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups.
- No comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- No textual analysis – purely descriptive.
- Often mostly irrelevant to set question, incoherent or 'Short' (under half a side of answer booklet).

Level 2 (13-17 marks) - Minimal   **Section B**

- Shows minimal understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers minimal textual evidence from two specific texts.
- Minimal knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups – 'general-knowledge level'.
- Minimal comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- Minimal textual analysis – mostly descriptive.
- Of minimal relevance to set question or brief (under one and a half sides of answer booklet).

(18-23 marks) – Basic

- Shows basic understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers occasional textual evidence from two specific texts.
- Basic knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups.
- Basic comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- Basic textual analysis – very descriptive with significant gaps.
- Some relevance to set question.

Level 3 (24-29 marks) - Competent	**Section B**

- Shows competent understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers textual evidence from two specific texts – award marks for appropriate choice/number of egs.
- Competent knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups.
- Competent comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- Attempts a balanced and competent textual analysis – descriptive in places with some gaps.
- Mostly relevant to set question.

(30-34 marks) – Proficient

- Shows proficient understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers frequent textual evidence from two specific texts, occasionally detailed.
- Proficient knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups.
- Proficient comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- A sustained and proficient textual analysis – mostly analytical, occasional gaps but award marks for degree of coverage/detail.
- Relevant to set question.

Level 4 (35-40 marks) – Very Proficient	**Section B**

- Shows very proficient understanding of the task and concepts related to chosen topic.
- Offers frequent and detailed textual evidence from two specific texts.
- Very proficient knowledge and understanding of the representation of social groups.
- Very proficient comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- A fluent and very proficient textual analysis - award marks for degree of coverage/detail, few gaps.
- Relevant to set question.

(41-45 marks) – Excellent

- Up to full marks should be given according to the degree of sophistication of understanding of chosen topic and its related concepts.
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of technical aspects of the representation of social groups.
- Very proficient comparison of messages, values and social signification in two specific texts.
- Candidate's textual analysis is presented with confidence, skill and flair as reasonable at AS level.

- If a candidate has satisfied all of the above criteria, s/he should be awarded full marks; please do not flinch from using this mark band, as it is an attainable one at AS level.

Quality of written communication

No specific marks are allocated to quality of written communication, but it should be sufficient at all levels to make meaning clear. It is possible, at the lower levels, that significant errors in detail and structure may impede or obscure meaning and thus indirectly penalise responses. At higher levels, information and ideas will be expressed accurately, concisely and fluently, although errors may still occur.

Question Specific Content Criteria

Section A – Textual Analysis (Unseen Moving Image Extract)

Extract: *The Italian Job (Dir. F Gary Gray 2003)*

Answer the question below, **with detailed reference to specific examples** from the extract only.

1)   *Discuss the ways in which the following are used, in this extract from **The Italian Job**   **(Dir. F Gary Gray)***

- *Camera Angle, Shot, Movement and Position*
- *Editing*
- *Sound*
- *Special Effects*
- *Mise-en-scène.*

                                                    [45 marks]

- **Examiners are required to prepare themselves <u>thoroughly</u> for assessment of candidates' answers to Section A, by several screenings and detailed analysis of the set extract, with close reference to the mark scheme, <u>before</u> any scripts are marked.**

The textual examples chosen by the candidates must address the question directly, in terms of appropriateness to subject matter and target audience for the film, rather than just a descriptive list of what they have seen or heard in the extract.

Candidates' answers should be tightly focused on analysis of the extract set and credit cannot be given for detailed discussion of the history or generic conventions of action adventure films at the expense of close textual analysis, however, passing reference to background research to illuminate a point is acceptable.

Examiners must be prepared to consider a point from the candidate that they themselves may not have considered, provided it is sufficiently justified.

It should also be borne in mind that 16 or 17-year old candidates are not necessarily likely to be familiar with any extra-/inter-textual references and should not be penalised for this.

Candidates are not required to cover each technical aspect in equal detail and some overlap between aspects is permissible. Neither are they expected to mention all of the following examples/aspects in their analysis. Candidates can select their own textual examples of the use of moving image language as appropriate.

NB: Candidates are not expected to know the original film, so no reference is made to any allusions in the mark scheme below.

Camera Angle, Shot, Movement and Position
Establishing shot; master shot; close-up (and variations); wide shot; two-shot; high angle; low angle; aerial shot; point of view; pan; crane; tilt; track; dolly; zoom/reverse zoom; framing; composition; hand-held; steadicam.

Examples:
- Sequence opens with a wide shot to show off the Minis and establish the togetherness of the team and establish the 'starting line' of the race/chase.
- Cars shown in tracking shots from the side to show that they're on the move
- Dollying in on cars as they move off
- Many camera positions used to emphasise movement and indicate the different elements/personnel/vehicles involved in the chase; eg fixed cameras mounted on car bonnets to place audience very close to main characters and in the midst of the action, to help identification and excitement
- Cameras placed mostly on same level as the characters to increase identification, low and high angles used to indicate location/eyeline/pov – eg between villain and main character
- Same camera posn/level/left hand side used for all three characters in Minis to establish unity of purpose and collaboration – a team
- Villain usually shown from right-hand side to indicate he is on opposing side
- Low camera angles used for cars to increase a sports car feel, close to the road increases sense of speed
- Use of high angle wide shots to show the team together
- Pov shots used to show approaching danger of obstacles in tunnel and in traffic etc
- Medium close ups used on actors to show conversations via earpieces and reactions to action, eg smiles and anticipation
- Reverse tracking shot of bikes in pursuit, at a low angle suggests their threat
- High angle wide shots of the cars, repeated for bikes show that this is a chase
- Aerial shots above helicopter emphasises speed and height, surveillance of Minis – used in a cut as a contrast to claustrophobia of tunnel
- Close up of bullet hole in Mini boot suggests significant event?
- Canted frame makes action more exciting and emphasises gravity defying stunts
- Crane shot used on exit of tunnel to retain proximity with vehicles but let them pass just in time, so increasing excitement
- Wide shots used to indicate changes of location, out of tunnel into sewer channel, into park, into city
- Placing of obstacles between cars and camera, such as structures/other cars in traffic increases feel of speed.

Editing
Sound and vision editing – cut; fade; wipe; edit; FX; dissolve; long take; superimpose; slow motion; synchronous/asynchronous sound.

Examples:
- Slow motion used occasionally to emphasise a stunt, such as Minis exiting tunnel
- Multiple camera angles edited to emphasise a sequence, again, exiting the tunnel
- Continuity editing used to establish links between team in the Minis and their opposition to the bikers and the villain
- Shot reverse shots edited between main hero and villain to signify almost a conversation, 'squaring up' to each other in a showdown
- Editing of music soundtrack, mostly subdued as diegetic sounds dominate, but volume increases when used in park section as a segue to next main action sequence.

Sound
Soundtrack; theme; tune; incidental music; sound effects; ambient sound; dialogue; voiceover; mode of address/direct address.

Examples:
- Diegetic sounds of cars/bikes/helicopter/bullet/traffic to indicate location and environment
- Much revving of engines/screeching of tyres etc to increase excitement and sense of danger/power/skill
- Music is very much a background feature, with drum beats used in the tunnel section
- Music creates a bridge between tunnel and city section as diversion for audience and brief release of tension – strings used to create a frenetic pace
- In city section, drums used to indicate urban warfare/warpath, the conflict of the two leads and the danger of the chase
- Repetitive bass notes used as opponents face each other
- Pace slows down near the end of the sequence to indicate its imminent end.

Special Effects
Graphics; captions; computer generated images (CGI); animation; pyrotechnics; stunts; models; back projection.

Examples:
- Traditional bike, car and helicopter stunt work – not CGI – revels in skill of drivers and pilot.
- Some use of computer graphics on the laptop – indicates high tech contemporary world in addition to enjoyment of conventional vehicle stunts.

Mise-en-Scène
Location, set, studio/set design; costume; properties; ambient lighting; artificial lighting; production design period/era; colour design.

Examples:
Sequence is in three main parts, all are dangerous and confined spaces for this kind of high speed chase.
Tunnel sequence
- Establishes chase narrative, only one way out, put 'heroes' under pressure and gives them a chance to show driving skill, as well as entertain and excite audience re. spectacle of car and bike stunt driving
- Use of underground sewer tunnel – indicates subversiveness of the heroes and their cheeky and daring escape
- Monochrome effect of light and dark looks dramatic and sleek/slick; visual appeal of use of different light sources, from car and bike red and white lights and strip lighting in tunnel, offers opportunities for reflection off windows, visors and shiny metal, as well as lighting up water spray – all creates a strong visual aesthetic
- Red, white and blue Minis – USA flag, patriotic and sporty primary colours, look fun especially in contrast to the villain's all black helicopter
- Helicopter almost used as a weapon itself – a physical threat as much as the guns/bullets used by the bike riders
- Villain also dressed in black with 'weasly' moustache, signifying his untrustworthiness and evil intentions
- 'Faceless' motorcyclists with dark visors, same as helicopter's windows, contrast with many expressions and individuality of heroes which encourage audience's identification

- Heroes smile – this is dangerous but great fun! Signifies their confidence and daring and invites us to smile at their skill as well – almost like a theme park ride.
- Costumes – heroes, all sporty/casual and individual styles, contrasting against villain and his henchmen
- Presence of female – of equal status as male heroes, part of the team, just as capable a driver in difficult circumstances

External sewer channel/Park – brief segue
- Sewer channel – conventional location for many such high speed chases in films
- A visual and narrative break from tunnel action, out into the light and open air signifying freedom and escape, offers some variety for audience
- Incongruity of cars on grass – they'll go wherever they like/can
- Indicates city in distance for next part of the sequence

City
- Heavy traffic in the city, grid-like arrangement of roads with traffic lights all indicate obstacles for the team to overcome in addition to escape from villain in helicopter
- Computer surveillance by one of the team, as well as mobile communication between all team members, signifies the 'high tech' gadgetry associated with the world of the contemporary action genre

Warehouse/under subway
- Another tight spot for the main hero, cornered by the villain in the helicopter
- Increases tension for audience as, aided by the editing, we can appreciate the dangers of a helicopter in such a confined space, which also shows determination of the villain and the obedience of his pilot

Section B: Comparative Textual Study

Answer **one** question on the topic you have prepared for.

You should make **detailed reference to specific examples** from the **two** texts you have studied for comparison.

2   *(a)*   *Consumerism and Lifestyle Magazines*

Compare the representation of materialism in the **two** magazines you have studied.

[45 marks]

The following areas may be covered:
*   Knowledge and understanding of how representation is constructed in the specified medium
*   Specific textual examples to illustrate points of comparison and address the question set.

2   *(b)*   *Celebrity and the Tabloid Press*

Compare the representation of celebrities' successes **and/or** failures in the **two** tabloid newspapers you have studied.

[45 marks]

The following areas may be covered:
*   Knowledge and understanding of how representation is constructed in the specified medium
*   Specific textual examples to illustrate points of comparison and address the question set.

2   *(c)*   *Music Culture and Radio*

Compare how music culture is represented in the choice of presenters and their mode of address in your chosen **two** radio programmes.

[45 marks]

The following areas may be covered:
*   Knowledge and understanding of how representation is constructed in the specified medium
*   Specific textual examples to illustrate points of comparison and address the question set.

2   *(d)*   *Gender and Television Situation Comedy*

Compare how the representation of gender is explored in the narratives of the **two** television programmes you have studied.

[45 marks]

The following areas may be covered:
*   Knowledge and understanding of how representation is constructed in the specified medium
*   Specific textual examples to illustrate points of comparison and address the question set.

2 (e) Conflict/Competition and Video/Computer Games

Compare how conflict/competition is represented by the heroes and villains in the **two** video/computer games you have studied.

[45 marks]

The following areas may be covered:
• Knowledge and understanding of how representation is constructed in the specified medium
• Specific textual examples to illustrate points of comparison and address the question set.

Mark Scheme 2732
January 2006

Section A

1   (a)   **Which four media companies does the passage suggest are involved in the Blu-Ray format?** **[8]**

Sony, Philips, Matsushita, Samsung (2 each)

(b)   **What is meant in the passage by 'the consumer will appreciate compatibility with current DVDs'? (lines 19-20)**

[4]

The buyer will want their existing DVDs to work on their new system (up to 4 according to clarity).

(c)   **Explain the main differences between the two new proposed formats**

[8]

- Blue-Ray bigger capacity
- HD-DVD compatible
- Blu-Ray better image
- Blue-Ray easier to combat piracy
- Blu-Ray better sound

2 marks each – maximum of 8.

2   (a)   **In what ways is this battle similar to that over video in the 1970s?** **[5]**

Possibilities:
- two different formats
- won't work in each other's machines
- different advantages to each
- one likely to become dominant
- people won't invest till happy with likely winner
- cost
- creation of 'standard'
- confusion for consumer

Up to max of 5 reasons. (1 mark for each)

2   (b)   **The next generation of DVDs will be able to store much more material than current DVDs. How far are issues of storage and/or compatibility significant for other new media?** **[20]**

0-6 very short or no reference to material outside passage
7-13 some grasp of reasons and understanding of significance
14-20 well explained good grasp of issues and understanding of significance.

3   **To what extent are new media technologies changing the way that audiences consume the media?**   **[45]**

Level 1 (0-12 marks)
• Likely to be short answers which may miss the point of the question
• Little or no reference to evidence to support points made..
• Arguments not developed in any detail.
• Opinions/assertions likely to be simplistic.

Level 2 (13-17 marks)
• Very limited reference to evidence to support points made.
• Undeveloped.
• Application of ideas minimal.
• Factual knowledge possibly inaccurate and may have little relevance to the question.
• Opinions simplistic and contextual knowledge limited.

(18-22 marks)
• Some reference to evidence to support points made.
• Some application of ideas.
• Some development.
• Factual knowledge shows some accuracy and some relevance to the question.

Level 3 (23-28 marks)
• Reference to evidence to support points made.
• Application of ideas.
• Some development of the answer.
• Factual knowledge largely accurate and relevant to the question.
• Some developed knowledge of the effect on audience consumption evident.

(29-35 marks)
• Some sense of argument and analysis.
• Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
• Factual knowledge mainly accurate and relevant.
• Some developed knowledge of the effect on audience consumption evident, supported by examples.

Level 4 (36-40 marks)
• Clear sense of argument and analysis.
• Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
• Factual knowledge accurate and relevant.
• Some evidence of the understanding of the role of the media in a wider context.
• Some developed knowledge of the effect on audience consumption evident and substantiated by detail in reference to evidence.

(41-45 marks)
• Thorough and detailed understanding of the effect on audience consumption evident, supported by detailed evidence.
• Comprehensive response to the demands of the question.

4   **Discuss the way media industries develop and promote new media technologies.**   **[45]**

Level 1 (0-12 marks)
- Short answers which may miss the point of the question.
- Little or no reference to evidence to support points made.
- Arguments not developed in any detail.
- Opinions/assertions likely to be simplistic.

Level 2 (13-17 marks)
- Very limited reference to evidence to support points made.
- Undeveloped.
- Application of ideas minimal.
- Factual knowledge possibly inaccurate and may have little relevance to the question.
- Opinions likely to be simplistic and contextual knowledge limited.

(18-22 marks)
- Some reference to evidence to support points made.
- Some application of ideas.
- Some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge will show some accuracy and some relevance to the question.

Level 3 (23-28 marks)
- Reference to evidence to support points made.
- Application of ideas and some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge largely accurate and relevant to the question.
- Some knowledge of the development and promotion of new media technology by media industries evident.

(29-35 marks)
- Some sense of argument and analysis.
- Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge mainly accurate and relevant.
- Some developed knowledge of the development and promotion of new media technology by media industries evident, supported by examples.

Level 4 (36-40 marks)
- Clear sense of argument and analysis.
- Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge accurate and relevant.
- Some evidence of the understanding of the role of the media in a wider context.
- Some developed knowledge of the development and promotion of new media technologies by media industries apparent and substantiated by detail in reference to evidence.

(41-45 marks)
- Answers reflect a thorough and detailed supported by detailed evidence.
- A comprehensive response to the demands of the question.

Section B

1   (a)   **According to the passage, which four record companies own 80% of
                the world's music?**   **[8]**

                Sony/BMG, Universal/Vivendi, Warner, EMI (2 marks each).

        (b)   **What is meant in the passage by 'against the principles of a competitive
                marketplace'? (line 9)**   **[6]**

                The idea that this merger will leave too few companies competing (up to 6
                marks according to sophistication).

        (c)   **What is meant by an 'indie' label in the context of this passage?**   **[6]**

                A record label which does not belong to one of the big four (up to 6 marks
                according to sophistication).
.

2   (a)   **What is meant by 'the long term health of the entire music industry'?
                (lines 10 -11)**   **[5]**

                Up to 5 marks dependent upon clarity.

        (b)   **The passage discusses the opposition of the independent record
                companies to the merger between Sony and Bertelsmann because, in
                their view, it will crate an 'imbalance in the music markets'. How far do
                you think globalisation is an issue for media sectors which you have
                studied?**   **[20]**

                0-6 very short or no reference outside passage
                7-13 some ability to relate material here to wider studies
                14-20 clear understanding of independent/major opposition.

3   How far do media owners need to respond to changing audiences and changing technologies?   [45]

Level 1 (0-12 marks)
- Short answers which may miss the point of the question.
- Little or no reference to evidence to support points made.
- Arguments not developed in any detail.
- Opinions/assertions likely to be simplistic.

Level 2 (13-17 marks)
- Very limited reference to evidence to support points made.
- Answers undeveloped and application of ideas minimal.
- Factual knowledge possibly inaccurate and may have little relevance to the question.
- Opinions likely to be simplistic.
- Contextual knowledge limited.

(18-22 marks)
- Some reference to evidence to support points made.
- Some application of ideas and some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge shows some accuracy.
- Some relevance to the question.

Level 3 (23-28 marks)
- Reference to evidence to support points made.
- Application of ideas and some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge largely accurate and relevant to the question.
- Some understanding of the notion of responding to changing audience tastes and changing technology apparent.

(29-35 marks)
- Some sense of argument and analysis with clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge mainly accurate and relevant.
- Some understanding of the notion of responding to changing audience tastes and changing technology apparent which is substantiated by some detail in its reference to evidence.

Level 4 (36-40 marks)
- Clear sense of argument and analysis.
- Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge accurate and relevant.
- Some evidence of the understanding of the role of the media in a wider context.
- Some developed knowledge of the notion of responding to changing audience tastes and technology apparent and substantiated by detail in its reference to evidence.

Level 4 (41-45 marks)
- Answers reflect a thorough and detailed understanding and knowledge of the topic.
- A comprehensive response to the demands of the question.

4   **Discuss the reasons why it might be in the interests of media organisations to expand.**   **[45]**

Level 1 (0-12 marks)
- Short answers which may miss the point of the question.
- Little or no reference to evidence to support points made.
- Arguments not developed in any detail.
- Opinions/assertions likely to be simplistic.

Level 2 (13-17 marks)
- Very limited reference to evidence to support points made.
- Undeveloped and application of ideas minimal.
- Factual knowledge possibly inaccurate and may have little relevance to the question.
- Opinions likely to be simplistic.
- Contextual knowledge limited.

(18-22 marks)
- Some reference to evidence to support points made.
- Some application of ideas and some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge shows some accuracy.
- Some relevance to the question.

Level 3 (23-28 marks)
- Reference to evidence to support points made.
- Application of ideas.
- Some development of the answer.
- Factual knowledge largely accurate and relevant to the question.
- Some developed knowledge of the reasons why media industries need to expand evident.

(29-35 marks)
- Some sense of argument and analysis.
- Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge mainly accurate and relevant.
- Some developed knowledge of the reasons why media industries need to expand evident.
- Substantiated by some detail in its reference to evidence.

Level 4 (36-40 marks)
- Clear sense of argument and analysis.
- Clear reference to evidence and examples to support points made.
- Factual knowledge accurate and relevant.
- Strong evidence of the understanding of the role of the media in a wider context.
- Some developed knowledge of the reasons why media industries need to expand evident.
- Substantiated by some detail in its reference to evidence.

(41-45 marks)
- Answers reflect a thorough and detailed understanding and knowledge of the topic.
- Comprehensive response to the demands of the question.

Mark Scheme 2734
January 2006

Assessment Descriptors

The Critical Research Study is marked out of a total of 90 marks with reference to the following categories:

Research (Question 1: 45 marks)
Analysis and Presentation (Question 2: 45 marks)

Assessment Level	Marks /45
Level 1	0-12
Level 2	13-17
	18-22
Level 3	23-28
	29-35
Level 4	36-40
	41-45

Preliminary Questions

- Is the specific area of study [micro research] appropriate to the overall topic [macro research]?
- Are the notes appropriate?

QUESTION 1 – RESEARCH - Questions to ask of the research

1. Has the candidate used both primary and secondary research methods?

2. What primary methods have been considered?
   - Interviews
   - Focus groups
   - Questionnaires
   - Letters, emails, phone calls
   - Remote discussions [e.g. Internet]
   - Textual analysis.

3. What secondary methods have been considered?
   - Magazines
   - Academic journals
   - Newspapers/newspaper archives
   - Radio and TV programmes
   - Books: popular and academic
   - Internet – industry sites
   - Websites –for individuals
   - Search engines.

4. Are sources acknowledged / referenced?

5. Has the nature of the research been explained? [e.g. logistics]

6. Is there reflection upon the advantages and disadvantages of methods considered?

FOR QUESTION 2

How far does the candidate grasp how their 'micro research' relates to the wider topic?

Overall for both questions

Quality of Language

No specific marks are allocated to written communication, but it should be sufficient at all levels to make meaning clear. It is possible, at the lower levels, that significant errors in detail and structure may impede or obscure meaning and thus indirectly penalise responses. At higher levels, information and ideas will be expressed accurately, concisely and fluently, although errors may occur

Candidates' responses should be placed into the level where overall they seem to best fit. It is unlikely that all criteria will apply in equal measure.

LEVEL 1	Question 1

(0-12 marks)
- very short responses
- no evidence of any research
- no referencing
- no explanation of process
- no reflection on methods
- focus likely to be inappropriate to topic area

LEVEL 2	Question 1

(13-17 marks)
- minimal evidence of research
- minimal referencing
- minimal explanation of process
- no reflection on methods
- focus may not be appropriate

(18-22 marks)

- likely to be no more than three research methods considered
- research may have limited appropriateness
- some referencing but incomplete
- limited explanation of process
- some reflection on methods
- focus of research may not be entirely appropriate for the topic area

LEVEL 3	Question 1

(23-28 marks)

- at least four research methods considered
- some, but not necessarily all, research likely to be appropriate
- most referencing complete
- mainly adequate explanation of logistics of process

- some reflection on methods and some evaluation
- focus should be appropriate to topic

(29-35 marks)

- at least five research methods considered
- much of the research appropriate
- complete referencing throughout
- clear explanation of logistics
- reflection on most and evaluation of some methods
- clear understanding of relevance of topic

LEVEL 4	**Question 1**

(36-40 marks)
- wide range of primary and secondary research methods considered
- research mostly appropriate
- complete and accurate referencing
- clear explanation of logistics of process
- clear reflection on and evaluation of most methods
- most points well supported by reference to specific examples

(41-45 marks)
- comprehensive and appropriate range of research methods, thoroughly and accurately referenced with supporting detail
- full evaluation of and reflection on most methods.

QUESTION 2 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

LEVEL 1	**Question 2**

(0-12 marks)
  * very short response
  * no sense of relationship between focus and wider topic
  * incoherent argument

LEVEL 2	**Question 2**

(13-17 marks)

  * minimal evidence of ability to relate research to question
  * lack of understanding of what the topic entails

(18-22 marks)
  * specific area of study may have limited appropriateness to the topic
  * limited evidence of ability to relate research to question
  * minimal understanding of what the topic entails
  * minimal ability to discuss the issues
  * minimal supporting evidence offered
  * some evidence inappropriate

LEVEL 3	**Question 2**

(23-28 marks)

  * some attempt to present an argument
  * some evidence of ability to relate research to question
  * some understanding of what the topic entails
  * some ability to discuss the issues
  * some supporting evidence offered

(29-35 marks)

  * good sense of what the topic entails
  * ability to present an argument and discuss the issues
  * ability to relate research to the question
  * appropriate use of findings as supporting evidence

LEVEL 4	**Question 2**

(36-40 marks)

  * mostly fluent response
  * clear relationship between chosen focus and wider topic
  * clear sense of argument
  * points well supported by evidence

(41-45 marks) In addition to the criteria for the previous band, these responses will be knowledgeable, reflective, will fully address the specific area of study and will be mostly incisive.

FOR INFORMATION

SPECIFICATION CONTENT REMINDER

Candidates will select appropriate aspects of their investigation, with relevant examples and evidence, to address the two assessment categories of:

Research (Question 1)
Analysis and Presentation (Question 2)

Guidance on the potential range/scope of candidates' study is provided in the specification, and below. Content should be within this range.

Women and Film

Research into the relationships between female filmmakers and the industry, as well as between their films and their spectators and/or female spectatorship of film.

(Film maker is here defined as director, actor, producer, screenwriter or other personnel, for example editor, production design, director of photography)

Gender issues such as equality of opportunity for women filmmakers in the industry; issues of gender representation in films; feminist critical perspectives; popular criticism; audience reception.
Candidates may draw on examples of films classed as 'feminist', films made for female audiences and films made by women as well as female responses to other films.

Popular Music and Youth Culture

Research into the relationships between popular contemporary music and youth culture.

The nature of youth and sub-cultures and their relationship to mainstream popular culture; the relationship between music industry and other industries, for example, fashion, film, television, video, live performance, Internet, newspaper/magazine publishing; issues of ideology and representation of youth culture and young people. Candidates may consider historical changes to popular and academic responses to 'youth culture' as a phenomenon.

Politics and the Media

Research into the relationships between the political system and the media.

Contemporary British politics only, but candidates may compare the relationship between government and media in the UK and other nations. The media as a tool of democracy, public service broadcasting; impartiality versus editorial/owners values; party political broadcasts, campaigns, photo-opportunities and lobbying; government press secretaries, public relations managers, spin doctors and the media; media commentators; the relationship between media owners and government legislation.

Children and Television

Research into the relationships between children as subjects of media representation and as consumers of television.

(Broadcast on British television only, which may include programmes made elsewhere for British consumption)

Children's' television genres; advertising targeting, and using, children; representations of childhood and gender; academic perspectives; television as education; research on the effects of television on children; children as participants in television programmes; views of parents, teachers and children themselves on television and childhood, effects debates, violence and theoretical models.

Sport and the Media

Research into the relationships between sport agencies and the media.

(British media only, but international sporting agencies may be investigated)

Relationship between media conglomerates and sport agencies; attraction and retention of audiences via sport in order to promote other products; the representation of ideology (such as global unity/competition, nation, gender, competition); proliferation of sports covered including minority interest sports; the media as sports watchdogs and commentators; as source of inter-media competition; sport and advertising/sponsorship, use of new technologies in sports coverage.

Concept to Consumption

Research into the processes involved in the production of a media text from its conception to consumption.

(Media products from Europe, USA or other countries)

A case study investigation into the making of a media product (in any medium), including the initial concept, planning, personnel, technology, facilities, time scale, finance, marketing, distribution and exchange. Candidates will need to understand the institutional contexts for production and distribution and the definitions of 'successful' reception by audiences.

Community Radio

The relationships between radio stations and their communities.

(British local radio stations, commercial or publicly funded, or niche radio programmes)

Functions and roles of community radio, including Public Service Broadcasting and local radio (public and/or commercial); the needs of community/community identity; public access; community radio as balance for London-centric broadcasting hegemony. Candidates are encouraged to use a specific example of community radio as a case study.

Crime and the Media

The representation of crime in/across a range of media.

(British Media only)

UK crime films; UK television crime series; True-Crime magazines; press representations of crime and criminality; news reporting of crime; radio

Mark Scheme 2735
January 2006

The total number of marks available for the paper is 90
Candidates answer three questions, one from each section.

Each Question marked out of 30 marks.

Assessment Level	Marks/30
Level 1	0-7
Level 2	8-11
	12-15
Level 3	16-19
	20-23
Level 4	24-27
	28-30

General Assessment Criteria

Level 1

0-7 marks

A weak answer, often characterised by a complete failure to understand the question. Answers that completely fail to communicate a coherent point of view, or that fail to demonstrate any understanding of the topic. Very short, insubstantial responses will fall into this mark band.

Level 2

8-11 marks

An answer with some attempt to develop a minimal view about media issues and debates, which demonstrates only a basic understanding of the question. Textual examples will be basic and descriptive. Arguments are not developed in any detail and opinions/assertions tend to be simplistic. Information may include irrelevancies or inaccuracies. The contextualisation of the media within society will be minimal.

12-15 marks

An answer which presents some attempt to offer a critical argument or point of view about media issues and debates, which demonstrates some knowledge of what the question demands. There may be limited analysis of case studies to illustrate arguments. The candidate's factual knowledge is mostly accurate and answers will be relevant to the question. Opinions/assertions are substantiated by some examples. The contextualisation of the media within society, as appropriate, will be limited.

Level 3

16-19 marks

An answer which presents an informed argument or point of view about media issues and debates. Textual and topical examples to illustrate arguments will be present. The candidate should use case studies competently to support the answer. The candidate's factual knowledge will be mainly accurate and answers will be relevant to the question. The contextualisation of the media within society, as appropriate, will be competent.

20-23 marks

An answer which applies knowledge of case studies to the topic. The candidate has a clear understanding of the issue, and has studied relevant case studies. The candidate's factual knowledge will be accurate and answers will be relevant to the question. Candidates will offer a clear understanding of the role of the media within a wider context.

Level 4

24-27 marks

This is work of confidence and accuracy, well structured and demonstrating an intelligent and well informed understanding of the topic. Candidates will demonstrate skill in the critical analysis and evaluation of contemporary texts and topics.

28-30 marks

This work is be intelligent, well informed, and precise; and perceptive and incisive insights into the topic, as appropriate in the examination situation.

<u>Question Specific Content Descriptors</u>

NB The bullet points indicate possible topics and details that may be referred to by candidates. They are not meant to be exhaustive lists.

SECTION A - BROADCASTING

Question 1

Discuss the importance of British Soap opera for audiences and for television channels.

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- Popularity of soaps over time
- Reference to audience figures of BARB, for example
- Social commentary
- Discussion forum for topical or contentious social and domestic issue
- Source of light entertainment , consolation, relaxation and inspiration
- Common reference point in increasingly fragmented society
- Uses and Gratifications theories

Question 2

"Broadcast news today is more concerned with entertaining than informing." Discuss this view of radio/television news.

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Ratings and competition*
- *Dumbing down and infotainment*
- *Role of broadcast news media*
- *Ofcom policy of accuracy, balance and freedom from bias*
- news management
- news sources and agencies
- rolling news programmes

Question 3

What have been the effects of the 1990, and subsequent, Broadcasting Acts?

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Reithean values, Psb ethic (inform, educate and entertain)*
- *Influence of ratings on scheduling, production, audience viewing and listening habits*
- *Effect of proliferation of channels/stations on choice and quality of content*
- *Advertising and sponsorship (regulations and codes)*
- *Government influence, DCMS*
- *Media moguls and multimedia conglomerates, media ownership and globalness*

SECTION B - FILM

Question 4

How far is it important for Britain to have a successful film industry?

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Current and recent strength of industry*
- *Influence of US film industry, currently and in recent history*
- *Government policy and support for industry*
- *Positive forces and effects of film in terms of culture*
- *Theories of Britishness, what makes a film 'British'*
- *Success, influence and legacy of British film industry to date*
- *Importance of film in general, and specifically for promoting/evaluating/analysing national culture*

Question 5

'No one would go to a film if they did not know what to expect. Films have to be predictable.' *Discuss this view of the role of genre in film.*

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Audience as major influence on film production*
- *Genre as a template, recipe or formula for repetition*
- *Genre as dynamic, able to adapt to :conditions, styles, trends, representations, social mores*
- *auteurism*
- *institutional, promotional constraints and imperatives*
- *film texts that support the view expressed in the quote*
- *film texts that challenge the view expressed in the quote*

Question 6

'Films that have a lot of violence, bad language and explicit sexual scenes are bound to be a bad influence on society as a whole. It is time for stricter censorship.'
Discuss this view of the effects of film in our society.

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- various media effects theories and related research
- Role of BBFC
- Current classification system
- Various cause celebre films and copycat incidents
- Role of Pressure groups/ government
- Arguments for freedom of expression, artistic freedom

SECTION C - PRINT

Question 7

Is stereotyping by gender more evident in the advertisements or in the editorial content of magazines?

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- Theories of stereotyping
- Representation theories
- ASA code of practice
- Audience targeting by gender, age, lifestyle, ethnicity
- Recent and current trends in audience/consumer statistics
- Pressure of sponsors/advertisers on magazine production/editorial content
- Magazine relationship with audience community/theories of interpellation
- Relationship between editorial content and advertisers
- House styles

Question 8

Discuss the beneficial effects that a local newspaper has for the community in which it is distributed.

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Alternative to mass circulation products*
- *Campaign forum for local issues*
- *Focus on promotion of local achievements*
- *Local news agenda*
- *Community-strengthening*
- *conservative bastion in a high tech market*

Question 9

*Discuss the view that the British press should **not** be regulated.*

The following issues may be referred to by candidates:

- *Self regulation in a liberal democracy*
- *Press and broadcasting freedom*
- *Legal restraints and constraints*
- *Role of PCC*
- *Role of Ofcom and its predecessors (RA.,ITC, BSC etc) and the rationale for the amalgamation*
- *Differences between the press and the broadcast media*
- *Existing legal constraints and regulations*

Quality of written communication:

No specific marks are allocated to quality of written communication, but it should be sufficient at all levels to make meaning clear. It is possible, at the lower levels, that significant errors in detail and structure may impede or obscure meaning, and thus indirectly penalise responses. At higher levels, information and ideas will be expressed accurately, concisely and fluently, although errors may still occur.

Report on the Units
January 2006

Chief Examiner's Introduction

The January 2006 session saw an increase in the number of candidates entered for all units. There is much evidence that Centres are heeding advice from INSET and previous reports, as examiners reported improved examination technique by candidates. This report attempts to identify examples of good practice in all units which it is hoped will lead to further improvements for next year's sessions.

There is advice offered here for improvement in preparation for all examined units and on administration and task-setting for coursework. The third edition of the specification has been published and can be downloaded from OCR's website (www.ocr.org.uk). Centres are reminded of the support available through the Media Studies e-community and OCR's INSET programme.

The first assessment session for the changes to topics in units 2734 (Critical Research Study) and 2735 (Media Issues and Debates) is January 2007. Centres should note that deleted topics will not be available on examination papers after June 2006, which may have an impact on re-sitting candidates.

2730 – Foundation Production

General Comments

There were just over 950 candidate entries this session of which 185 appeared to be re-sitting the unit.

The majority of the work fulfilled the requirements of the specification and, although there are a few Centres which insist on submitting bulky 'planning' files, this practice tends to be confined to those Centres with small numbers of candidates. Centres with greater candidate numbers appreciate the need for brevity and a close adherence to the word count limits for the Production Report (within which limits it is still possible to produce appropriate evaluative comments). The general level of analytical comment appears to be improving. This is particularly the case where Centres award level 4 marks for the Production Report. There is a general consensus amongst Centres of what constitutes an appropriate production.

The administrative aspects of the moderation process were well executed by most Centres this time with most meeting the deadlines and remembering to send in the mandatory Centre Authentication Form (CCS160). Only one form per Centre is required and should be sent directly to the moderator along with the Internal Assessment Mark Sheet (MS1). There were however, a few Centres which missed the deadline for sending in mark sheets or did not comply promptly with sample requests. Centres are reminded of the importance of making and retaining copies of all work submitted for moderation. OCR is required to keep samples of candidates' coursework for awarding, archiving and training purposes and so cannot guarantee that all work submitted will be returned following moderation.

Centres are reminded that the 3rd edition of the specification, published in Autumn 2005, should now be used. The updated specification is available to download from OCR's website at www.ocr.org.uk. The marking criteria for the Foundation Production unit are set out on pages 61 – 75 of the updated specification. Please note that mark allocation for the four levels in the mark scheme for the Construction element have been amended.

The new mark allocations are:

Level 1 0-30
Level 2 31-38
Level 3 39-48
Level 4 49-60

The mark allocations for Planning and the Production Report have not changed.

The Set Briefs

The most popular brief was the print brief - production of an advertising campaign. Interestingly set brief 1 – the film thriller - did not appear to be as popular as in previous sessions. Again the radio and television briefs were only presented in small numbers, as were the games package and the web-based work.

The film thriller set brief explicitly requires candidates to illustrate how their work relates to a 15 or 18 certificated audience. (This requirement may account for the prevalence of the 'stalker' thriller in work produced by candidates). Unless candidates can justify the appropriate audience certificate – most likely in the Production Report – they are unlikely

to achieve a level 4 mark. Centres are advised, therefore, to support their candidates in this requirement.

To include the opening titles within the sequence is very important to the success of the work. Centres should ensure that candidates keep to the time allocation as stated in the specification. Editing of video footage is crucial and the need to be well practised in the use of 'pace' within the sequence enhances the opportunities of gaining higher marks.

General levels of technical competence were good and most Centres seemed to understand and enjoy the brief. The main technical problems were lighting and sound quality. Some Centres use the music track as the main sound element. Care needs to be taken with this approach as moderators have seen a small number of examples where the end production could be taken for a 'music video'.

As has been stated in previous reports, Centres must ensure that health and safety issues and the use of inappropriate language are addressed. Car chases, bedroom scenes and night time scenes with the use of knives and toy guns are still in evidence and concerns over student safety and police involvement are being raised by moderators viewing such work. As in previous reports, Centres are reminded again of their role *in loco parentis* and of the need to consider health and safety issues as well as the appropriateness of students filming certain sequences. Well considered, detailed planning and the monitoring of candidates' work can but only support effective practice and outcomes.

The television brief offers the opportunity for imagination and inventiveness given the openness of the genre. Programmes aimed at a wide range of different child age groups were seen by moderators in the session, reflecting Centres' understanding that Children's TV does not just mean television for very young children. One or two examples seen this session were clearly well considered, using a range of still and live action images as well as animation.

The teenage magazine brief appears to be developing along two distinct lines related to the gender of the candidates submitting the work! Work submitted by females tends to be of the young women or women's style magazine, as seen in mainstream media. Males' work reflects either the 'lads mag' genre or focuses upon one area / hobby, such as music or football.

For this brief each candidate must include three original images in their magazine, defined in the specification on page 33 as 'Photographs taken by the candidates themselves, with proof supplied in the Production Report appendix.' Many of the magazines seen by moderators use large found images of personalities and smaller self-created images. This skews the presentation of the final text and it is not always clear to moderators where the three original images are in the layout of the magazine.

Centres are encouraged to discuss this issue with their candidates and ensure that it is the candidates' own original work which is the focus for applying the marking criteria. The level 4 Construction criteria clearly indicate that a candidate '…is expected to consistently demonstrate **excellence**…' For candidates to demonstrate this indicator, the criteria must apply to their original images and not those which are found images. Too often in this brief, moderators see work that relies upon non-original images or ineffective original images, yet Centres have awarded level 4 marks to the product.

The advertising campaign was the most popular task seen this session. It was generally well-executed and made good use of original images manipulated for context. In general, candidates used existing charities and attempted to re-brand them. It is worth considering the option of inventing an entirely fictitious charity, or using a little known medical

condition, as this could lead to more attention to form rather than an emphasis on content. Centres are also encouraged to engage candidates' thoughts about where campaigns could or should be placed or shown. Every media text has a context.

The radio work submitted this session had been developed and was presented with enthusiasm. The best work showed clear evidence of planning, scripting, sound mixing and editing. The most appealing productions were not 'read' texts but brought the medium alive through an appropriate mixture of voices, music, and pace to create a package that would interest a radio listening audience. The 'invisible' medium still offers a great deal to the creative Media Studies candidate.

As with the games package, there was little evidence of the web work for set brief 6. The use of 'PowerPoint' to create web material is not appropriate. This software is not fit for purpose. The specification clearly states that Centres must provide access to software such as Flash or Dreaweaver and that for the duration of the moderation period, the web pages (for a new band / music artist) '…should be placed online…and a URL should be indicated on hard copy printouts of the web pages.' (Appendix A page 60).

Assessment Criteria

Overall, the majority of Centres applied the assessment criteria with confidence. As with previous sessions there were Centres whose marks were either reduced or raised. This is done to bring a Centre's marks in line with the agreed base line standard within the moderation process of quality assurance. Centres are reminded that the application of marks must reflect the level criteria as stated in the specification.

The most common issue that arises from the application of the assessment criteria to a candidate's work is the level of comment provided by the Centre. If comments on the Coursework Cover Sheet are detailed then the moderator can see how marks have been arrived at. If Centres do not provide detailed comments, it is much harder for moderators to support assessments.
Construction is the category which still tends to be over-rewarded, though on occasion, inflated marks for Planning and the Production Reports are in evidence.

Advice
- *Common tasks for all candidates within a Centre seem to work best and provide the Centre with less difficulty in arriving at a rank order*
- *Expertise and the development of skills in one medium / task can be achieved by focusing upon ONE set brief, which could be expanded year on year across two or three set briefs*
- *A clear policy on Health and Safety must be established and adhered to*
- *The content of productions, along with clear and detailed planning must be put in place and discussed before productions are started*
- *The emphasis upon the use of original images must be made clear in all print based work*
- *There must be access to appropriate equipment, resources and training (for candidates and staff)*
- *The close study of real media texts related to the candidates' choice of brief encourages more detailed understanding of that task with the potential of more appropriate outcomes (and marks)*
- *Deadlines (internal for candidates and external for the Centre) should be met*
- *There should be clear labelling and administration of paperwork*
- *There must be detailed comments from the Centre on candidates' Production Reports work and on the Coursework Cover Sheet to support marks awarded.*

2731 - Textual Analysis

General Comments

The January 2006 session had almost 8700 entries for this unit, comprising first time entrants as well as re-sit candidates from June 2005.

There was a good range of performance across all levels, but with fewer high marks than in the June 2005 session. However, there were more candidates who attained competent and proficient levels than usual in this session. The majority of candidates fully understand the requirements of this unit, especially as far as Section A is concerned. However, Section B continues to be the question in which a significant number of candidates underperform, not due to lack of knowledge about their chosen texts, but due to lack of attention to the requirements of the rubric or basic examination technique. There were few examples of candidates who had run out of time and the majority of candidates answered both questions.

All questions were considered appropriate in their level of demand, allowing for good differentiation between all candidates, especially in Section B. There were no significant issues raised by Centres, except regarding the wording of a Section B question – 2a) (see below).

It appears that most Centres appreciated the change from having the moving image extract supplied on VHS tape to a DVD. The resulting improvement in picture quality and playback convenience seem to have been welcomed.

Where they continue to apply, some observations have been repeated from previous reports to help Centres in their preparation of candidates for this unit.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Textual Analysis - Unseen Moving Image Extract
1) The extract chosen,(the tunnel chase sequence from *The Italian Job* Dir. F Gary Gray 2003), provided plenty of examples of the five technical aspects of moving image language which candidates are required to discuss.

Screening Conditions
It may be preferable for Centres to use a large space, such as the Hall, Games Hall or Drama studio with a video/data projector and a large screen (and indeed many Centres are now adopting this strategy) so that all candidates experience the same examination conditions. Some measure of blackout will improve picture quality and care should be taken to test sound and picture quality in advance. Most data/video projectors have limited sound projection, so it is advisable to add a booster speaker(s).

It is the responsibility of Centres to check that every candidate can see and hear clearly, especially if they have specific difficulties with either sense.

Previewing the Extract
The DVD extract is sent in advance of the examination with precise instructions to Centres regarding when they should preview the DVD only in order to check that it functions and whether any adjustments need to be made to sound and picture quality.

It is the responsibility of the Centre to preview the DVD extract when advised, as OCR cannot rectify any problems on the day of the examination. If the DVD has not arrived when expected, Centres are advised to contact OCR at once, rather than wait until the day of the examination.

It must be stressed here that the opportunity to preview the extract is for technical reasons only. Any Centre suspected of leaking information about the choice of extract to candidates, or using this knowledge to gain an unfair advantage, will be referred as a malpractice case, whereby all candidates might be withdrawn from the examination or their marks disqualified.

Note-making
As far as note making on the extract is concerned, Centres should address helpful strategies directly with their candidates in advance (for example, dividing notes into five sections for quick reference) and give them ample opportunities for practice. The examiner does not mark the notes. They are simply to aid the student in recording details from the moving image extract and should be as brief and clear as possible.

Approaches to answering the question
It is well worth considering a recommendation to candidates that they approach writing about each of the technical aspects in turn, or in pairs, instead of in a chronological way. Whilst it must be stated that the technical aspects of moving image language undeniably have a combined effect, the chronological approach often results in too high a number of candidates leaving significant gaps. It is this factor in particular, which often leads to few top-level answers, as the mark scheme requires a near comprehensive response, without significant gaps, at the top level.

Centres are reminded to emphasise to their candidates that their answers are required (by the examination paper rubric) to be in continuous prose. They should not use sub-headings, notes or bullet points.

Examiners are looking for as balanced an analysis as possible (in proportion to the extract chosen) of all five technical areas. Unfortunately, many candidates' answers were uneven, commonly with two or three of the aspects dealt with by only a brief sentence or two.

As has been observed before, mise-en-scene is often neglected and the minutiae of camera shots/ angle/ movement and position tends to dominate some candidates' answers at the expense of analysis of other aspects. Some candidates failed to make any comment on the setting, locations, costumes and props although there were ample examples to discuss.

Centres have been advised in previous reports to advise their candidates to start their answer with a detailed analysis of the extract's mise-en-scene. Several Centres adopted this tactic this session with success. Candidates must remember that simply stating the location and what characters are wearing does not constitute textual analysis.

The best answers discussed the underground location and the low light levels at the start of the sequence and related this to the criminals. (Some candidates discussed the ambiguity of identifying the villains here, which is certainly valid). They disucssed how the open spaces of the sunny park were an exuberant contrast, reinforced by the music, to the tunnel chase and so signified the sense of fun enjoyed by the criminals racing their Minis and outwitting their opponents.

For a significant number of candidates, the discussion of camera techniques dominated their answer leaving gaps in the other aspects. Again, Centres are asked to explore in depth the creation of meaning by the use of different camera shots with their candidates, rather than just the ability to spot and name them. Too often, candidates wrote a generic answer that could almost apply to any extract, rather than offering a close reading of what they have seen.

There was evidence of some more assured and informed approaches to analysing editing, for example, temporal and spatial editing and how the narrative of the sequence and its effect on the spectator was achieved by the choice and succession of shots.

There were too many examples of candidates using immature terms, such as 'goodie' and 'baddie'. This is very disappointing at Advanced level. Also, too many candidates offered a very simplistic analysis of colour, which ignored its specific context in this extract.

Advice for Section A

- *Make useful detailed notes on the extract*
- *Identify moving image language techniques accurately*
- *Select appropriate examples from the extract to discuss – you do not have to cover the whole extract or every example*
- *Analyse why/how these aspects are used to create meaning for the spectator – deconstruct what you see and hear, explain function, purpose and effect*
- *Refer closely to the set extract – no generalised analysis of action adventure films*
- *Cover all five aspects – do not miss one out*
- *Avoid just describing what happens – do not just give a descriptive chronological commentary – analyse and interpret.*

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Section B: Comparative Textual Analysis

There was some evidence of strong teaching, with many candidates well prepared to address issues of representation using comparison of appropriate texts. Again, only a small number of candidates did not attempt this section at all. There were still far too many examples of candidates answering a question that had been set in a previous examination session.

Some candidates produced very general responses, which were not tied, as required by the question paper rubric, to an analysis and comparison of two specific texts (with stated editions or episodes). This limited their attainment as far as providing specific textual evidence is concerned.

Other candidates offered a textual analysis of two texts, often assured and detailed, but completely disconnected from the question set. This inevitably leads to underachievement, as they have not fulfilled the requirements of the question..

As mentioned in previous reports for this unit, it is crucial that candidates understand the processes involved in representation and are thoroughly prepared on the chosen topic using pairs of appropriate texts that offer ample opportunities for comparison.

Centres can assist their candidates by the sensible and appropriate choice of texts that fall within the rubric for this section, using differentiation where necessary.

Candidates should remember that they are required to identify their two chosen texts (and their episodes/editions) at the start of their answer to this section. Sometimes there was no mention of a text until well into a candidate's answer.

Centres are reminded that candidates are not allowed to take their studied texts into the examination.

There were a few examples of Centres who offered pre-prepared answers to this section, with candidates using very similar introductions and essay structures. This degree of over-preparation restricted candidates and made them unable to adapt what they knew to the specific focus of the question set and therefore they underperformed.

2a) Consumerism and Lifestyle Magazines

There were some good examples of carefully chosen magazines, good comparative textual evidence and an understanding of representation. The most successful texts are undoubtedly mainstream gendered lifestyle magazines. Comparing a male with a female magazine offered the greatest opportunities for meaningful comparison.

There was a significant number of candidates who did not appear to understand the concept of materialism, despite the fact that this term is used in the specification content for this unit. A couple of Centres expressed concern after the examination that this might be the case. This was raised with the team of examiners and discussed. In effect, the term 'materialism' is so closely related to consumerism that most candidates were able to attempt this question without problems.

There were still some examples of Centres choosing magazines that could not be defined as lifestyle magazines, but which were niche publications and far too difficult for candidates to tackle.

b) Celebrity and the Tabloid Press

This question was well answered by some candidates attempting this option. They had a firm grasp of the concept of representation and answered the question with thoughtful and measured analysis and discussion of appropriate texts. There were some excellent examples of textual analysis and discussion of the representation of celebrity.

There were, however, many examples of candidates who did not answer the question or simply offered all they knew about a particular paper whilst repeating the question. Far too many did not deliver detailed textual analysis and comparison.

There are still occasional responses that relied on that week's news, which were no more than superficial general discussions of celebrity news.

c) Music Culture and Radio

As usual there were far fewer answers on this option. However, most candidates were well prepared and had a firm grasp on how music culture was represented in an aural medium.

There was the occasional incidence of a candidate choosing to answer this question in preference to the topic for which s/he had been prepared.

d) Gender and Television Sitcom

As in previous sessions, this was the most popular option by far and most candidates were well prepared with good background knowledge of the genre, chosen texts and an understanding of the concept of representation.

However, a significant number of candidates referred to many episodes briefly, or none at all, failing to focus tightly on a specific comparative analysis of two chosen episodes.

There was some excellent comparison of the ways in which audiences' understanding of gender is challenged by use of a variety of comedic techniques. Several candidates ignored the role of humour in positioning the audience in relation to stereotypes or ignored the differences in the audiences for different types of sitcom. This frequently led to erroneous or simplistic assumptions about gender politics and its historical contexts. Many candidates seemed uncertain about the ways in which representation functions beyond character dialogue and behaviour.

The most successful answers explicitly engaged with issues of narrative and showed a good understanding of the concept. It must be emphasised that narrative is not about narrative theory. Narrative theory developed to explain how narrative works. Too many candidates, and it must therefore be assumed, teachers, are accessing the concept through the theory, which is unhelpful and often leads to nonsensical assumptions about how narrative functions.

As has been observed before, the use of differentiated texts would be helpful to all candidates. For example, the sophisticated wit and cultural references of texts such as *Frasier* and *Will and Grace* eluded many candidates. The most successful answers were often on the simplest and most conventional sitcom texts, such as *Fawlty Towers* and *My Family.* However, there were some excellent examples of confident candidates relishing mature and informed discussion of more challenging texts such as, *Absolutely Fabulous*, *The Office*, *Friends* and *The Simpsons* (these last two texts are not as simple to analyse as they might initially seem).

Whilst there may be many interesting points to make about gender representation in *Sex and the City* and *Desperate Housewives*, neither are sit-coms.

Some candidates confused class and sexuality with gender and failed to explain any relevant links between these other aspects of representation and gender.

e) Conflict/Competition and Video/Computer Games

There were very few examples of Centres choosing this option although some candidates appeared to have answered it in preference to the option that they had been prepared for.

The key points to remember when preparing candidates for this section are:

Advice for Section B

- *Choose a topic that plays to the teacher's strengths and resources*
- *Select texts that engage and interest candidates, appropriate to their ability*
- *Teach the basics of textual analysis and the concept of representation*
- *Give concise and helpful, rather than exhaustive, definitions and contextual information on a topic*
- *Ensure that the question paper rubric is adhered to in all respects*
- *Give plenty of examination practice and prepare candidates in examination technique and how to answer unseen questions.*

2732 - Case Study: Audience and Institutions

General Comments

There were around 4000 candidates for this paper, of which the vast majority answered on Section A. There were very few rubric errors, usually involving candidates answering both sections, in which case the higher mark counted. However, in one Centre 15 out of 50 candidates did both sections, indicating a serious need for the Centre to review its preparation for the examination.

Time management and essay structure remain two of the most significant areas for improvement, with evidence once again that many candidates are still spending too long on the short answer questions and not leaving themselves adequate time for the essay. Most candidates scored well on the short questions, but only those writing at some length could hope to cover the necessary ground to reach higher levels 3 and 4 of the mark scheme for the essay. There were a number of essay answers of less than 100 words, which is clearly inadequate for a 30 minute task. Centres are asked to note that material covered for question 2b should not be simply replicated for question 3 or 4.

The iPod was the most commonly used example in both question 2b and the essay for Section A, however, often specific examples were inadequate or entirely absent. Candidates cannot hope to gain many marks for these more open questions purely from generalisations.

A number of essays seemed to contain 'dumped ' information rather than making an attempt to address the question set. Centres are advised to give sufficient practice to ensure that candidates get used to dividing up their time according to the marks allocated. There were many Centres with single candidate entries, (presumably re-sitters), yet in many cases they seemed totally unprepared.

There are encouraging signs that many Centres are learning from past papers and candidates are more successful, both in terms of their time management and subject knowledge. Most Centres had ensured that candidates had good case study material to refer to, though a minority seemed to offer very narrow options to their candidates in terms of the breadth of material taught.

There is still an element of candidates adopting the 'survey ten of your mates' approach which unfortunately does not help their answers. There is still some evidence of Centres teaching outmoded theories which candidates have difficulty understanding and applying.

It is evident that much of the material studied for Section A is fast becoming 'old' media (DVD, Digital TV etc). Centres should consider using as case studies some cutting edge popular new media such as blogging and podcasting as well as considering the social uses of new media such as MSN, webcams and mobile phones. Candidates are to be actively encouraged to consider their own media use for this paper. Whilst there is evidence of this in case studies of MP3, there is much scope for it to be extended. Other recommended case studies would be the growth of sites like MySpace and online resources such as wikipedia.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

1a) Generally very well answered. Most candidates got full marks.

1b) Many candidates seemed to read 'compatibility' as 'comparability' and misinterpreted the question as a consequence. Others just took 'appreciate' as their 'hook' and discussed why consumers would like the new DVDs.

1c) Most candidates got the idea of difference in capacity and which of the two formats was compatible, but few offered any other points of difference in format. Many listed the companies involved instead.

2a) Again candidates often did not raise the range of comparisons as indicated in the passage and some just compared VHS to DVD as formats.

2b) On the whole, this question was understood by candidates and the main case studies offered were iPods and phones. However, most candidates did not write at sufficient length to explain the relevance of their examples. Some again failed to read the question and continued discussing the new DVDs.

3) There was a huge variety of case studies offered here. Few candidates made any reference to the most recent developments, such as podcasting or blogging, still talking as if consumption just means purchasing technology. Many wrote very effective responses which were substantiated by their analysis of their own and their peers' use of MP3s and computer games. There is still a tendency to cover too many technologies too thinly and also to not really engage with how audiences actually use new media. In most cases there was a stark contrast between those candidates who had evidence and examples to support their argument and those who did not. There were examples of candidates who appeared to have been taught the history of TV and radio since the early 20th century rather than looking at *new* media.

4) There were fewer responses to this question than to question 3, though those who did attempt it often did it well. Case studies tended to be thoroughly covered, such as Sky plus or games consoles. The iPod was much in evidence. There was a tendency to be able to discuss promotion better than development of new media.

Section B

1a) Surprisingly, many did not get full marks. Often Sony and BMG were listed. separately, but more significantly there were many candidates who listed Impala, the US Federal Trade Commission and the European Union as major record labels.

1b) This question tended to be well answered with candidates demonstrating a reasonable level of understanding.

1c) Many candidates got the sense of independence in the passage but a significant number simply described the type of music.

2a) This required a little thought and most candidates were able to explain at least the gist of it. However, there were some who talked about the health of the consumer or interpreted the passage as suggesting that the Sony/BMG deal was all good.

2b) A high proportion of candidates had no idea what globalisation might mean, despite their appropriate case studies. Those who were familiar with the term though

explained very clearly and in detail using examples, with a sense of debate about what it involves. Very few saw globalisation as being in conflict with cultural diversity and self-determination.

3) This question was well answered where candidates had prepared. There was a wide range of case studies, most of which were potentially appropriate. However, there were examples of Centres preparing candidates with material which was inappropriate such as *Pop Idol*, *Little Britain* and theories of hegemony which candidates did not understand. Some had a lot of historical background about areas such as the BBC but little contemporary information. Many generalised and did not provide specific case study information in relation to individual companies.

4) Where candidates had sufficient material prepared, this question was often answered well. There were some excellent responses about the battle for supremacy in the TV industry with detailed knowledge of Sky and BBC supported with facts. There were some good studies on the computer games industry.

Overall, it seems that, where taught well, Section B can yield excellent results. However, where candidates are unclear about the material they have been taught, Section B produces very poor responses. Section A is more likely to tap into existing student knowledge and at least allow them to draw upon their experience.

Advice
- *Candidates need more timed practice in advance of the examination*
- *Candidates need to balance their responses according to the mark weighting*
- *Candidates need to read the passage and the question carefully*
- *Centres should prepare candidates with more than one example of a media industry or technology in order for them to grasp trends and concepts*
- *Credit is given for understanding and analysis, critical comment and application of examples. Candidates should be advised against simply listing facts.*
- *The changing definition of 'new media' is well worth exploring- this unit should be cutting edge !*

2733 - Advanced Production

General Comments

This was the fifth session for this unit and the second January session. With approximately 900 candidates, the entry was double the size of last January's. There was an increase in the number of large, established Centres choosing to enter all their candidates for this unit in this earlier session, rather than in June. A significant proportion of candidates came from single-entry Centres, though most of which seemed to be resubmissions from earlier sessions. There was some excellent work amongst the fresh entries, particularly in the music videos and some of the print work. Generally, the skills demonstrated by A2 candidates are improving each session and often the moderators are genuinely excited by the work they see. However, as with last January, some of the administrative procedures were less efficient than in the Summer sessions.

Moving image work remained the most popular option, especially music videos or 'pop promos'. There were some film trailers and a number of magazines, but very little documentary or other TV productions, and almost no radio or ICT work at this level.
Fewer Centres created work which seemed too close to the set AS briefs. Only a handful showed insufficient differentiation and progression from the AS work.

> Some Critical Evaluations did not seem to make sufficient shift from the expectations for AS to those for A2. They showed little evidence of research into existing media and few references to relevant theory or concepts. Both are required at A2 level. The specification is clear about what elements this writing should contain and how this work should be assessed .

Assignments

Centres and candidates generally devised appropriate tasks, working to their strengths in terms of skills and resources. Fewer worrying practices, such as car stunts, were seen (although there were still some) and it was clear that the vast majority of candidates had derived genuine pleasure from working on their productions, demonstrating high levels of engagement.
Video
As with all previous sessions, video was the most popular medium and consisted wholly of music videos/pop promos for a range of genres. A vast number of these videos take a completely narrative approach, however, when the industry models might suggest this should be the exception rather than the rule. The best examples of work usually had a performance element with excellent lip-synching.
Film
This was proportionately more popular than last session, largely through trailer production. The best ones were complex, multi-layered and episodic in form. The weaker ones were still more narrative in structure than one might expect from this form – often seeming more like film openings.
Television
There were virtually no examples of this medium in this session.
Print
This was proportionately more popular than in previous sessions. Most print work was submitted as part of cross-media packages but some candidates produced pages from either new newspapers or magazines. The newspapers were sometimes disappointingly unlike any industrial models, with limited understanding of layout, font, appropriate framing of images, mode of address, or the importance of advertising to the industry. Such work was often over-marked by Centres. Magazines were sometimes dangerously close in focus to the AS magazine set brief. There was an issue with sufficiency in some cases with too few pages being produced. There were also a number of candidates who did not include original images.

ICT/New Media
There were very few ICT/new media-based submissions in this session. This is an area which many Centres could consider developing, building on the interests of many candidates in computer games and making their own websites at home.

Radio
Once again there was very little radio work this session, which is a pity given the flexibility of the medium and the comparatively cheap technology.

Cross Media
This was less popular than in earlier sessions. The best examples of those seen were truly cross media being several promotional materials in a number of different media. Producing all products in print, as is often the case, seems to be missing the point of this activity.

Assessment Criteria

Although most Centres' marks were quite accurate, a significant minority fell outside tolerance, necessitating adjustment in line with agreed standards across the national cohort. Centres are advised to use the wording of the assessment criteria when writing comments on the Coursework Cover Sheets as this keeps the assessment within the appropriate level.

As always, Construction was the element most frequently marked too generously, especially at the upper end. Conversely, some Centres were still a little harsh in marking the Planning element. It is vital that teachers credit the planning which they have *observed* the candidate to have undertaken and do not rely solely on the candidate's Critical Evaluation and their discussion of planning. The planning material submitted by candidates was often supportive, the best files being accompanied by a *slim* appendix of relevant planning materials. It is still imperative that Centres comment on their own observations to further support their marking of this element. Critical Evaluations were sometimes marked a little generously and a few Centres failed to annotate the Evaluations.

Administration and presentation of work for moderation

Although the majority of Centres continued to be efficient in sending work for moderation, a significant number missed the deadline for sending mark sheets or waited too long before responding to sample requests. In addition to work arriving late, other administrative problems included Internal Assessment Mark Sheets (MS1s) being incorrectly completed; no Centre Authentication Form and coursework cover sheets missing required information. If candidates have been withdrawn or are absent then the MS1 should be completed accordingly and the appropriate copies sent to the Board and Moderator.

Several Centres sent work with no postage or insufficient postage, leaving the moderators to foot the bill. This is clearly unacceptable.

More work was sent in the appropriate format than in previous sessions, but Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to produce work in the required format (as set out on page 68 of the Second Edition of the specification). The only formats to be used for sending to moderators are as follows:

- audio work may be submitted on either CD or cassette

- video may be presented on either DVD or VHS (**not** CD Rom)

- web work **must** be accompanied by a live URL as well as printouts

- print work may be **no larger** than A3.

As with earlier sessions, Centres are reminded that it's essential to protect the work from possible damage in transit and to label all artefacts with the Centre number and candidate's name.

Centres are reminded of the importance of making and retaining copies of all work submitted for moderation. OCR is required to keep samples of candidates' coursework for awarding, archiving and training purposes and so cannot guarantee that all work submitted will be returned following moderation.

Advice

- *The best tasks build on the strengths of Centres in terms of their skills and resources.*

- *Critical Evaluations should include:*

  o *a systematic account of the stages of planning and production*

  o *detailed reference to relevant real generic examples, indicating evidence of independent research*

  o *detailed reference to the relevant areas of institutional context and clear understanding of where the candidate's own production would sit within this*

  o *detailed reference to audience feedback and use of theoretical framework in which to place the production.*

- *Use the wording of the assessment criteria when writing Coursework Cover Sheets as this keeps the assessment within the appropriate level.*

- *Keep to the deadline for sending mark sheets and, where there are 10 or fewer candidates, send all work with the MS1 by the deadline.*

- *Work should be ready to send when the sample request arrives from the moderator so that the Centre can respond promptly.*

2734 – Critical Research Study

General Comments

Although there continues to be a solid improvement in the work of candidates at the lower levels of assessment, the overall standard of the responses this session was disappointing, particularly at the upper end of the mark range. A significant number of Centres are still taking an inappropriate approach to the unit and failing to appreciate its spirit. There is a still a marked difference between Centres who have guided their candidates appropriately and those who appear to leave their students entirely to their own devices. There is a real need for all Centres to take up the benefit of OCR INSET, join the OCR e- community and read the syllabus rubric guidance very carefully.

On the one hand, candidates are left unguided and break the rule, for example, that American films are not to be used in the Crime and Media topic. On the other hand, there are examples of teaching the topic where a whole Centre provides the same topic questions and all candidates refer to the same, two or three, academic books, down to the exact same quotation and page reference. Similar over-steering of candidates occurs where several candidates are not discouraged by the teacher to use the same focus question, thus breaking with the notion of independent and individual research. One Centre's candidates submitted responses this session on *Women and Film* and all used the same study pack and precisely the same website links with very little variation on specific area of study.

The Critical Research Study is intended to provide candidates at A2 level with a unique opportunity to engage in active independent investigation into a media related topic, enabling them to study the topic, learn about it and develop an individual critical response to the media issue/area researched. In addition, the unit allows candidates to develop research skills which will be useful to them in higher education or in the workplace.

However, it is essential that candidates are given very careful guidance, especially at the outset, as to the suitability of their specific area of study and how to engage in, reflect upon and evaluate appropriate research. It is essential that candidates should present a hypothesis, or a question, from which they can research and develop a detailed discussion and argument. In this session, there were too many specific areas of study that were not really appropriate, being either far too general or very limited and too specific. In many cases it would be advisable to present some kind of historical context for all topics that could feature as a key part of the response or help to inform a more contemporary focus. Some topics were far too simplistic. To ask "Does television affect children?" is a little like asking "Do cars have wheels?" More appropriate questions for discussion are "How far?" and/or "In what ways?" In a similar vein, there were many candidates that simply asked "Does sponsorship affect sport? Which is a little like asking "Do you get wet if you swim in the sea?"

Of particular concern are questions in the Children and Television topic where an unquestioning approach to 'effects' theory is permitted. There are often too many open questions along the lines of 'does television/advertising affect obesity/violence in children?' Responses tend to follow predetermined behaviourist models and often contain unscientifically small and suspect conditions for the audience studies. Many responses in the Crime and Media, and Children and Television topic frequently do not contain relevant Media Studies theory and often rely on information drawn entirely from Health and Social Care, Sociology or Psychology syllabuses; having no real engagement with textual representations or academic theory. There is an uncomfortably large contingent which bases its whole hypothesis around the simple hypodermic syringe effects and Bandura's

doll experiment theory, without looking at alternative theory or conflicting models of research or enquiry.

Another example of inappropriate focus occurs in a minority of Concept to Consumption responses where candidates describe, for example, (not even analyse), the *history* of media technologies such as MP3 phones or ipods. Some candidates may have simply been re-using their AS 2732 New Media Technologies research and applying it to the Critical Research paper, which is not appropriate.

Where Centres are uncertain as to the suitability of a specific area of study, advice should be sought via the Subject Officer or through the media studies e-community.

In responses to Question 1 there is an increasing tendency for candidates to overstate the basic, physical mechanics of the process of research. It is not necessary to explain how to switch on the computer and describe the steps between loading up the address bar and locating a search engine. Another unnecessary strategy is for candidates to describe, at length, in isolation from the content of their own research focus, the pros and cons of different research methods. It is better to describe why a particular method chosen is appropriate and then to discuss its benefits and disadvantages.

There is also a surprising tendency among several candidates to undervalue academic research and write it off as 'biased', asserting that 'it is the work of an individual'. What academic study and it is hoped, Critical Research paper, is intended to do is raise the importance of analysing existing theory and research, investigating case study examples and to allow personal engagement with the field of debate within a specific Media Studies area.

There were more candidates offering short responses this session. Rather than being a time management issue in the examination, this reflected a lack of depth and detail in the responses as a whole (perhaps as a result of insufficient focussed research).

Within some Centres there is a low expectation of the skills involved in this unit. However, a pleasing number of candidates managed the step up to individual and independent academic research, involving the retrieval and selection of a range of factual and academic information as well as the production of a reasoned and lengthy written discussion and analysis, using supporting evidence. Clearly, a rewarding experience.

For the most part, the four pages of notes are being utilised well. There were <u>still</u>, in spite of persistent and regular advice, a worrying number of candidates who produced notes that broke the rules set out in the specification. At its worst this led to whole sections of unacknowledged sources being plagiarised. Centres should remind candidates that examiners have access to a wide range of software and websites dedicated to identifying plagiarism. Any candidates suspected of plagiarism will be referred for investigation to OCR's Malpractice Unit and many have their marks for the unit as a whole reduced to zero.

Centres must remind their candidates that notes must be hand-written and large sections of continuous prose are not permitted. There were too many occasions where candidates had copied large sections of their responses directly from their notes. Please see pages **49 and 52 of the current edition of the specification for guidance on the format and use of candidates' notes.**

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1 – Comments relating to all topics.

At the outset candidates should try to establish that "this is what I want to find out" rather than "this is what I think" and then insist on proving it regardless of appropriate research.

Most candidates handled this question reasonably well but not all did themselves justice. Some offered very short answers, although it was clear from their notes and the responses to Question 2, that a significant amount of research had been undertaken. A broad range of research methodologies was addressed and virtually all candidates were able to distinguish between primary and secondary research. All candidates were able to describe their approaches to research, or list their sources, but it was disappointing to see that careful evaluation of methodologies and sources was frequently either very perfunctory or not evident at all. It is encouraging to see that more candidates are showing some reflection on their research methods, but more needs to be said than "this method was effective". To explain why it was effective is a higher order skill and this is suitably rewarded.

The weakest responses offered little more than descriptions of questionnaires and lists of websites and then merely stated that, "these were not helpful at all". A significant number of candidates were not able to relate their response to Question 2 in any way to their research. On the other hand, there was sometimes too much overlap or repetition across the two parts of the paper. In some cases there appeared to be no separation at all between the responses to the two questions.

Primary research involving questionnaires and focus groups was, with a significant minority of candidates, far too limited. For this question candidates need to be able to select research methodologies appropriate for their area of study and then discuss and evaluate their methods and sources.

Question 2

Women and Film

This question continues to bring out strong responses from those candidates who apply close textual focus and link it to a macro level of debate about representations and the issues concerning the relationship between women and cinema. Studies comparing iconic stars from present and past were usually productive. Focus on specific niches such as female teenage or child stars was also effective.

Weak answers tended to limit analysis to one or two films of a particular actress, without contextualising their importance or presenting a comparison of a range of films that represent an evolutionary or distinctive signature. Some stronger answers were able to debate the validity of, challenge and modify theories that currently exist about women and film. There was also a tendency to focus on actresses under forty. There was a disappointing decline in the number of answers about women as producers, screenwriters, technicians, directors or executives etc. Candidates might be guided to find out more about screenwriters or executives who have influenced cinema. However, there were some enthusiastic and informed responses on stars such as Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe and one particularly good response on Ida Lupino as film director.

Most candidates were able to focus on a specific area of study rather than offer too broad a scope. There were still many candidates who tended to respond with reference to a single star or director and only one of their films and present little more than a biography of their chosen star or director. A small number of candidates offered a simple textual analysis of a single film. This unit is not to be looked at as merely textual analysis.

Popular Music and Youth Culture

This question invited some well focused questions relating particular elements of youth culture to their relationship to the music industry. Candidates failed to grasp the point of the topic when they focused on a potted history of the music style or movement, detailed description of a particular clothes style or drug without relating the culture to the music industry's exploitation or indifference.

The topic was less popular compared with previous sessions and responses improved slightly overall. The best responses showed some degree of academic distance. Many candidates still failed to engage with the concept of Youth Culture and merely discussed youth audiences. However, an increasing number of candidates offered a definition of the term Youth Culture with varying degrees of confidence and some were able to explore the complexities of its relationship with popular music [and not always contemporary popular music]. The best candidates were characterised by a mature response to their research together with wider reading.

[Please note that this option will no longer be available after the June 2006 session].

Politics and the Media

This topic, which continues to increase in popularity, was answered very well when candidates took a case study and followed the progress of a breaking news story, (such as the media representation of Blunkett leaving office as Home Secretary or the Tory leadership battle and the representation of David Cameron), and then related theoretical perspectives on how journalism or television operates in British society.
There were many good responses with candidates' research and findings offering mature insights and substantial degrees of analysis. Weaker candidates relied a little too heavily on the coverage of politics and politicians in one or two red top tabloids. There were several thoughtful and detailed discussions concerning local politics and local media. A word of warning must be given, as there were some candidates who did not follow the specification ruling that **only British Politics is permissible as an area of study. (This ruling ends after the June 2006 session).**

Children and Television

A large number of students covered this topic. Responses were varied with some very well researched institutional angles and interesting audience responses. There was a tendency to summarise the responses of questionnaires or audience focus groups without much detail. For this topic, in particular, to simply gloss findings of a case study in one paragraph seems to undervalue the significance of effects, and potential diversity of audience responses. For example, a common statement would be "the findings of my sample of four children proved my point that children are affected by television viewing". This summary comes with no quotation or citation of children's responses.

Another problem for Centres is the very broad nature of some of the focus questions. For example, questions such as, 'Does television affect obesity?' seems to invite an undue emphasis on the state of the nation's eating habits rather than a focus on detailed textual

analysis of advertisements, or a less scientifically ambitious question, entailing psychology and food studies, about children's attitude to body shape or size. It would be better if the research started from the point of view of the children's consumption of television and the various representations within its output or the usages of television as a medium. There were some excellent candidates who analysed the 'educational' elements of television and were able to draw on institutional intentions to 'educate and entertain'. There were some excellent audience studies that were detailed, and analysed thoroughly their variously found data, offering the candidate a chance to observe variation and difference in their sample, and in relation to their hypothesis. In contrast, too many discussion or focus groups consisted of very little actual data as evidence and all too frequently were cursorily reported as verifying the candidate's hypothesis, with no detail or citation of verbal or written response.

The topic does lend itself to a taught approach. When Centres use exactly the same theoretical research in exactly the same way, this restricts the more able candidates, making it less likely that they will offer an individual approach or voice.

After the June 2006 session the topic becomes *Children and the Media*.

Sport and the Media

There was a greater variety of approaches to this topic, although a declining number of candidates attempting it. Some explored the commercialisation of sport as opposed to community needs and enjoyment. There were also some interesting discussions on the relationship between the effect of new technologies on TV scheduling and audience access to sport.

Many weaker candidates continue to offer little more than a description of how sporting personalities are represented in the tabloid press.

Concept to Consumption

There were few responses to this topic, virtually all very poor for two main reasons. Firstly, some candidates attempted to describe, not analyse, the whole history of a film's progress, without really digging into the production values or the specifics of a particular stage of the process. Secondly, a few candidates seemed to think the effect of a new technology, such as MP3, was legitimate to present as a product and as a process.

Community Radio

There were few answers to this topic, which is a pity, as those responses seen were usually very good. There were responses from one Centre that focussed on radio catering for the cultural and age differences within Greek and Asian communities. These were tackled thoroughly and with enthusiasm. Most responses were extremely well researched, investigating and analysing the relationship between institutions, regulatory authorities, audiences and community and regional radio stations.

Crime and the Media

The majority of responses were satisfactory, though there was a slight tendency to ignore conceptual or theoretical debate. This is an increasingly popular option and it was very encouraging to see some interesting interpretations and effective studies. The better responses came from candidates who confined their research to one medium rather than several. Areas of study that were successful were "Crime, moral panics and the tabloid

press", "Crime in Television drama", "Glamorisation of gangsters in British films", aspects of British gangster films and representations of female criminals.

Too many of the weaker candidates used the topic to regurgitate barely understood effects theories and this also led to significant errors in complying with the specification. Some candidates based their entire study on American films. The specification is quite specific in stating **British media only**. In some cases, quite able candidates underachieved significantly because this rule was broken. **However, please note that this restriction does not apply after the June 2006 session.**

Please be aware that some of the topics change and others are removed from the list after the next session in June 2006. This means that candidates undertaking the topics that are no longer available will not be able to retake these topics after June 2006. Please see pages 48 to 52 of the third edition of the specification for details of changes to the topics for assessment in 2007.

In spite of some issues still remaining, there is much to be applauded in work from the majority of Centres. Where Centres have encouraged the spirit of this unit, candidates have clearly gained an enormous amount from their research and have reflected, in many cases high levels of informed engagement.

2735 - Media Issues and Debates

General Comments

This is the second time that this unit has been offered in a January session. The number of candidates was relatively small compared to other units, many Centres having just one or two individual candidates.

Candidates appeared to be generally well prepared and responses showed a pleasing level of conceptual understanding and use of case studies to illustrate answers. However, in one Centre, a succession of similar errors by candidates was traced to a sample essay available on the internet. Candidates need to be warned of the importance of checking sources.

The main problem for weaker candidates appeared to be a lack of specific focus rather than one of misinterpretation. This is a recurring problem. Too many candidates fail to answer the actual question, and have a tendency to rely on a set answer that they have learned for a mock examination, or from a previous year's examination paper. Good candidates answer the question by using relevant case studies to demonstrate their understanding of the key concepts involved in the issue and the debate. Those candidates who fail to answer the actual question that has been set are falling at the first hurdle.

Time management was good in most cases. There were very few examples of short answers where candidates had run out of time on the third question.

Comments on Individual Questions

1) This was a popular choice of question. Candidates were asked to discuss the importance of British soap opera for audiences and for television channels. Candidates with prepared answers were limited to descriptions of generic conventions of soaps. The best candidates offered insights into the needs and expectations of audiences, and the value of the soap genre over recent decades for television channels. On the whole, candidates felt more comfortable in dealing with audiences as opposed to institutions. Sadly, there are still candidates who believe that Eastenders will help the BBC to gain evenue from advertising. Media courses tend to focus initially on texts and textual analysis. The next logical step is to progress to audience reception theories. More advanced courses should also offer an insight into the institutions that produce the texts. It is this final piece of the media studies jigsaw that is absent from the understanding of weaker students.

2) Candidates were asked to consider the extent to which broadcast news had become more concerned with entertaining than informing. Most candidates usefully analysed the concept of infotainment and the perceived dangers of dumbing down. Examples from television were more common than from radio. Most successsful candidates chose to focus on the textual details and styles of presentation of two or three specific programmes. Weaker candidates relied on generalizations and assertions that were largely unsupported by specific examples.

3) Very few candidates attempted this question.

4) Candidates were asked to consider how important it is for Britain to have a successful film industry. Whereas all candidates agreed that a strong British film industry was desirable, reasons varied from simple patriotic yearning to a more detailed argument based on economic and cultural rationale. The term 'successful' was usefully analysed by some candidates who pointed out the difficulties faced by British film producers when

faced with the narrow economic definition of the term. Some candidates wrote well about the importance of the British film industry to nurture talent, offer cultural representation and produce financial revenue. However, one apparent confusion evident in responses was that the British film industry and the BFI are the same thing.

5) Candidates were asked to discuss how far predictability is an important feature of films. Candidates were generally well prepared for this question using examples from the romantic comedy genre, the science fiction and the horror genre. Successful candidates were able to reconcile the paradox of predictability and freshness. For many candidates the study of the concept of genre had enhanced their understanding and appreciation of film. Able candidates managed to combine textual analysis with an understanding of issues of media audiences and institutions.

6) Candidates had to consider whether or not stricter censorship would be beneficial to society. Passive effects theories were generally understood, but some Centres' candidates were unaware of active theories. Candidates at one Centre used a prepared answer which contained factual errors and even included the tutor's personal experiences – a step too far. The best candidates were aware of the role of the BBFC and the trend towards guidance (e.g.12A). Weaker candidates seemed unaware of any changes since the 1970s. It is disheartening to see long discredited copycat stories being cited as evidence for increased censorship. Many candidates would be well advised to look at the case studies on the BBFC student website.

7) Candidates were asked to consider whether gender stereotyping was more evident in the editorial content or in the advertisements of magazines. This was, as ever, a popular question. The question proved to be a good differentiator of performance, with answers ranging from basic description of content to intelligent analysis of complex theories. Weaker candidates had clearly been prepared to answer a question about gender stereotyping and had thought very little about the differences between the editorial and the advertising content.

8) Candidates were asked to consider the beneficial effects that a local newspaper might have for its community. Some candidates wrote well about local news and community, if overly descriptive. Able candidates had gone to some length to research local newspapers and their effects and influence in the local communities. Facts and figures, supporting quotes from producers and consumers, and a variety of textual and other supporting evidence were helpful. Weaker candidates offered a superficial and exhortatory anthem, encouraging people to buy local for no other reason than for old time's sake.

9) Candidates were asked to discuss the view that the British press should not be regulated. Few candidates tackled this question, though there were some good answers from candidates who applied their knowledge of the current statutory restrictions, the code of practice and self regulatory mechanisms, illustrated and well supported by a pleasing range of recent and current case studies. Most candidates addressed the issues of privacy, freedom of information and defamation/libel.

Advanced GCE Media Studies (3860/7860)
January 2006 Assessment Session

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2730	Raw	120	98	88	78	68	58	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2731	Raw	90	68	61	54	47	40	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2732	Raw	90	64	57	50	44	38	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2733	Raw	120	99	89	79	69	60	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2734	Raw	90	68	61	54	47	40	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2735	Raw	90	70	62	55	48	41	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3860	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
7860	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
3860	8.53	35.29	63.24	86.18	95.88	100.00	502
7860	2.86	25.71	54.29	88.57	97.14	100.00	108

502 candidates aggregated at AS level this session. 108 candidates aggregated A2 level this session.

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp

Statistics are correct at the time of publication