GCE

Media Studies

Advanced GCE **A2 H540**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H140**

Report on the Units

January 2009

H140/H540/MS/R/09J

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Advanced GCE Media Studies (H540)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Media Studies (H140)

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

Chief Examiner report

In this first session for the new specification, examiners are pleased to report that centres have entered into the spirit of the changes and that there was much very good work from well-prepared candidates. In the report on the coursework portfolio, a range of issues are discussed, which it is hoped centres will take on board for the summer; the exam paper ran very smoothly this first session, with centres adapting well to the changes.

The much bigger entry anticipated for the summer will present greater logistical challenges but I am confident that if centres heed the advice in this report, it will be a successful session for all concerned.

G321 Foundation Portfolio Report

Introductions

In this first session for the new AS coursework unit, centres and moderators had to adjust to new tasks, a new markscheme and to new standards as although many elements of the new unit draw heavily on the old specification, the shift to 50% coursework and the requirement for electronic evaluation do demand something very different. There were, therefore, considerable adjustments made to most centres' marks from this first cohort to set the standard for future sessions. Centres entering candidates for the summer should look at the exemplar material from this session for guidance before submitting the marks this summer.

There were around 1000 candidates from thirty different centres; the magazine task was the most popular, followed by video. There were very few examples of the website and radio tasks.

As with the old specification, meeting deadlines was a key issue for centres and it is very important that all marks are on the system and with moderators by the general deadline of January 10 (May 15 in the summer). Once samples have been requested, it is vital that work is despatched swiftly so that moderation can progress. In most cases, this was achieved, but there were a minority of centres where marks and/or work were not despatched on time. In a small number of cases, there was also evidence from the dates of posts on their blogs of candidates continuing with work after the deadline.

Teacher comments on all three assessment categories remain essential to justify marks, but they should reflect the criteria and match the levels awarded. In some cases, teacher comments were very thin or even absent, which often makes it hard for moderators to endorse the mark awarded. Where there is more than one teacher at the centre, it is important that internal moderation has taken place. Again, sometimes this appears to be lacking, particularly when more than one of the four tasks has been attempted; there was evidence in some centres of different standards being applied according to the task; consistency is vital, otherwise work has to be returned to the centre for re-marking if a valid rank order cannot be agreed.

In group work, especially evident for the video task, differentiation in the marks awarded to different group members is to be expected and needs to be justified on the cover sheets. All work needs to be labelled with candidate and centre numbers as well as names- sometimes whole CDs with just candidate first names were seen. This can be time consuming to match up with candidates.

There were issues with formats this session, notably DVDs and CDs which were unplayable; centres should check disks on domestic players before submission. USB sticks were sent with work on by a few centres. Please note that this is not an acceptable format and moderators reserve the right to return work in such formats for re-submission appropriately. This delays the process and may cause a delay in actual issue of results.

Some issues around copyright and the use of 'found' material emerged. Most are dealt with in relation to the specific tasks below, but the main point to raise is that the specification quite explicitly asks candidates to create their own material; there were far too many instances of blatant use of images of well known bands culled from other magazines and popular music tracks added to videos without any comment passed by centres. In each case this either led to work being returned or marks reduced.

Finally, centres are reminded of the need for candidates to complete a preliminary task before the main one, which they should also send to the moderator; some centres forgot to include these. Though they are not marked, the moderator does want to see them as evidence.

Research and Planning

For this unit, centres had the choice of electronic or paper evidence for research and planning; at A2 for the coursework, all evidence is to be electronic, so a number of centres decided to make a start on this model from the outset, often using a mixture of paper and electronic evidence. Where centres kept to paper-based work, the main problems tended to be over-packaging making huge and heavy files for magazine work and sometimes an over-structured approach where all candidates annotated an identical set of industry examples of magazine covers. It should be remembered that to get a high mark for planning, there needs to be some correlation in the finished work. In many cases, candidates had been awarded level 4 for research and planning, when really the only justification was in the *quantity* of research.

Irrelevant planning exercises waste paper but also time which could be more usefully spent on the construction phase of the work. Such exercises do not help support higher candidate marks; centres are reminded that observation of candidate performance in the planning stage can, however, be very helpful and comments should be reflective of this.

Where candidates had kept blogs, this was better done from the start, rather than done retrospectively. The blog should be seen as an ongoing formative process rather than a summative one. It is not necessary for candidates to print out their blogs as well. To facilitate the work of moderators, it is also better either for the centre to set up all the blogs, with some commonality of address or to provide a central hub or gateway where all the blogs are linked. To type each address is an unnecessary chore for moderators and can lead to errors, particularly when candidates have created bizarre and lengthy names for their blogs.

The best research and planning blogs featured step by step evidence of planning, by way of storyboards, animatics, location shots and rough cuts for video and screengrabs of the process of creating their pages for magazine work.

Evaluation

The requirement for this to be electronic afforded a number of different options for centres to choose from. The vast majority of evaluations were presented as either a blog (sometimes in combination with research and planning) or as a powerpoint. Unfortunately, in most cases, the opportunities afforded by the electronic format were not fully exploited, as evaluations tended to be presented as mini-essays, either entirely text based on a blog or as a series of paragraphs on powerpoint slides. In a few cases, centres ignored the requirement to be electronic and just presented word documents, which is unacceptable.

The benefit of electronic formats is that the potential for multimedia approaches can be exploited; some blogs and powerpoints were illustrated with examples from the projects and from comparable industry texts, with audio, video embedded, images and links, making them much more fluid and interactive. The same can be true of powerpoints, which in turn can be uploaded to sites such as slideshare and embedded on blogs.

Some of the best examples seen were of presentations which used bullet points and whose delivery was then videotaped by centres; this gave the opportunity to see how candidates thought about and engaged with the questions, rather than just ticked boxes in essay-style writing. There were also a very small number of director commentaries, which can be achieved both on DVD but also by uploading a re-edit with voiceover to youtube, for example.

Though evaluations can be presented as a group, the evidence of individual contributions needs to be more rigorous if a high mark is to be justified. In such instances, a filmed presentation or voiceover discussion might well prove the best option. Audience feedback could be captured as podcasts or video discussion which would be more useful evidence for a blog.

Crucially, evaluations must use the questions in the Specification and not simply be a blow-by-blow account of the project. A number of centres ignored the questions and made no attempt to address them, suggesting a need to read the Specification!

Finally, it is best to think of the Evaluation as a product in its own right. Given that it is worth 20 marks, it should be well presented, making full use of the format chosen.

Construction

60% of the marks are allocated to this category and it would be fair to suggest that this is the first element that moderators will consider. Good construction makes it easier to support good marks for research and planning; a weak piece of construction can rarely support high marks for research and planning. It is possible that a candidate can pick up higher evaluation marks in acknowledging some of the limitations of a weaker piece of construction, but again on the whole a successful video, magazine, website or radio programme will give scope for plenty to be said in the evaluation category as well.

It was in this category that the most significant over-marking took place, with many products valued at level 4 which showed little or no evidence of the criteria needed to achieve this. Though a 'best fit' model still applies, there must be a very clear sense that the production demonstrates a range of skills to a high level if it is to reach level 4. The preliminary task gives the opportunity to experiment and to make mistakes; in some cases, the preliminary looked better than the main task, which suggests that candidates learnt little from it. In some cases, however, there was a very clear sense of progression between the two, demonstrated in both the production and in the evaluation, which is very pleasing.

Centres should not feel that they have to 'sell' candidates' work to the moderator; it is fine to be honest about shortcomings as well as strengths in arriving at a final mark. In practice, this type of marking tends to be more accurate!

Film Opening

Key to this task is an understanding of the conventions of film openings, including how titles work institutionally. Occasionally work looked more like trailers, suggesting a lack of research into openings, despite the material in the research and planning folders. Thrillers still predominated, though there were examples of a number of other genres. The main problems were with camerawork, which was often shaky and used inappropriate zooms, framing, which usually revealed far more than candidates wanted from a scene and editing, which sometimes did not make sense.

Sometimes candidates seemed to have spent a lot of time looking at irrelevant models for their work; both in paper-based planning and on blogs, there were often lengthy analyses of films which bore little relation to the product eventually made.

Very few openings seen paid much attention to titling in imaginative ways, which can often reduce the need for effective acting skills by disguising the limitations. Soundtracks were problematic, in that they often made use of copyright material (usually well-known tracks) without any acknowledgement of the source. Frequently, these seemed to jar with the material on screen as well. Some better sequences made use of wild sound or sound effects in interesting ways, though others were dominated by the noise of the wind, often at the expense of the dialogue. Some sequences were considerably longer than two minutes, which should be seen as the target. Though there is no formal penalty for going over, significantly longer sequences tend to penalise themselves as more mistakes are made.

Magazine

The best magazines really showed a grasp of genre conventions and attention to detail. Where they fitted a niche within the music magazine market, they often had a very clear sense of audience, layout and mode of address. Some even integrated research and planning blogs by styling them in the same way as the magazine cover, creating a brand identity.

For this task, it is clear that centres need access to image manipulation and desktop publishing programs and to train candidates in their use. In some cases, there seemed to be an attempt to deliver the unit 'on the cheap' with inadequate software, which simply does not work. To get a real sense of layout that moves beyond a school newsletter is essential if candidates are to gain media understanding from the experience.

Photography is important to this task. In a number of cases, images of real bands had clearly been taken from existing sources; this is in breach of the specification rules. Other problems with photos, included using very poor images, often with 'redeye', magazines dominated by a very similar set of images all of the same person with very little variety, and 'sharing' of a 'pool' of photos by candidates so that the same ones crop up in several magazines. Care must be taken in verifying the source of images and showing the development through screengrabs from original shot to finished piece; this was often done to great effect on the blogs. It is particularly important where there is great variance in the quality of final images, as if there is no evidence of the evolution of a photo to final product, this raises suspicions that it may not be the candidate's work.

This task produced the most unnecessary packaging by centres, with laminated magazines and bulky folders. In practice, it is not actually necessary to print out the magazine at all, as it could be provided as pdfs or included on a blog. In some cases, a version on the blog actually looked significantly better than a printed version.

As for the previous Specification, centres are advised to physically separate finished pieces from the planning, only including one version of the finished work, as it can often be confusing to work out which is the final product and which is a nearly-final draft. When other paperwork for magazine production is included in a folder, the finished magazine should be placed at the start, so that the moderator can track back from there.

Despite these reservations, this task produced a number of quite outstanding pieces of work and centres and candidates can be congratulated for excellent practice where the task has been done well.

Websites

There were very few candidates doing this task, which was uniformly poorly done. Key criteria for a website is that it should be online. None of the material presented was accessible online, defeating the object of the task. CDs with the files were frequently useless in trying to reconstruct what the candidate was attempting to do and in most cases did not contain the elements required, such as video, audio, images and links. Centres should not embark on this task at all, unless they have the facilities to do it and the skills to teach it. If the criteria are not met at all, candidates marks will be reduced to level 1.

This task also demands more than just using an online website creation site as such templates broadly 'do the task for you'. Candidates need to have opportunities to show their skills.

Radio

Only one small centre entered any radio work, which met the criteria and showed promise. There were issues over audibility, suggesting more time is needed on practice with the equipment. Candidates were sometimes tempted into a humorous approach to the task, which is unwise for a news programme. This task, like the website, lends itself to opportunities to use real live material, such as real local news stories and interviews with genuine local people rather than candidates pretending to be farmers, police officers and councillors. Such an approach would help to produce more structured and serious work.

Conclusions

Thanks are due to centres for allowing themselves to be the guinea pigs in the first session for the new specification! It was inevitable that this session would involve very significant movement of centre marks to set a new standard. The expectations of the candidates from 50% coursework are greater than from 40% as it inevitably has a more significant impact on overall grades and we have looked very carefully at the threshold of achievement expected at both grade A and grade E in order to set a standard for future sessions.

There was some quite outstanding work and much in evidence that fully captured the spirit of the new specification and the potential of new media, showing many centres moving forward effectively.

In summary, points to note:

- research and planning needs to be clearly linked to achievement in construction
- construction needs to be rigorously checked against the levels criteria
- evaluation needs both to address the questions in the spec and to make full use of electronic potential
- when using more than one of the four tasks, internal moderation needs to be applied with rigour
- tasks should not be offered without appropriate software and training for candidates
- appropriate formats for sending material to moderators should be adhered to and the volume of packaging minimised
- teacher comments should address the criteria and the levels and be matched to the work
- preliminary tasks should be submitted as a matter of course
- the requirement for original work needs to be addressed
- hang on to your coursework as candidates will need to refer to it in the G325 exam at the end of the second year. This includes keeping electronic resources, such as blogs, active.

G322/3 Key Media Concepts (TV/Radio Drama) January 2009

Introduction

The entry for the January session was approximately 2,200 candidates for G322 and 9 candidates for G323. There were no reported problems with either of the extracts, (for TV drama: **Monarch of the Glen**, and Radio Drama: **The Sensitive**), nor with the question set. These extracts enabled differentiation through the examination of the key concept of the representation of age for question one, with the analysis of the extracts technical features. Given the tiny number of entries for Radio drama this report focuses on the unit G322 Television Drama, and reserves a paragraph for the exam paper G323 (headed below), which shares question 2.

Overall this was a good inaugural session, with some examples of excellent student responses in analysis and understanding of the question set in relation to television drama. For question one, the majority of candidates addressed the technical features of camera shot, angle and composition, mise en scène well, with some fluency at times, but the technical areas of sound and editing, particularly the latter, need some refinement in candidates' responses. There was plenty of evidence of students being able to reach the higher end of the marks available and candidates, where possible, were awarded full or nearly full marks for their responses.

Candidates who had been guided in the question 1 essay responses often offered complete 'micro' substantiation for representational points. Unfortunately, there was some evidence in candidates' responses that they had been taught a legacy 2731 approach to answering this question. For question two, there was a reasonable range of case studies offered within the answers with the majority of students understanding the difference between the new requirements and those of the legacy 2732. Question 2 was open enough for students to select effectively from the case studies examined and there were some refined candidate responses notably on the music industry and the video game industry. Overall, the paper achieved a good level of differentiation within the cohort; being accessible enough, as well as adequately stretching.

The choice of topics available for question 2 enabled centres to choose appropriate case studies in addressing the question on institutions and audiences. It was felt by examiners that the candidates had in the majority of cases been well prepared to answer the questions set. The main area for development is to have candidates address the question posed rather than respond with a 'write all I know about the institution' approach. Those candidates least well prepared could offer only a very generalised approach to the case study without dealing with the key issue of production and distribution as the question demanded.

There was some evidence of a need for improvement in time management, especially for question 2, when sometimes candidates wrote shorter responses than in question 1. Centres need to ensure that candidates spend an appropriate amount of time on each question and this need to be addressed given the equal weighting of marks (50) to each question.

There is no requirement to include unapplied media theory in this paper – its ethos is to test key concepts in Media Studies with applied understanding and exemplification. Simply tagging on media theory (such as Mulvey's 'male gaze') in a question looking at the representation of age is misplaced, when a discussion of stereotypes and ideology would be more appropriate given the construction of representation by the technical features of the text.

As indicated by the mark scheme for this exam paper, the use of media vocabulary is a very important part of the exam at AS level. The mark scheme allocates a number of marks for the use of terminology. Good practice suggests that candidates should be keeping a vocabulary list of technical language for both questions. At times, in question one there was an absence of subject-specific vocabulary in some candidates' responses and some common misconceptions like an 'insert shot'. On page 18 of the specification there is a list of the key terminology used in relation to analysis of the technical features of television drama. It is advisable that centres ensure coverage of these in preparation of the candidates in the exam, likewise for students embarking on the analysis of radio drama this key vocabulary list can be found on page 24 of the specification.

Question 1 – Television drama

Candidates structured their responses in a number of ways; some began by addressing the concept of representation in the extract and a discussion of the representational differences between Amy McDougall the stereotypical teenager and contrasted this with the Headteacher and the middle-aged character Paul Macdonald. Then the candidates would address the technical areas one by one. Stronger candidates could provide an integrated analysis of the extract through analysis of key examples identified. These candidates explored *how* the technical features could be applied using a combination of the technical features, for example, in discussion of the argument between Paul Macdonald and Amy. They could then place this sequence of conflict in it's mise en scène (the stately home), through the use of shot reverse shot (editing), shot types used and through sound, both diegetic and non diegetic in discussion of how Paul's anger and authority, used as parental control, would order Amy (stereotyped as the teenage tear away) back to school.

Either of these approaches to the structure of question 1 is advisable and centres need to help structure the candidates' responses in the classroom. Candidates are advised against lengthy introductions about what they are going to say and against theoretical introductions and/ or historical contexts to television drama. Candidates are advised to get straight on with their analysis.

It is also important that candidates move from description of key technical areas to analysis of *how* representations are constructed. This will enable candidates to achieve higher marks for their responses. The mark scheme enables credit to be awarded to students at three different levels Explanation, Analysis and Argument (20 Marks), Use of Examples (20 Marks) and Use of Terminology (10 Marks). Centres are advised to make the mark scheme available to candidates for the summer session so that they are aware of how the work is assessed. This could also be used for the marking of timed assignments in the classroom and for the marking of mock exam papers.

Camera Shot, Angle and Composition

This technical feature was well addressed by the candidates.. Where candidates used the correct terminology and could describe shot composition, this on the whole was well done. Weaker candidates were able to describe key shots used in exemplification, but would often lack explicit links to how these shots assisted in the construction of the representation of age.

Mise en scène

There was plenty of evidence of candidates' discussion of clothing and props, visual iconography and character Setting, although a little more problematic for some, was used well in discussion of the range of representations of age used in the extract. More able candidates would move beyond description and use the technical features of mise en scène in order to discuss the signification of the representation of age.

Sound

Candidates often discussed this technical feature with some limitations, with some focusing solely on the use of dialogue or accent. Candidates did also relate the use of non diegetic sound to the emotional state of Amy whilst she was in her room and the contrast of non diegetic music showing the adults to be happy in the work they performed. The use of non-diegetic sound to emphasise Amy's isolation was often commented on, as was the diction of the middle-aged characters that spoke "properly". Other weaker candidates showed confusion with technical terminology, getting diegetic and non-diegetic sound the wrong way round. It is advised that centre's do cover the technical features of sound thoroughly in order to give candidates an opportunity to fully engage with the analysis of the extract.

Editing

This proved to be the most problematic for candidates and the one technical area of analysis that was often omitted in candidate's answers. Most candidates who addressed editing were able to address the type of transitions used and could comment on the pace of the editing. Weaker candidates often omitted any discussion of editing or offered quite simplistic accounts of how editing was used, for example in the use of quick succession cuts and short takes when the community takes apart the fishing hut at the end of the sequence.   More able candidates could analyse technical issues of editing by way of analysis of the ellipsis, accounting for how the extract collapsed a series of events, for example, in explaining the narrative to represent Amy as a 'troubled' teenager who had no option left but to run away from school and then the home of Paul McDonald; then candidates were then able to comment on pacing, the use of continuity, most often through the shot reverse shot compositions in the extract and some through the use of sound as well. These candidates cleverly discussed how soundbridges were constructed through the use of non-diegetic music in the representation of age, for example, the stringed mood music representing the gloomy prospect that Amy faces, or the use of upbeat music to represent the happiness of the small rural community.

The advice offered to centres is to encourage as much practice on the concept of editing as possible and how this assists in the construction of representation. Again begin with identifying the techniques and encourage students to apply these to a range of examples in class and importantly, test them on this

Representation

This key media concept was either addressed at the beginning of the candidates or at the end, but sometimes when at the end, the analysis was all too cursory. Candidates were able to relate the representation of a variety of age groups closely to the textual elements of the extract. There was some solid analysis of age and how it can be stereotyped in a variety of ways: teenage emotionality; adult authority; caring nature of the older female adult and other sensibly reasoned representations.   Weaker candidates failed to focus on the representation of age, relating their analysis to the region or the gender of the characters.

Radio Drama

The extract used was **The Sensitive: The Hanged man**. Of those candidates who answered the question well, there was a clear link between the analysis of technical aspects of radio drama and the key media concept of representation and age. Most candidates dealt with the issue of speech and sound competently and at times in a detailed and thorough way, the major omission from candidate's answers was the analysis of editing in the construction of the radio drama.

General Comments on Question 2

Although the question was a wide one, many candidates still failed to focus their discussion and case study material on the production and distribution phases of media production. The best answers showed awareness of the ways in which institutions shape and distribute products in order to meet the demands of their audiences and to make profit; they were able to illustrate this with detailed reference to case study material.

Those candidates who could use their case studies and really focus on the question rather than simply regurgitating the whole case study, wrote some interesting and well founded answers. One centre on video games provided some good examples of case studies and the candidates had obviously been thoroughly prepared. The case study provided enough depth, by looking at three manufacturers and individual games developers, for the candidates to show a breadth of understanding in their answers. Overall the best candidates related closely to the focus of the question, writing about the relationship between audience and industry with particular emphasis on the production and distribution side of the industry. Centres are advised to refer to and use the questions on page 20 of the Specification and to ensure coverage of key institutional concepts such as synergy, cross media convergence, media technologies and audience consumption. This will aid the candidates' conceptual understanding of institutions and audiences. It is also necessary for candidates to address the question set, rather than offer a general address of institutional practices across the board.

The most popular media areas studied were film and music, the least were newspapers and radio.

Film Industry

Popular case studies included the study of UK film companies such as Working Title and Film Four, which provided plenty of promising material, particularly when their working practices were contrasted with Hollywood equivalents. Some centres had prepared candidates for this unit with single text studies (i.e. of an individual film), which clearly did not provide candidates with sufficient knowledge of wider institutional and audience contexts to tackle the question set. Institutional questions, which dealt with a comparison of successful American institutions versus less commercially successful home grown UK industries often worked well. The contrast of a large US studio like Time Warner versus DNA Films was useful. Candidates with an entirely British view, Working Title on its own, or Big Arty Productions and independent British film making, for example, Bullet Boy and 'This is England' also fared very well, but would benefit with some comparison to Hollywood practice. Examiners noted that up to date referencing of the new boom in 3D films was done very well by one or two centres and candidates were able to discuss the download of movies through home communication networks and the impact of Blue Ray DVD on film consumption.

The Music Industry

The candidates displayed good contemporary knowledge and understanding of record companies and the production and distribution practices of the music industry. There was a focus on how the big four major record companies produced and distributed music, and a recognition of the role of music download sites. There were also some very good studies of 'independent' or subsidiary companies such as Warp records and the candidates showed some excellent knowledge and understanding of technological convergence, synergistic practices and cross media ownership that record companies use in targeting British audiences. A good starting point for a case study of a record company is to examine patterns of music consumption and to investigate the relationship between artist and record label as a prelude to exploring the concepts of institution and audience. Examples used in analysis of the Music industry included contrasts between Sony and a small British independent outfit like Soul Jazz. Such contrasts worked well as candidates could compare and contrast production, distribution, marketing &

consumption patterns across the board.   On occasion candidates recognised the interdependence of major and minor record companies as having a symbiotic relationship in the music business.

The Newspaper industry

The newspaper industry tended to generate responses which focussed largely on target audience and little on other elements that were key to exploring the institutional element of the question. Some good responses included discussions of The Sun and The Guardian and how they have responded to declining circulation figures. The strongest were those that discussed the changing nature of distribution, as well as the increase in citizen journalism and the potential of new technologies to create more active audiences through the use of forums, blogs etc that can get involved in the production process. Most candidates discussed the development of an online presence and the targeting of increasingly fragmented audiences.   A lack of relevant examples was something that dogged many weaker candidates, as did the description of the selling of newspapers and the products consumption (often solely in terms of readership profiles) in a very generalised way. Weaker candidates responses were at times also 'common sense' based and lacked detailed evidence to support points made. A common misconception made by some candidates is that online editions of newspapers outsell the print counterparts.

Video Games

There were some very positive responses by candidates with very focused case studies, such as Grand Theft Auto 4 & Rockstar games. In this instance, candidates had been clearly briefed on the requirements of the specification and had been guided towards a contemporary case study. Answers contained detailed information concerning the production process, the nature and impact of pre-existing audiences, the use of new media technologies in the development of the game, institutional response and use of existing controversy surrounding the earlier versions of the game and the attempt to advance the game beyond the previous gaming experience. The best answers did not present a textual analysis of the game, but did suggest how textual elements were used within marketing. The distribution discussions in the better candidates' responses considered how social networking sites were utilised in the pre-publicity of the games release. These answers also used terminology to enhance their points; considering synergy, convergence and horizontal\ vertical integration as factors in the success of the game's release. Candidates appeared to have been fully briefed on the need to place their product in both an institutional and cultural context. There were some very encouraging responses to this question

Radio

There were a handful of responses on radio as an industry. Those that focused on specific case studies, such as BBC Hereford and in contrast, Radio One on the whole addressed the question well and could link radio production to its institutional and commercial contexts, which included the notion of public service broadcasting. Candidates were able to discuss the role that cross media convergence played and link this to the demand of the music industry, as in the case of Radio One. Weaker candidates relied on description of institutional practices and the targeting of the audience, rather than on what the question demanded.

Advice offered for the summer's exam session:

- Do encourage students to link analysis of the technical features of television and radio drama to the key concept being examined
- Ensure that all the technical elements are covered and that a discussion of the key concept takes place
- Avoid lengthy introductions on context or misapplied theory
- Candidates should time manage responses carefully to avoid brief answers, particularly for question 2
- For question 2 candidates need to address the question set
- Encourage candidates to use a wide range of contemporary examples
- Do cover all the possible issues of an institution and its audience
- Encourage candidates to use plenty of exemplification

Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE Media Studies H140
January 2009 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
G321	Raw	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G322	Raw	100	77	67	57	47	38	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
G323	Raw	100	77	67	57	47	38	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H140	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

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

No candidates aggregated in this first series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:
http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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