



AS

Communication and Culture

COMM1 Understanding Communication and Culture

Mark scheme

2625

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Version 1.0: Final Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk.

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

Aims

When you are marking scripts your aim should be:

1. to identify and reward the achievements of students;
2. to ensure compatibility of assessment for all students, regardless of question or examiner.

Approach

Please be *positive* when marking scripts, looking to reward relevant points that students make rather than to penalise what they don't know.

A specification of this type must recognise the variety of experiences and knowledge that students bring to the examination. The questions have been designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned about different aspects of Communication and Culture.

The Principles of 'Best Fit'

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

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

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

The Marking Grid

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

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

Annotating Scripts

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

To this end you should:

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

Generic AS Grid COMM1 (Questions 1, 2 & 4 - Question 3 is 20 marks AO2)

Level	Marks	AO1: This tests the ability of students to communicate in the register of Communication and Culture	Marks	AO2: This tests the ability of students to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification	Marks
		<i>This reflects the degree to which the student has extended their grasp of the discourse of the subject and/or produced effective communication in their chosen medium.</i>		<i>This reflects the degree to which the work provides evidence of further knowledge and understanding of the content and concepts of Communication and Culture.</i>	
4	16-20	Highly technical in its register and/or creative and/or proficient in its use of the chosen format.	7-8	Knowledge and understanding will be very good in terms of its range of knowledge and/or depth of understanding.	10-12
3	11-15	Sound in terms of its range and control and good in terms of its effectiveness.	5-6	Level of knowledge and understanding will be secure and will evidence sound subject specialist knowledge.	7-9
2	6-10	Limited vocabulary, perhaps only partly understood, rising to a degree of competence evidenced by the effective use of a fairly narrow range of terms/concepts.	3-4	Evidence will range from a limited, largely non-specialist relevance through to a simple but competent grasp of Communication and Culture content.	4-6
1	1-5	Basic, non-technical and unconvincing.	1-2	Evidence will be basic, non-specific and unconvincing.	1-3

- 1** In any communication, the choice of medium influences the meaning. Such meanings respond to cultural change and developments in communication technology. For example, sacking an employee by text message could be particularly hurtful.

Choose **one** of the following and explore the influences that the choice of medium can have on a message. What sort of messages would be appropriate and/or inappropriate for your chosen medium?

1(a) Phone text (SMS)

[20 marks]

or

1(b) Twitter

[20 marks]

or

1(c) Facebook or other social network

[20 marks]

or

1(d) Photo-sharing site, eg Instagram

[20 marks]

	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions. A clear, concise exploration of the selected context. Explicit and convincing evidence that ideas about cultural communication are thoroughly understood. Supporting examples are apposite.
3 (11 – 15 marks)	Likely to lead with the keywords, whatever the selection and consider the theory of the issue before the practice. Awareness of key terms and their use. Reasonably convincing, if partially flawed, attempt to explore chosen context. Some evidence that the cultural context is understood. Examples are relevant and support the premise of the chosen explanation
2 (6 – 10 marks)	Likely to work through practical answers with limited evaluation. The chosen context is described rather than explored or arguments offered are less than convincing. Ideas around cultural context are only partially understood. For marks of 9 – 10, appropriate examples may compensate for conceptual shortcomings, or vice versa. For marks in the range 6 – 8, examples are limited or unsuitable.
1 (1 – 5 marks)	Students respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question. At this level, any explorations are inappropriate. Descriptions of the chosen context are limited. There are likely to be serious misinterpretations. Examples lack relevance or are, in the range 1 – 3 marks, absent.
0	No relevant response.

2 Our identity defines not only who we are but also how we interact with the world around us: what we see, what we say and what we do.

Explore, with specific examples, how your identity impacts on **one** of the following:

2(a) the ways you perceive your environment and relationships **[20 marks]**

or

2(b) the ways you speak **[20 marks]**

or

2(c) the ways you act (how you interpret the rules of behavior). **[20 marks]**

	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>Clear, confident explanation of how the chosen element might be influenced by the subject's identity. There is some explicit evidence of conceptual understanding, demonstrating understanding of how these relationships might work.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on keywords and address theory in advance of practice. Attention to detail is key here.</p> <p>Reasonably well-informed explanations of how the chosen element is affected. Some evidence that key concepts (identity, code, context) are understood. In the range 11 – 12 marks, descriptive material may predominate over conceptual references.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. There may be a pre-prepared Case Study offered. Likely to come to easy conclusions without arguing through the case. Unfounded assertion through to competent responses.</p> <p>Likely to be a descriptive rather than analytical or evaluative account of the chosen element. Limited or partial understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p>Uncritical explanation of the statement. Little else offered.</p> <p>Explanations are inappropriate or inept. Little or no understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
0	No relevant response.

- 3** **Total for this question: 20 marks**
- Image of a woman in a bed in woods.
- 3 (a)** Suggest a context for this image and how it might be used. **[4 marks]**
- 3 (b)** Identify **two** dominant signifiers of this text. Give reasons for your answers. **[6 marks]**
- 3 (c)** Through a detailed analysis, explore the meanings of this text. **[10 marks]**

	3 (a)		3 (b)		3 (c)	
Level	Context	Mark	Dominant signifiers	Mark	Analysis	Mark
4	A skilful response which demonstrates secure knowledge. Knowledgeable and specialist.	4	Handles the key terms in a mature fashion. Knowledgeable and specialist.	6	Fluent and detailed analysis of the text. Knowledgeable and specialist.	9-10
3	Sound understanding of 'context' demonstrated in reference to the text.	3	'Dominant signifier' is a term largely understood and exemplified.	4-5	Sound understanding of relevant Communication and Culture content and concepts. Strong knowledge or application.	6-8
2	Beginnings of awareness of the key content of the course. Competent understanding of context.	2	Largely descriptive and non-specialist response to this text feature. Competent.	2-3	Competent, active reading of the cultural product with some technical knowledge or analytical skill.	4-5
1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1-3
0	No relevant response					

- 4 “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.”
(LP Hartley)

The past is very much with us. Our history is a widely used feature in today’s popular culture, for example feature films, television programmes, computer games and graphic novels. However, some will argue that we still lack a sense of and knowledge of the past.

Task:

As a Communication and Culture student, use specific examples to explore the ways in which ‘the past’ has been reinterpreted by popular culture.

[20 marks]

	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</p> <p>Confident, well-informed analysis with strong evidence that relevant debates about culture and meaning are understood. Alternative explanations are convincingly rooted in conceptual understanding. Polemical and personal responses may feature at this level if ideas are well supported by evidence and argument.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of ‘the past in popular culture’ as a key focus. Evidence will be sound and detailed.</p> <p>Competent understanding of the issues is evident with some analytical elements. Alternative explanations demonstrate some familiarity with the terms of debates about the construction of meanings involving ‘the past’.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p>Likely to offer a reading of the issue and to address the examples in it. Likely to focus on the examples only (largely) or anecdotally.</p> <p>Responds to the text and issue at a personal rather than analytical level. In the range 9 – 10 marks, comments indicate some awareness of relevant sections of the unit but in the range 6 – 8 marks are more likely to be based on barely substantiated assertions.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</p> <p>May be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the stimulus material and/or the task. Superficial account or one which is too brief to constitute a serious response to the question.</p>
0 marks	No relevant response