



**General Certificate of Education**

**Communication and Culture**

**COMM1    Understanding Communication  
and Culture**

**Mark Scheme**

*June 2009*

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## Aims

When you are marking scripts your aim should be:

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

## Approach

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

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

## The Principles of 'Best Fit'

This paper requires candidates 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 a total in the margin at the end of each answer.

**Generic Marking Grid**

<b>Level</b>	<b>AO1: This tests the ability of candidates to communicate in the register of communication and culture</b>	<b>AO1 Marks</b>	<b>AO2: This tests the ability of candidates to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification</b>	<b>AO2 Marks</b>
4	<p>Work at this level both impresses and genuinely engages. It is both fluent and technical: accurate and specialist.</p> <p>Material is well organised including concise use of a technical vocabulary. Written expression is well structured, accurate and precise. Work is confident and detailed.</p>	7 – 8	<p>Sensitive to the scope of their own and others' knowledge and understanding. Evaluative. Sophisticated.</p> <p>Handles a range of content and concepts with skill. Knowledgeable and specialist.</p>	12 11 10
3	<p>Writing enhances the presentation of ideas and arguments. The candidate is clearly controlling the technical code of the discipline.</p> <p>Material is clearly organised and usually incorporates neat and purposeful use of a technical vocabulary. Written expression is accurate and clear.</p>	5 – 6	<p>Very good range of specialist knowledge which evidences an engagement with the material. With knowledge comes understanding.</p> <p>Sound understanding of relevant Communications and Culture content and concepts. Shows a good range of specialist ideas.</p>	9 8 7
2	<p>Competent written style: generally accurate and communicative. Beginnings of a technical register, including some evidence of the appropriate use of a subject specific vocabulary.</p> <p>Ideas sometimes supported by explicit or implicit reference to a subject specialist discourse. Written work features regular low level inaccuracies. Occasional use of technical terms.</p>	3 – 4	<p>Competent understanding of Communications and Culture concepts and of the specified content. Ample evidence of a course of study.</p> <p>Beginnings of awareness of the key content of the course. Sometimes supports views by reference to Communication and Culture concepts.</p>	6 5 4
1	<p>Written style has a number of lapses in accuracy and clarity. Assertion of ideas with little or no support from a subject specific context. Technical terms often misunderstood or applied without relevance.</p> <p>Little or no evidence that a course of study has been undertaken. Technical quality is significantly below what might be expected for AS level.</p>	1 – 2	<p>Some comments on subject-related matters, mainly led by tasks and contexts. Rarely connects with subject specific content. Some 'lay' knowledge of themes and debates.</p> <p>Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.</p>	3 2 1
0	No relevant response	0	No relevant response	0

**Question Specific Prompts**

**1 People who criticise popular culture argue that it has little value. Others argue for the importance of popular culture as an area of study. Choose one of the following arguments in favour of popular culture. Use examples to develop and illustrate your chosen argument.**

**EITHER**

**1(a) Popular culture has value and is worthy of study because it includes experiences which are in themselves sophisticated and complex. (20 marks)**

**OR**

**1(b) Popular culture has value and is worthy of study because it has a role in defining people’s identities. (20 marks)**

**OR**

**1(c) Popular culture has value and is worthy of study because it reflects the preferences of the majority of people. (20 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>A clear, concise justification of the selected explanation. Explicit and convincing evidence that the concept of ‘value’ in relation to cultural products is thoroughly understood. Supporting examples are apposite, contrasting and clearly linked to the chosen explanation.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>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.</b></p> <p>Reasonably convincing, if partially flawed, attempt to justify chosen explanation. Some evidence that the concept of ‘value’ in relation to cultural products is understood. Examples are relevant and support the premise of the chosen explanation.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to work through practical answers with limited evaluation.</b></p> <p>The chosen statement is described rather than justified <b>or</b> justifications offered are less than convincing. Concepts of ‘value’ and/or ‘cultural products’ 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.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</b></p> <p>At this level, any justifications offered are inappropriate. Descriptions of the chosen explanation are limited. There are likely to be serious misinterpretations of ‘value’ and/or ‘worthy of study’. Examples lack relevance or are, in the range 1 – 3 marks, absent.</p>
0	No relevant response.

**2 Show how a person's 'true' identity may be communicated by one of the following:**

- body language
- personal possessions
- speech.

**(20 marks)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>Clear, confident explanations of how the chosen aspect offers the indications of our true identity' including, probably, some reference to why other candidates are less convincing. There is some explicit evidence of conceptual understanding, demonstrating links between identity and the chosen statement.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on keywords and address theory in advance of practice. Attention to detail is key here.</b></p> <p>Reasonably well-informed explanations of how the chosen element operates. Some evidence that key terms in the question, particularly 'identity' are understood. In the range 11 – 12 marks, descriptive material may predominate over conceptual references.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>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.</b></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, particularly 'identity'.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Uncritical explanation of the statement. Little else offered.</b></p> <p>Explanations are inappropriate or inept. Little or no understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
0	No relevant response.

- 4 Read this extract, from the article ‘What not to bare, Trinny’, published on the *Daily Mail* website on 14 July 2006, and attempt the task below.

## What not to bare, Trinny

In her role as a style guru to the women of Britain, Trinny Woodall is notoriously slow to praise and swift to criticise.

Visiting the Serpentine Gallery summer party in West London, the 41-year-old presenter of *What Not To Wear* chose an elegant midnight-blue satin frock with cap sleeves.

Not so elegantly, however, a significant amount of (whisper it) armpit hair was clearly visible.

And last night she made no attempt to claim that hirsute\* is the new bare in the underarm department.

‘There will never be a trend for hairy armpits, I can promise you that,’ she said. ‘I forgot to shave, it’s as simple as that.’

‘I didn’t have time as I was rushing out to the party straight from work so it was the last thing on my mind. I was in a hurry.’

Clearly though, she had enough time to ensure that her make-up was applied precisely and her hair looked immaculate. And by the length of the underarm hair, she had in fact forgotten to shave for quite a few days.

\*hirsute = hairy

Explore the cultural norms and values in relation to personal appearance revealed by this article. (20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</b></p> <p>Confident, well-informed analysis with strong evidence that relevant debates about culture are understood. Alternative explanations are convincingly rooted in conceptual understanding. Polemical responses may feature at this level if ideas are well supported by evidence and argument.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of ‘cultural values’ as a key focus and to relate this to the ‘practice’ of self-presentation. Evidence will be sound and detailed.</b></p> <p>Competent understanding of the passage is evident with some analytical elements. Alternative explanations demonstrate some familiarity with the terms of debates about the construction of identity.</p>

2 (6 – 10 marks)	<b>Likely to offer a reading of the text and to address the examples in it. Likely to focus on the examples only (largely) or anecdotally.</b>  Responds to the text 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.
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<b>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</b>  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.
0	No relevant response.

Separate Marking Grid for Question 3 (AO2 only)

These questions are meant to test knowledge of critical techniques. They thus only address a single Assessment Objective and require a simpler, streamlined marking grid.

TEXT: The front side of a flyer promoting the home shopping brand 'oli'.

- 3(a) How do the words 'A GIRL SHOULD NEVER PAY MORE THAN SHE NEEDS TO' anchor the meaning of this text? (4 marks)**
- 3(b) What is the intention of this text? Identify the barriers to communication that may prevent this from being achieved. (6 marks)**
- 3(c) What might a semiotic analysis of the image of the woman reveal about the ways in which the text communicates? (10 marks)**

	3(a)		3(b)		3(c)	
Level	anchorage	Mark	intentions/barriers	Mark	semiotic	Mark
4	A skilful response which demonstrates secure knowledge. Knowledgeable and specialist.	4	Handles the key terms in a mature fashion, teasing out the subtleties. Knowledgeable and specialist.	6	Fluent and detailed semiotic analysis of this feature of the text. Knowledgeable and specialist.	9 – 10
3	Sound understanding of anchorage demonstrated in relating words to images.	3	'Intention' is clearly understood and applied relevantly. At least one kind of barrier is referenced and evidenced.	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 anchorage.	2	Communication and Culture concepts are generally understood even when not skilfully applied.	2 – 3	Competent, active reading of human figure 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					