



June 2019

**Level 3 Nationals in Creative Digital
Media Production**

**Unit 5: Specialist Subject Investigation
(31672H)**

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications website at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html> for our BTEC qualifications.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/contact-us.html>

If you have any subject specific questions about this specification that require the help of a subject specialist, you can speak directly to the subject team at Pearson. Their contact details can be found on this link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-for-you/teachers.html>

You can also use our online Ask the Expert service at <https://www.edexcelonline.com>
You will need an Edexcel Online username and password to access this service.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at: www.pearson.com/uk

June 2019

Publications Code 31672H_1906_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2019

Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:
<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

Unit 5: Specialist Subject Investigation (31672H).

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	10	21	35	50

Introduction

Unit 5: Specialist Subject Investigation is mandatory for the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Creative Digital Media Production. Learners are provided with a Set Task Brief (Part A) five weeks before the assessment period directing them to conduct research into a specialist subject topic. They are required to focus on a contemporary specialist media issue or debate detailed in the Set Task Brief and use this as a starting point to undertake investigations into it using a range of primary and secondary research methods and techniques. This preparatory stage includes 12 hours independent preparation and 6 hours undertaken in monitored conditions.

The assessment period includes the preparatory stage prior to a two hour period of supervised assessment where learners will respond to the activities and stimulus material provided in part B.

There are two assessment opportunities each year and May 2018 was the first external assessment opportunity for this unit. The June 2019 stimulus material required learners to research conduct research into the representation of LGBT in a specific media sector, and its impact on the production in that sector.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Learners responded well to the focus of the stimulus material; responses indicated that learners engaged with the topic and were able to access a wide range of relevant research sources.

While learner performance was relatively consistent across the five activities, learners often responded more effectively to questions 1, 2 and 3 which required them to use the research to respond to a statement relating to the topic, explain research methods and techniques used and conclusions drawn than they did in questions 4 and 5 which required learners to use the findings of research to make logical arguments relating to areas of future production and research.

Unlike responses to previous papers, the vast majority of learners focused on specific sectors and TV, film and games were all well represented.

Primary research conducted by learners was generally purposeful and relevant, but in many cases lacked consideration of the validity of the information being obtained, e.g. reference to suitability of sample sizes and demographics. Higher performing learners demonstrated a clear purpose and focus to the research they had undertaken.

Individual Questions

The following section considers each question on the paper, providing examples of learner responses and a brief commentary of why the responses gained the marks they did. This section should be considered with the live external assessment and corresponding mark scheme.

Activity 1 –

Analyse the significance of representation of LGBT groups or individuals in a specific media sector with reference to the issues/debates mentioned in the statement:

‘The lack of LGBT characters in mainstream media, and reliance on outdated stereotypes, does not represent the LGBT community in a fair and balanced way.’

You should refer to your own research and the research carried out in the stimulus material, making reference to the validity of the sources used.

For this activity, higher performing learners focused clearly on the statement, referring not only to the stimulus material, but to their own research findings, to support a well-reasoned response.

However, less developed responses often simply summarised the information which had been provided in the stimulus material, and identified key themes within it, but provided little in terms of interpretation of the data or discussion of the media debates it related to the statement provided in the activity. Some learners summarized their own findings, but without relating them to the statement, which led to them then duplicating this in their response to Activity 3.

The higher performing learners typically presented a detailed and specific response to the statement with points well supported by reference to the stimulus material and/or their own research, demonstrating a clear understanding of the relationship between the research and the statement. Learners at this level would also typically make judgements about the validity of data, e.g. that it was outdated, or was from a reputable source, though these often still lacked in depth consideration, e.g. they may have written that ‘The information from GLAAD is valid because they are a well-respected organisation’ without identifying the potential for bias within GLAAD’s viewpoint.

The following response gained 12 marks out of 15. It clearly discusses the significance of the topic with relation to the impact on jobs as referred to in the statement provided. Comparison is made between different elements of the stimulus material and the learner's own research, referring to the sources but lacking reference to the validity of the material.

In the past "LGBT Community was under represented in the T.V Sector. However, we have seen a steady rise/ increase in representation from 2015 to 2017.^[1]

Reflecting on the past the stimulus material states that "Eastenders" was "criticised in parliament for the first on screen gay kiss". This demonstrates that LGBT+ issues/debates were still a taboo subject matter, ~~so~~ in society so much that it reached parliament debate. According to my ~~own~~ research there was a lack of LGBT+ representation particularly

in the UK, up ~~to~~^{until} the late 1990's when "Queer As Folk" was aired. Although the most popular episodes averaged 1.6 million viewers [2] it still showed an ^{stereotype and} imbalance of representation as the show's focus was gay, white men. ~~It~~ In addition making the show the sole LGBT+ representation on T.V. at that time. This meant that there was a lack of diversity in terms of representation ~~of~~^{that} LGBT+ community could identify with, only identifying gay men and not lesbians, Bisexuals, Transgenders, queers or Asexuals.

In today's world the presence of LGBT+ in T.V. has made a significant increase [3] in the hope to challenge ~~to~~ those "outdated stereotypes" and tropes that are attached to the community.

~~In 2011 there were approximately 100 one hundred~~ According to the GLAAD report 2018-2019 across streaming services such as Amazon, Hulu and Netflix 75 LGBT+ ^{regular} characters were counted on programs [4]

My primary research supports this as I carried out a content analysis of an episode of the Netflix original "Orange is the New Black" and found to be present 1 Transgender, 5 Lesbians, and 2 Bisexuals. However, the focus wasn't wasn't their sexuality it was that they were humans in crisis, forced with issues such as: crime, mental health and poverty. This representation is important as it does not represent the community to be idealistic, however it ensures that the characters are given as much depth as a heterosexual character.

The secondary source used to predominantly answer this question was the GLAAD Report 2018-2019. This source is viable as it is a reputable organisation who specialise in matters concerning the LGBT+ community and issue reports annually meaning that the reports are up to date.

[1] GLAAD REPORT 2018-2019, "Findings for Primetime Broadcast Shows from 2005-2017"

[2] L. MORAES, Washington Post March 2001.

[3] GLAAD REPORT 2018-19, "RECURRING CHARACTERS, PATTERNS 2005-2017"

[4] GLAAD REPORT "Where we are today" (Total for Activity 1 = 15 marks)

The following response gained 3 marks out of 15. The response summarises quantitative data from the stimulus material and of secondary research the learner conducted but does not relate them effectively to the statement provided. Though the response demonstrates some understanding of the topic, it provides little interpretation of these findings and draws unsubstantiated conclusions such as linking a decrease in LGBT character to the older generation. The response does not make reference to the validity of the sources as required by the activity.

In today's society LGBT has been seen less and less in the film sector due to how it is portrayed. In recent years there has been a downfall on the amount of LGBT we see in film. From my key research gathered 12% of mainstream feat releases featured LGBT characters last year. Furthermore, that was down from 18% in 2016. So as seen it is decreasing the amount of LGBT characters shown in film. This may be due to the older generation. Everyone has ~~their~~ ~~their~~ their opinions on what they feel suitable watching but ~~however~~ the older generation may be more stereotypical and ~~see~~ don't feel or find it suitable to

Watch films that contain LGBT. 17 of 102 movies in 2013 featured lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender characters and of these 17, the majority were offensive and defamatory portrayals. If this piece of my research is true then it provides evidence that LGBT is treated unfair and not equally balanced.

Activity 2 -

Justify the choice of secondary sources you used to investigate the key areas of the set task topic within a specific media sector.

For this activity, less developed responses typically either simply identified the specific sources used, or attempted to describe the reasons for choosing the sources without first identifying what the sources were, e.g. I chose my first source because it showed the way the media had changed through statistics. A small number of learners identified primary sources used as well as/ instead of secondary sources. No marks were awarded for the identification of primary sources, but any secondary sources discussed were still awarded marks, and marks were also awarded for any justifications given for the research methods chosen.

A significant number of learners discussed the content and findings gleaned from the sources with justifying their choice of sources. Although marks were awarded for this as part of a 'detailed description' of the sources, the lack of explanation of the choices prevented learners from being awarded marks in the higher grade bands.

More developed responses included a wider range of different secondary sources and evaluated the detailed reasons for choosing them. The rationale given for the choice often included information re. the validity of the research and, even though this was not specifically required by the question, it was rewarded as part of the rationale for the choice.

The following response gained 15 marks out of 15. It clearly identifies the relationship between the secondary research undertaken and the stimulus material, and provides a clearly justified rationale, evaluating the sources used.

(12)

When conducting my research I used a range of different sources. One being the GLAAD "Where we are now on T.V" Report 2018-2019. I choose to use this source as GLAAD (Gay, Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) Report due to the fact that they specialise in LGBTQ+ issues/debates, ~~and~~ ~~has~~ releasing reports annually meaning that the information is up to date.

In addition the GLAAD report highlighted statistical information about the representation of the LGBT community and how it has changed over a period of time across ~~a~~ T.V ~~broads~~ platforms: broadcast, cable, streaming. However, this report did have draw-backs as it only represented data based on USA T.V therefore not a true representation of the LGBTQ+ community as a whole/UK.

Another source I used was Wikipedia as it is a long standing website and can

and regularly updated.

be sourced checked. For example: when I^[1] found the information about the complaints that Eastenders received regarding the on screen gay kiss before the watershed. I sourced checked this information and found that it originally come from a report from the BBC, which is a reliable source as they are the producers of the show.

An additional source was an article taken ~~from~~ from the Guardian Newspaper. I used this source because it is a long standing newspaper written by reputable journalist. The article talks about LGBT+ characters on T.V and the stereotypes attached^[2] such as "bury your gays". However, using an article such as this may be considered bias as the journalist may influence readers by incorporating their personal opinions into the article. Additional newspapers used were the LA Times and Washington Post: as ~~I also used Magazines~~ such as "the" they too are reputable newspapers.

~~Finally~~ I also used magazines such as

and digital ~~page~~
The Verge. The reasons for this were that although that they are less established when compared to newspapers such as the Guardian they provide a more skilled media analysis of the LGBT community.

The following response gained 4 marks out of 15. The response describes the content of the secondary sources used but does not properly discuss the selection those sources. Where some explanation for a choice is attempted (to identify if there was an increase or decrease in LGBT representation) the source of this information is not identified.

To analyse my secondary sources I researched in a particular manner. My first area of research I targeted was numbers and percentages of the amount of LGBT in film. For example "of the top studio films feat released last year 14 featured LGBT characters. And of those LGBT characters 43% were white, 28.5% was black and ~~28.5%~~ 28.5% were Latin American."

My justification for this choice of secondary research was because it provides facts and knowledge on statistics side of things. My next area of research targeted was films in Hollywood that have contained the likes of LGBT. For example, "Oscar ~~winning~~ - Brokeback Mountain, which is the portrayal of a gay relationship. Thor, Ragnarok where a cut scene would have confirmed a certain character was bisexual. And lastly Pain and Gain and We're the Millers where in this case were ~~ass~~ accused of "gay panic" story elements". My reasoning for this was it provided detail information on the film and how LGBT

is tied in with the film. My last particular research I targeted for the findings of my work were dates. Date's ~~en~~ enabled me to identify what happened in that year and if there was a increase or decrease in LGBT. For example, in 2016, there was one transgender character in a major studio film ~~for~~ release. In 2017 there were none. In 2016, 23 major studio releases had LGBT characters whereas in 2017 the number fell to 14.

Activity 3 –

Explain the conclusions you have made from your research and evaluate how these conclusions support and/or challenge the findings of the stimulus material.

For this activity, less developed responses typically summarised learner findings with a brief conclusion but this was often skewed by the limited nature of the research undertaken, e.g. 'the LGBT member I interviewed agreed that more LGBT characters are needed on TV.' The research was clearly related to topic within the stimulus material but learners at this level did not typically comment how their own findings supported or challenged the findings of the stimulus material; if any comments of this kind were made they were limited to simple generic statements such as 'my findings agree with the stimulus material that more LGBT characters are needed in games.'

Higher performing learners provided detailed information of the information collected, including both statistics and quotes. Learners at this level referred to both primary and secondary sources in detail. They drew clear and logical conclusions from this research and made frequent, direct and logical comparisons between their conclusions and those of the stimulus material. The most developed responses often included citations within their responses or, where they did not, made detailed reference to the specific element of research that supported their conclusions.

The following response gained 13 marks out of 15. The response uses quotes and statistics drawn from the learner's own research to develop effective chains of reasoning. While it does make relevant comments relating to how the learner research supports/challenges the findings of the stimulus material, these would have benefitted from more in depth justifications.

One conclusion I made from my research is that there has been a significant increase of LGBT characters in television. The stimulus material supports this as it shows from 1987 until 2017 T.V shows that include LGBT character has have been introduced to society. ~~My own~~ My own secondary research to support this is an article taken from The Verge^[1] as it states '2018 saw record growth in LGBT roles in television. In addition my primary stated that 40%, that's almost half of those surveyed strongly agreed that the representation of LGBT character has increased in television over recent years.

Another conclusion that I reached after research was conducted is that streaming platforms demonstrate a more diverse representation of LGBT characters^[2] than broadcast T.V. The stimulus material supports this as it states that orange is the new black ^{which is} Netflix original. "features in-depth

portrayals of gay female characters". This links to my primary research question, as 93% of these ~~same~~ participants preferred streaming ~~as~~ over TV as their preferred method of viewing. This may be due to the fact that platforms such as Netflix have the freedom to demonstrate a more diverse representation as viewers subscribe to their services, and are able to view according to personal preference. This is also beneficial to Netflix as viewers but a subscription and ~~the~~ unlike other platforms such as broadcasting eg: BBC/ITV they are not reliant upon sponsors and advertisement for funding or beholden to viewing regulations such as the "watershed"

The final conclusion made challenges be stimulus material. As the stimulus material states that the show "will \$
*Grace did more to educate the American public more than ever done so far". My research would argue that the portrayal of gay men in this show is not a true representation as in my focus group ~~my~~ participants ~~said~~ commented that ~~the~~ that ~~was~~ ~~he~~ represented "in a stereotypical

nanner" and "not all gay men behave like him". These ^{comments} ~~is also~~ ~~su~~ are also supported by show such as "The Ru-Paul drag race", "Queer eye" which are both reality T.V shows which aim to represent the ~~po~~ LGBT+ community accurately and more positively in order to educate society.

The following response gained 3 marks out of 15. The response documents the findings of the learner's own research but does not interpret or appraise these to reach reasoned conclusions. The response makes no comments about how research supports/challenges the conclusions of the stimulus material.

From my Quantitative research the questionnaire I can gather a conclusion that may go in favour of more LGBT to be represented in film. My first question asked was "should LGBT be used more in film?" My answers were 80% yes and 20% no.

Question 2: Do you know why there are concerns about LGBT? 100% yes, 0% no.

Question 3: Have you watched films that contain LGBT? 90% yes, 10% no.

Question 4: Do you feel the usage of LGBT characters affect the overall popularity of the film? 65% yes, 35% no.

Question 5: Has LGBT affected you? 85% yes, 15% no.

From the findings of this research it enables me to identify that people aged 17-19 are comfortable and have no issues with LGBT in film. However if a questionnaire was created for people aged between 50-70 a debate could be made on how they feel about the likes of LGBT in film.

Activity 4 – What changes would you suggest for future media production in your specific media sector in response to the research findings in the stimulus material and your own research?

For this activity, less developed responses often began the response with phrase like 'In my opinion...' and went on to give a suggestion that could be logically derived from the stimulus material, but without developed chains of reasoning to support this. A typical example would contain statement such as 'In my opinion TV producers need to include less LGBT stereotypes.'

More developed responses used specific and diverse elements from both their own research and the stimulus material to support a logical argument for the changes they suggested. For example, rather than just using past performance to predict future changes, they would draw upon research from a number of sources, often including their own secondary research, to provide a detailed argument supporting their conclusions.

The following response gained 10 marks out of 10. The response makes sustained reference to research sources to develop clear, and mostly effective chains of reasoning.

It was very clear from my findings that things need to get better within video games.

I asked the question [#] within my primary ~~story~~ ^{interviews} "what do you think games companies could do to improve LGBT representation?" The answers included "get rid of tokenism" and "make more main characters LGBT", which both suggest that more characters need to be added, as the ones in place now are so few that they come across as token.

Another quite common answer was to "hire someone from the LGBT community to do it right". This suggests that right now, characters are not very good, and are written quite poorly, which could be due to ~~some~~ the writers not understanding the community as they probably are not part of it.

The main point among all questions, answers and sources is that LGBT characters just need to be added in a natural way, and a realistic way. Source one stated that "Some representation right now is 'poor or outright offensive', which is bad as according to Source 2, '65% of all LGBT consumers play games... Slightly edging out heterosexual players (63%)'. So really things do need to improve to cater to this playerbase.

One quote from my fourth source says "We need better queer narratives, to do that we need community members in dev and design roles" this really does back up that the characters do not feel natural probably because they are being written and designed by people who do not understand the community, and who are maybe taking poor guesses at how LGBT people want to be represented.

The following response gained 3 marks out of 10. Although the response relates to the topic of the stimulus material, the suggestions are not supported by appropriate reference to research sources.

The changes I would suggest for future media production in this specific sector in response to the research findings in the stimulus material and my own would firstly be the portrayal. For a movie that will feature either Lesbian, bisexual, gay or transgender portray that character in a positive way. The negatives of not portraying in a good way or bad way could be bad reviews and less views. Secondly, use more LGBT characters in film. If you want a positive outcome of a film use more characters of LGBT, this is because it will present that you are treating it fair and not being unbalanced towards the topic. Thirdly, straight actors that represent LGBT. Getting actors and actresses to play roles where they can be gay or lesbian would increase more directors to ~~fulfill~~ fulfill. It presents a positive image and message that says there's nothing wrong with portraying LGBT characters. My last suggestion would be don't be stereotypical. When directing the film don't use that

character in a stereotype way. Portray ~~them~~ as something different to surprise and catch out the audience. It will be more positive for the LGBT character.

Activity 5 –

Explain what further research could be conducted into this topic and how this would help to gain a greater understanding of the current impact of the representation of LGBT groups or individuals in your specific media sector.

For this activity, less developed responses typically described a number of additional research activities, often referring to what they themselves could have done differently, e.g. 'I could have given more questionnaires to members of the LGBT community to find out their opinions'. Where they referred to professional research, responses lacked specific suggestions for research, e.g. 'More LGBT people should be interviewed to see what they think about representation.'

The best performing learners made logical arguments which follow on from their previous responses to support the reason for further research into a specific topic, e.g. the frequency of LGBT characters from minority ethnicities, or with disabilities. They would go on to give a detailed explanation of the specific nature of the way in which such research that could be conducted.

The following response gained 10 marks out of 10. The response provides effectively supported recommendations for future research, justified by the use of consistent reference to the learners own relevant primary and secondary research.

The Report that gave me the most of my secondary data was researched by CRAAD, which is an American company that only focuses on American programming.

This was a useful document as many of the shows researched in the report are available in the UK. However, it would be useful to gain a better understanding of LGBTQ+ representation on mainstream Terrestrial T.V in the UK (BBC/ITV/Channel 4 & 5). The Government equality office or the department for digital media and Sport should commission research into the representation of LGBTQ+ community in UK media to provide information on audience response and how well T.V channels are showing diversity in their programming.

The report could also include more information of intersectionality e.g. include the number of LGBTQ+ characters who have a disability for identification purposes. From this I think there is

more primary research that needs to be undertaken to understand how LGBT Communities feel about the ~~the~~ representations that they see of themselves in the media. A nationwide Survey with around 5000 respondents should be carried out to ensure the reliability of the information. This information should then be used to conduct a focus group with both members of LGBT+ Community and producers of T.V Shows that are aimed at the LGBT+ Community. ~~to provide~~ in order to find out different perspectives of the LGBT+ representations and the difficulties both producers and members of the community may face by giving them the opportunity to state the changes that they feel need to be made to the T.V Sector in order to have a positive impact on the LGBT Community and Society as a whole.

In addition research would need to consider the demographics of these

survey I questioned. For example my primary research questionnaire only surveyed people who were 16-18 years old. However, it would be beneficial for me to also survey people of older age groups in order to produce a more accurate results of individuals' ~~opinion~~ ~~opinion~~ opinions on representation and how they may differ due to difference in age.

The following response gained 2 marks out of 10. The response provides superficial and generic suggestions for further research without providing an appropriate rationale in support of these suggestions.

I believe the best research that could be ⁽¹⁰⁾ used to give greater understanding of the impact of the representation of the LGBT community would be a large scale survey asking people opinion on LGBT comedy, and LGBT characters and if characters have received their opinion and if it was in a positive or negative way, this would highlight to the TV shows what they are doing right or wrong and if they need to change how they portray the LGBT community. From my research I found 75% said they see portrayed 50/50 as positively and negatively and 25% said negatively this could suggest studios need to change some of the LGBT characters.

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, learners should:

- Respond clearly and specifically to the statement given in Activity 1
- Where required by the question ensure that their responses show consideration of the validity of their own research, methods and techniques, and/or those used in the stimulus material, e.g. whether information is current, appropriateness of samples sizes and demographics, etc.
- Clearly identify the research methods and sources they have used, and discuss these in detail, justifying the selection of each source/method.
- Clearly identify the specific purpose and focus of their own research
- Make clear comparisons between their own research and the stimulus material to demonstrate how their own research supports/challenges the findings of the stimulus material.
- Clearly justify all conclusions made with logical chains of reasoning and reference to the research undertaken, particularly within Activities 4 and 5.

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE

Ofqual




Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

