

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Examiners' report

DIGITAL MEDIA

05843–05846, 05875

Unit 1 January 2021 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Unit 1 series overview

Less candidates sat the Unit 1 exam paper in this series due to Covid-19 restrictions so the recommendations and observations from this report are based on a smaller cohort than usual.

In Section A it was pleasing to see improvement to answers where candidates had clearly been guided to interpret different data sources in ways not previously seen. In Section B key media industries concepts such as horizontal integration and synergy continue to be taught well. Answers to the extended response question that tests LO3 were sometimes less successful than in previous series. Responses to this question did not always show a comprehensive understanding of the production techniques and theories of representation required by the specification. Candidate answers to the extended response question that tests LO6 continued to show that centres are successfully teaching media effects and regulation, with some candidates using contemporary case studied such as fake news, Donald Trump and Twitter and Instagram influencers.

<i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i>	<i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used contemporary and relevant examples of digital media products to support points made • Used theory in the extended response questions • Used key terms from the specification in their answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not expand on answers, e.g. giving one-word responses • Used non-contemporary examples of digital media products – e.g. <i>Child's Play 3</i>

Question 2 (a)

Use Fig. 2 and your own knowledge to answer the following questions.

2 (a) Identify and explain **three** patterns in the way audiences listen to radio in the UK.

1

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2

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3

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[6]

Many candidates were able to identify three patterns in the way that audiences listen to radio in the UK from the RAJAR data. In contrast to Q1 (a) candidates found it more difficult to explain why these patterns of listenership existed. The best answers referenced key terms such as 'technological convergence' and understood the importance of how DAB enabled choice for consumers, as well as devices that allowed audiences to listen to radio 'on the go'. As a recommendation, centres should offer candidates the opportunity to engage with areas of the specification holistically, with data analysis skills required for LO4 taught with an understanding of distribution and audience consumption in LO2.

Question 2 (b)

- (b) Identify **two** social media channels that radio producers might use to target 15-24 year-old listeners to promote a new radio programme.

Explain why each would be an effective channel to target these listeners.

1

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.....

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2

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[4]

Most candidates were given at least one mark for each part of this question, correctly identifying why social media channels such as Instagram, TikTok or Snapchat would be effective to target 15-24 year-old listeners. Less successful answers repeated the question as part of their explanation. The best responses brought in synoptic learning from Unit 6, and could identify why and how the social media channels could be successful marketing tools for a radio programme.

Section B overview

Responses to the questions in this section suggested that some candidates would have benefited from a greater understanding of theoretical ideas about the macro concept of representation supported by specific examples from media products in order to allow them to apply this to any independent research as part of their revision. Candidates did not always demonstrate accurate understanding of production techniques, and this is an area that centres could further incorporate when learning technical production skills for Unit 3. The use of theoretical ideas about regulation, moral panics and audience effects theories and debates was sophisticated, and the application of concepts to case studies that directly affect candidates (such as debates about the impact and role of media influencers) was more successful than when applied to non-contemporary media products.

Question 3 (a)

3 (a) Identify **four** media industries that produce digital media products.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

[4]

For this question candidates were either able to successfully identify four media industries, such as print, TV, film, games, web, gaming, to gain full marks, or they were incorrect and provided the names of four digital media companies. It is important that candidates understand key terms such as media industries and sectors and the difference between media companies and organisations.

Question 5 (a)

- 5 (a) Identify **three** advertising techniques that were used as part of the marketing and distribution process for a media product you have studied.

Media product:

1

2

3

[3]

Many candidates answered this question exceptionally well. Contemporary media products were used and creative methods of advertising were cited. Key terms such as above the line and below the line marketing were also referenced. Less successful answers tended to be one-word responses such as 'TV'. These types of answers did not address the specifics of the question and were too vague to meet the requirements of the mark scheme.

Question 6 (a)

- 6 (a) Identify **four** production techniques used in a media product you have studied.

Media product:

1

2

3

4

[4]

This question asked for four production techniques from a specific media product. Correct responses discussed the production techniques learnt as part of the requirements of LO3 of the specification. These include elements of mise-en-scene, camerawork, editing and sound. Responses that discussed generic planning documents such as 'call sheets' or 'recces' could not be credited. Candidates need to be clear about the production techniques used in the case study products studied in lessons.

Question 9

- 9* *'The internet has made it impossible to protect audiences from the negative effects of digital media.'*

Using your knowledge of the effects of digital media and the role of regulation, discuss the accuracy of this statement. Use examples to support your answer.

[20]

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Once again, it was pleasing to see that some centres had continued to take on board feedback about the importance of teaching key theories and terminology in relation to audiences, media effects and regulation. Many candidates included the suggested theories such as passive v. active audiences, desensitisation, and copycat behaviour. Candidates had to directly address the statement about whether *'the internet has made it impossible to protect audiences from the negative effects of digital media'*. The best answers showed candidates understood the 'effects debate' as well as the role of regulatory bodies such as the ASA, BBFC, OFCOM and PEGI. Some answers gave a variety of examples from different media sectors, while others discussed one sector such as film or video games, and it was found that either approach allowed candidates to access the full range of marks. Children's access to digital products on the internet was discussed at length by some candidates, with excellent responses considering the lack of regulation of explicit or banned content such as pornography and video games and the potential impact that this may have on children. Candidates discussed social media in terms of both moral panics about the effects of unrealistic body images and trolling, and cyberbullying. There was an increase from the previous session in the number of responses referencing the 1993 Jamie Bulger case and the 1999 Columbine Massacre, which did not provide a contemporary context. Centres are reminded to teach contemporary case studies to allow candidates the opportunity to discuss relevant digital media products they interact with. Candidates should know a wide range of case studies to support their arguments and the application of theory, or be able to discuss case studies in greater depth to fully access the marks given for 'use of examples'.

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