



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Media Studies

48101/PM

Unit 1: Investigating the Media

Topic Situation Comedy

Preliminary Material

Notes to Candidates

- The following brief has been issued to help you prepare for the examination in **Unit 1 Investigating the Media**.
- You are advised to read it carefully and use it to guide your preparation.
- The preliminary material takes the form of a brief. In the examination you will be expected to respond in role to this brief.
- You will need to use the knowledge and understanding you have gained of Situation Comedy and Media Issues.

Guidance for the examination

- You should take into the examination coloured pencils, fine liners and a ruler and use these where appropriate.
- You should make sketches and diagrams to help develop your answers where appropriate.
- You are not allowed to take this copy of the brief or any notes with you into the examination.
- A clean copy of this brief will be included with the examination paper.

48101/PM

The Laughter Channel
Jubilee Terrace
Manchester
M6 9TW

Dear Student,

The Laughter Channel is a new cable television channel specialising in a range of comedy productions. We are always on the lookout for new ideas and pride ourselves in the role we have already played in launching the careers of successful comedy writers.

We are currently working on a project to reignite the previous success of British television situation comedy in attracting family audiences. We are aware that writers for television have recently moved away from this and have focused their efforts on productions for smaller and niche audiences such as *The Mighty Boosh* and *Peep Show*. In spite of this, we believe that successful mainstream comedy can cut across all age groups and social classes.

However, we also recognise that it is important to respond to the concerns and identity of our modern culture and we are not interested in reproducing the out of date representations which have previously been such an important feature of television situation comedy. We are also keen to use technology to respond to changing television viewing habits, building on such successes as the *iPlayer*.

We are planning a launch of a new comedy series for an eight week run in the autumn schedules and here is where you have a chance to become involved. We would like to commission new writers for a pilot episode of this series and to give us some ideas about how we can use new technologies to engage our target audience. Remember we want our new series to keep all the

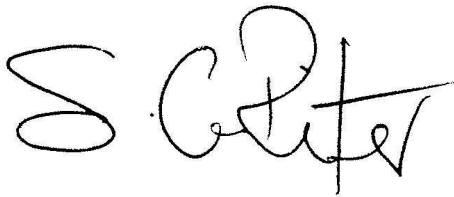
successful features of situation comedy whilst offering something fresh and relevant to the lives of our target family audience in the 21st century.

You have six weeks in which to prepare and then you will be asked to complete four tasks to help us draw up a short list of entries for our final selections. Remember to:

- keep your responses sharp and to the point
- use diagrams and illustrations to support your ideas.

We look forward to receiving your entry.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. C. Riter'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

S. C. Riter

Commissioning Editor

Glossary

Commission	To give authority to a person or group to carry out a task on behalf of a company, often for payment.
Culture	The society in which we live.
Mainstream comedy	Types of comedy which appeals to the majority of people.
Niche audience	A narrow and more specialised audience, eg teenagers or pensioners.
Pilot	A prototype and first programme in a series being considered for broadcast. If the target audience enjoys it then it will influence the decision whether to go ahead with the rest of the series.
Pitch	To present a summary of an idea to win a commission.
Representation	How people are presented to audiences.
Reignite	To bring back.
Schedules	The dates, times and channels for television programme about to be broadcast.
Social class	The way people are grouped together according to such things as their family background or their occupation and income. In our country we often talk about the working, middle or upper classes.
Television viewing habits	The way people watch television programmes. Technology has opened up a variety of ways we can watch and even take part in a television programme.