



Media Studies

GCSE 2012

Media Studies

Teachers' Handbook

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Introduction

OCR's GCSE in Media Studies entered first teaching in September 2009.

We have improved the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike. We've made improvements in two key areas: updated and relevant content and a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills.

In addition and in response to reforms announced by the Government and in response to Ofqual mandated changes to GCSEs, unitised assessment of this qualification is being replaced by linear assessment from September 2012. This means that candidates commencing a two year course from September 2012 will take all of their GCSE units at the end of the course in June 2014.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment and examinations will be summative
- Examinations provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Equality Act.

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the specification and to support you while teaching them.

It is important to make the point that this Teacher Handbook plays a secondary role to the specifications themselves. The GCSE Media Studies Specification is the document on which assessment is based: it specifies what content and skills need to be covered. At all times therefore, the Teacher Handbook should be read in conjunction with the Specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought, then that clarification must be found in the Specification itself.

Subject specific guidance

Controlled Assessment

What is controlled assessment and how does it differ to coursework?

Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment that has three distinct stages: task setting, task taking and task marking. Each of these different stages has QCA-set levels of control – high, medium or limited. For GCSE Media Studies, task setting is set at ‘high control’ (OCR control), task taking at ‘medium control’ and task marking at ‘medium control’. These levels of control are set within the assessments so that the assessors can confidently authenticate the work of the students, and that validity and reliability are ensured. More information on levels of control will be available in the separate guide.

The main difference between this and coursework is the need for students to be ‘supervised’ while they complete their work: controlled assessment requires students to complete their work under ‘informal’ supervision, with the exception of research and preparation which may be completed under ‘limited’ supervision.

You are likely to have initial concerns over how these levels of control can actually work within a course that contains significant levels of practical work. Some of the work, such as filming, location photography or research work, will by its very nature take place outside of teacher control, however it is what the students then do with this work that will need to be supervised. As with all controlled assessment work, the teacher must be satisfied that the work submitted is the candidate’s own work and be able to authenticate it. Guidance on how to work within these guidelines will be in the guide.

Level of control for task setting is set as ‘high’, does this mean that centres can’t adapt the tasks set by OCR?

No, some adaptation can take place to suit the needs of the learners or the centre’s own environment. If centres make alterations to tasks then they must ensure that students still have the opportunity to reach the highest marks in the Assessment Criteria. Centres are encouraged to develop their own tasks and briefs to suit their teaching strengths.

How much help can I give students with their work for the controlled assessment?

This is probably one of the most important questions around controlled assessment. If drafting and re-drafting of written controlled assessment work is not being assessed then teachers cannot provide detailed and specific advice on how a draft could be improved to meet the assessment criteria. Again, you will find specific advice on how to tackle this in the separate booklet.

Can students work in groups for the controlled assessment units?

Students can work in groups (up to 5) for the Production Portfolio in Media Unit (B324) should they or the centre wish, but cannot for the Individual Media Studies Portfolio unit (B321) as this unit assesses a purely individual input. It is possible that some preliminary work for B321 could be

done in groups if students are studying the same topic, such as exploring similar genre texts, but candidates will be assessed on their own portfolio and contribution.

How many media must students cover?

Students must study at least three different media during the course of the GCSE, including one print and one audio-visual based, and must study a minimum of two in the portfolio as a whole.

What grades can students get?

GCSE Media Studies is awarded on the scale A*-G, the individual units are awarded on the scale A to G. Any student who fails to meet the minimum requirement for G grade will be recorded as Unclassified (U) and this is not certified.

As with the GCE the specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. Students will be awarded a mark out of 120 for each controlled assessment unit and a mark out of 160 for the examinable unit. These marks will then be added together to give a mark out of 400. The grade awarded will be determined by the total uniform mark.

Can I still enter students for the Foundation Paper?

No, the new GCSE Media Studies is no longer tiered, which means that the scheme of assessment will cover all abilities from A* to G. Students who gain D-G grades will be awarded Foundation Level 1.

B321 – Individual Media Studies Portfolio – controlled assessment

This is a controlled assessment unit, internally assessed and externally moderated and is worth 30% of the full GCSE. Students produce an individual portfolio containing an analytical assignment, a production exercise and a planning and evaluation exercise, and are being tested on their knowledge and understanding of media language and representation. Centres can develop their own titles of study but must choose a topic area from a set list.

What is the mark allocation for this unit?

The analytical assignment is worth 60 marks, the production exercise 40 marks and the planning and evaluation (commentary) 20 marks.

Why are there set topics but not set titles?

The regulatory body outlines that the level of control for Task Setting is high and for this reason the topics are outlined by OCR. This is to make the work common for all candidates as far as possible. The ability to adapt the individual titles still allows for some flexibility and variety.

Should all students choose the same topic and tasks?

It would be advisable for all students in the same class to work towards the same topic, simply because of the necessity for you to introduce the topic with whole-class preparatory exercises. However, centres should bear in mind the candidates' interests when deciding which topic(s) to choose. It is certainly possible for students to tackle different tasks within the same class.

If you have more than one GCSE class then it may be interesting to choose more than one topic for your centre.

Is there a word count for the analytical assignment?

There is a guidance word limit for the assignment, with 800-1,500 words recommended if written, 10-15 slides if PowerPoint is chosen and 5 minutes of recording time for a podcast. Although this is only a guide it would be advisable to try to stick to this as far as you can, to ensure fairness and parity between students' work.

How should we decide which format to choose for the analytical assignment and commentary?

There is no requirement for all students to present their work using the same format. A judgement should be made or a choice given to the students themselves as to which way would suit them best, based on students' own strengths. Some students may feel more comfortable with a more traditional way of presenting their work and will elect to write their analytical assignment. Others who are not as confident in their written skills could choose to podcast their analytical assignment.

A PowerPoint presentation seems less work than a 1,500 word essay, how can I ensure that they are of equal depth?

The PowerPoint presentation will require the same level of input by the student, and will of course involve them rehearsing and giving their final presentation to their teacher. Although the slides themselves won't contain the same amount of words as the traditional essay, the student will be expected to go into more depth than is projected onto the screen during the presentation. This goes for podcasting too. Students will be expected to script and rehearse their podcast in the same way a student would draft and redraft a written assignment.

In the analytical assignment, would students have to cover all areas of representation outlined in the specification?

No. The specification provides a list of possible areas of representation and not all of the texts in the exemplar tasks will cover each area. For example, if you decide to choose the exemplar task for Topic 4 (Jade Goody and the Big Brother Race Row) then you are likely to focus your discussion around ethnicity, regional or national identity and age, rather than sexuality or gender. This list is to help you when you are planning your preparatory sessions and is also not meant to be exhaustive.

How does the production exercise link to the analytical assignment?

The production assignment is a vehicle for students to demonstrate what they have learnt through their analytical assignment. There needs to be a direct link between the two parts of the unit either through subject matter or genre, and if you are thinking of adapting either the exemplar task, text or production exercise remember the necessity to use at least two different media in the portfolio as a whole.

Can students use the same media for the production exercise as they do for unit B324?

As long as students have studied a minimum of three media, including print and audio-visual, across the whole course then there is nothing stopping them from looking at the same media for the two Controlled Assessment Units. It is important to look ahead when planning the new GCSE course to ensure that this requirement is met. For example candidates could choose Topic 4 for B321 which covers TV, Newspaper and Magazines, then choose Action Films for B322. They could then choose video brief 6 for B324 which covers TV. So although they have chosen to study TV in both controlled assessment units it is allowed because they have also looked at film and two different print products.

How many media should students use in this unit?

A minimum of two media must be covered in this unit as a whole.

Can the students work in groups for the production exercise?

No, the individual portfolio is for individual work only. Students will get an opportunity to work in a group when they start unit B324.

What resources are needed for the production assignment?

The quality of the production assignment for this unit is not expected to be the same as that for B324. The emphasis is on assessing the students' understanding of Media Language and Representation rather than their skills of practical production work, which will be assessed later in B324. For this reason it is certainly possible for candidates to neatly draw storyboards, magazine front covers or posters rather than using photographs or design packages to produce their work, particularly as there is no requirement for original photography in this unit. Candidates can produce pretty good newspaper front covers using a word-processing package such as Word. Using the camera on a mobile phone can produce excellent storyboards with few technical resources needed to transfer them to file. However, if the technical resources are available to you then this unit could be a great way to induct the students into using the equipment in preparation for the Portfolio in Media Studies unit.

What do students need to put in their commentary?

The commentary is an account of the researching, planning and construction of their product and is similar to the evaluation for assignment 3 on the legacy 1918 specification. Detailed guidance is given in the specification as to what it should contain. As with the analytical assignment, the work can be produced in one of several ways: written (350-750 words), PowerPoint (5-10 slides) or podcast (3 minutes).

How much time should be allocated for this unit?

There is a time control suggested for the amount of time available to complete the task and this is 25-30 hours. You will also need to factor in preparation time in addition to this.

What happens if a candidate does not submit any work for this unit?

If a student fails to submit any work for this unit then their mark must be recorded as '0'.

How does B321 differ from B324?

There are several differences between these two units. The first is that B321 is an individual portfolio whilst B324 can be undertaken in groups. The second is the inclusion of an analytical assignment in B321. B324 is similar in content to the old Assignment 3 on the legacy 1918 specification, whereby students are assessed on their skills of planning, production, and evaluation of their own media product.

Unit B322/B323 Textual Analysis and Media Studies - examination

This unit is an examinable unit and is worth 40% of the full GCSE. The paper consists of two sections:

Section A on B322 is the Moving Image option (Action Adventure);

Section A on B323 is the Print option (Lifestyle magazines);

Section B is common to both units and is Television and/or Radio comedy.

What do students need to prepare for Section A?

Whether you decide to teach the print or moving image option, your students will be expected to answer three questions in section A based on the Media Concepts of language, genre and representation. They are being tested on their ability to analyse and respond to the extract using these concepts under timed conditions. Learning how to analyse a text under exam conditions, and writing essays to time are two skills that are central to this unit. Practising these skills should form a central part to your scheme of work. It is also important to spend time teaching students how to analyse what they are looking at rather than simply describing what they see, which some students resort to in an exam.

Students will need to learn the specific terminology of the medium. A comprehensive, although not definitive, list of media language is printed in the specification.

Will all of the technical areas be apparent in each exam text selected by OCR?

Not in the same depth – it would be very difficult to find an extract that illustrated this. However, students must be prepared to comment on all the technical areas.

How do I decide which option to go for?

This could come down to something as simple as the viewing facilities that are available in your school. If you have a screen or interactive whiteboard connected to a DVD player then this is perfect for analysing film. If you are still using a television on wheels then students may find it difficult to see clearly what is on screen, as close analysis is important. Remember that you will need to have adequate viewing facilities for the exam too.

Otherwise it should come down to what you feel comfortable teaching and what the students enjoy. Action films are popular and will be familiar to almost all your students. Lifestyle magazines may appeal more to your female students than male, although they may surprise you!

How much teaching time should be dedicated to this unit?

It is worth 40% of the overall GCSE course so will require some input. However, putting a time-limit on it is difficult as it will depend so much on the ability of your students. Weaker students will need more input with longer time to digest what is being taught, whereas stronger students could fly through. Ensuring that a variety of different activities are included in the lessons so that the students don't lose interest is key.

If at all possible introduce some very short practical exercises to keep the students focused and to give them the opportunity to express their knowledge and understanding in a format other than writing. They could prepare and present a pitch for a new Action Adventure film, or come up with a concept for a new lifestyle magazine. These could be done in groups, which would be good preparation for B324.

How long should students spend on each question?

Both papers are 1 ¾ hours including 30 minutes of note making time. Section A carries 50 marks and Section B 30 marks. So roughly speaking allow approximately 45 minutes for section A and 30 minutes for Section B.

B322 – Moving Image option (Action Adventure films)

Is it important for students to watch whole films, or will studying a variety of clips be sufficient?

It is important to study at least the whole of one film if you can, as this will help students understand how narrative structure works within film. It is also important to show the students a variety of different clips as they are likely to be asked to compare the exam clip with their own study of the genre, so they will need to be able to draw out similarities and differences.

How many texts should students study in preparation for the exam?

As many as you feel you need to cover – there is no magic number. It is important to cover genre, representation and media language thoroughly so you will need to select a variety of different clips/texts in order to do this properly.

In their exam answer, should students refer to action adventure films they have studied in class?

Yes, although they must remember to write about the exam clip, which is the main focus of this exercise too!

What viewing facilities are needed for the moving image option B322?

The exam clip will come on DVD so DVD playback and a largish screen will be needed. Appropriate set-up of the room that will be used for the exam is crucial. It is important that all students get an unrestricted view of the screen and are not so far back that they cannot see the image clearly.

B323 – Print Option – Lifestyle magazines

How many texts should students study in preparation for the exam?

As with Action Adventure films it is important to select appropriate texts that allow you to cover all aspects of genre, representation and media language thoroughly. So the breadth is almost as important as the quantity. Ensure that you have covered as many sorts of lifestyle magazines as you can – weekly, monthly, men's, women's – drawing comparisons as you go.

Are students expected to refer to texts they have studied in class in their exam answers?

Again, as with Action Adventure it is likely the exam question will allow candidates to compare their study of Lifestyle Magazines with the exam text.

Section B of B322 and B323 will be common.

What is the purpose of Section B?

Section B tests the students' knowledge and understanding of audience and institution, looking at the context of the production and consumption of the programmes studied.

What do students need to do to prepare for Section B?

Students will need to have a detailed knowledge of their case studies and be able to contrast the two texts using key media concepts.

What do you mean by 'comedy'?

You could look at Sketch Shows, such as Little Britain or Catherine Tate, or situation comedy such as My Family. You could also look at comedy quiz shows such as Mock the Week or QI, although students may find these a little harder to relate to. There is no requirement to look at all types of television comedy, although it is probably a good idea to contrast two of the same sort just so that proper comparisons can be drawn.

Should centres offer both Television and Radio comedy?

This is entirely up to the centre to decide. Offering students a choice in the exam could benefit some but not if this means that you have to rush through both units to get them completed in time. Focusing on one and covering it in great depth is probably the best way forward, as this will be the most straightforward option for the students. Students who write about both in the exam but neither in enough detail will not be able to access the higher level marks. Radio was offered as an option for DDA purposes, so there is no expectation that centres will cover it, but it is a lively and growing interest.

What sorts of questions will be asked in Section B?

Although there is only one question in Section B it is split into two sections with separate marks, and may contain short bullet points to guide students with their answer. One part will ask the students to focus on an aspect of institution, such as scheduling, channel brand identity or regulatory issues, and the second part will ask students to focus on an aspect of audience, such as how the programme addresses its audience, what pleasures the text offers or audience positioning.

Does it have to be British Television Comedy?

No, as long as the programmes are scheduled on British Television or radio channels then they can be from anywhere in the world.

In order to be able to contrast the programmes it is advisable to study texts from different television channels, so that a discussion around the differences in scheduling and/or institutional factors can be pulled out and analysed.

How many texts should we look at?

Centres should study at least two texts for this unit. Again, it is important to study texts from different broadcasters on different television channels.

Should we concentrate on contemporary texts?

Although there is no requirement for the texts to be contemporary it may be difficult to obtain information on scheduling and other institutional factors for programmes that were broadcast a while ago.

One of the easiest options would be to choose a text that is broadcast at the time of study so that teachers can lay their hands on the necessary information. Remember that you can obtain copies of Television programmes from Richmond College providing you hold an off-air licence. Both Channel 4 On Demand and BBC's Iplayer have classic and current comedy shows available to watch online.

How much of a focus is on textual analysis?

There will be some although identifying the use of technical language is not the primary focus for this section of the exam. Candidates will be expected to write about the pleasures and attraction of the texts for audiences which will require some close analysis.

B324 – Production Portfolio – controlled assessment

G324 is a controlled assessment unit, internally assessed and externally moderated, and is worth 30% of the overall GCSE. Students will be assessed on their skills of research, planning and construction, as they put together a practical production that they then evaluate.

What is the mark allocation for this unit?

Planning and research is worth 30 marks, the construction 60 marks and the evaluation 30 marks.

Does this have to be a group project?

No, students can work on their own if they like, although some of the briefs lend themselves more easily to group working, such as producing a music promo video or a television extract.

If students do work in a group then there is still the requirement for individual evidence of the research and planning of the product, along with an individual evaluation. There is also the necessity for students to take on specific roles when working on a group project, for example when working on a video production the roles of director, camera operator, or editor should be clearly defined. This will also help you when you come to mark the project as it should help to make it clear who has or hasn't participated!

What resources would I need to deliver this unit?

Unlike B321 there is a need for the appropriate resources to be made available to your students and the need for you to feel confident in using them with the students! Your choice of topic for this unit is likely to be dictated by the resources available to you. See the following section on resources for specific advice.

What is original material?

This is material that is created by the students themselves. Photos they have taken, video they have shot, audio that they have recorded. The exception to this is music for the music video brief – students are not expected to write and then record their own music. Some excellent music videos have been created when students sourced music from unsigned bands (My Space is a great resource for this – if you can get access to it!) or used material that is non-copyright – you can buy CDs of music that doesn't contain copyright.

Can there be any overlap with the Individual Portfolio (B321) – can I use the same media?

There can be, and as long as centres have ensured that the minimum three media have been covered across the whole GCSE then this is acceptable.

How much flexibility is there in designing the briefs?

The briefs for this unit are prescribed briefs, but within each brief there are some choices, such as the genre of a new film for Brief 7 or the audience for a new magazine for Brief 2.

What needs to go into the Appendix?

The appendix should contain all the materials that have been used to plan the product, including materials that were later discarded as this shows the planning process. Storyboard drafts, rejected photographs, magazine front cover mock-ups, etc can be included.

What is a production log and how does this differ to the evaluation?

The production log is essential in providing evidence for you and the moderator of the student's individual contribution to production. It has to be completed individually, even if the student worked in a group. The specification outlines in detail the expected content of the log. The evaluation is written after the product is finished and can be produced in one of several formats: written (500-800 words), PowerPoint presentation (5-10 slides), a podcast (3-5 minutes) or a DVD with extras (3-5 minutes). As with B321 deciding factors over which to choose should be which of these formats would suit your students and how confident you feel about your technical skills, and there is n

What could a Production Log look like?

Producing a booklet for the students to collate their ideas in is one idea for the format of a production log. An A4 booklet with a card cover, blank sheets for planning, blank storyboarding pages, diary pages for each lesson and a production schedule could be given to each student to fill out as they went along. This could then be collected in at the end of the unit and used as evidence.

How should the work be presented for moderation?

Video work needs to be on DVD and should be playable on a regular DVD player. Audio work must be on CD, and print work no larger than A3 in size.

If you have chosen the webpage brief then these should be copied to a CD for the moderator and any links must be tested beforehand to ensure that they work properly. Where possible the websites should be accessible live and the corresponding URLs sent with the work to the moderator.

How many hours should be set aside

As with B321 the time stated in the specification for task taking is 25-30 hours, but of course this doesn't include any preparatory work so you will need to factor this in.

Resources

What equipment is needed to run this course?

If you are running GCSE in a centre that also offers A Level Media Studies then you are hopefully able to get your hands on some of their equipment! If it is possible to structure your year plan around the availability of this equipment without disadvantaging the students then this is a great solution.

However, if you aren't in this position then it is important that there is some sort of budget for resourcing your course. A lot will depend on which topics you plan to offer to your students for B324 as this is the unit that will most definitely need some resourcing input. As the specification states, choosing briefs will depend on the expertise of the staff and access to appropriate equipment, software and training. You need to feel confident in your technical skills, particularly if you don't have a technician on hand to help with editing or technical difficulties.

For Print Work:

Print work for B324 cannot be neatly drawn or 'cut-and-stuck' so you will need to plan ahead and invest in the appropriate software, particularly if all your students are doing the print option.

Photoshop Elements (Adobe) is an image manipulation and design package and is available on licence for educational purposes, which saves quite a bit of money compared to the normal licence. It is fairly easy to use with some practice and is cross-platform (available for Mac and PC). It is quite advanced in terms of what it can do, and at GCSE it is unlikely that you would need to use many of the tools that it offers but you may find that many of your students are already familiar with it. Because Photoshop allows you to manipulate images, it would be a good choice if you are designing a DVD cover. It is not a layout package however, so would not be useful for newspaper front covers. For this you should consider Quark or Indesign.

Quark is simpler and easier to use than Photoshop, but it is unlikely that your students are familiar with it. However, if you feel confident about getting your head around how it works then this is probably the easiest publishing layout package to use in the classroom. The page is a collection of boxes for either text or images/pictures, and can be moved around and resized with the click of a mouse. Quark is excellent for designing front cover layouts but as it is difficult to manipulate images using it, it needs to be used in conjunction with Photoshop or a similar image package. It is also available with an education licence, which is again cheaper than the usual licence.

Indesign is very similar to Quark as it is a layout package rather than a design package. It is also very simple to use.

For Video Work:

Roughly speaking, if you have 20 students then 4 cameras and 4 editing computers will be necessary for video work at GCSE. If you have more than one class then camera usage will be higher so you budget for 6 cameras.

Digital video cameras that use DV tape are slowly being replaced by cameras with removable hard discs, so there are lots of really reasonably priced camcorders with DV tapes about. £200-300 will buy you a camcorder that will produce the quality of work that is expected and you do not need to

invest in industry standard camcorders or expensive edit suites. Tripods are essential so that students can demonstrate panning and tilting effectively.

If you choose brief 6 or 7 (B324) and you are not doing an opening sequence then you may need to use some dialogue that will need to be properly recorded. The microphones on the top of most domestic camcorders do not offer the right level of sound quality, so buying an external microphone that can be mounted on top of the camera, or attached to a boom, is a good solution. Make sure that your camcorder has the appropriate mic input on the side of it.

There are many editing packages out there, including Adobe Premier (PC), Final Cut Express (Mac), Final Cut Pro (Mac), iMovie (Mac) or even Windows Movie Maker (PC). As with the cameras, you do not need to invest in industry standard equipment, but you need to feel confident in using the software with your students. iMovie and Windows Movie Maker are the simplest packages to use, and work as drag-and-drop. iMovie is available on educational licence. If you are more adventurous then Premier and Final Cut Express offer more in the way of features but are a little more complicated to use. Final Cut Pro is industry standard software.

Video work can take up quite a lot of space on a hard disc and shouldn't be saved onto a network because of this. It is worth considering investing in some external hard discs to keep the work on – they can cost as little as £70 each. You will also need a fast processor and good quality graphics card.

For Audio Work:

It is still possible to create audio productions using tape recorders, microphones and very quiet cupboards, but this is now rapidly being replaced by computer audio packages, including Adobe Audition. Although the quality of work at GCSE is not expected to be at the same standard as A Level, if you are choosing an audio topic then it would be very beneficial to your students if you could invest the money in the appropriate software.

Buying digital recorders, for recording real sound for use with video or audio work, is probably an unnecessary expense, particularly as most mobile phones now have pretty good quality digital voice recorders attached. These files can then be sent via Bluetooth to a Bluetooth enabled Mac or PC.

For Websites:

Again, if you have students who are eager to produce websites for their coursework then it is likely that they are familiar with one of the common packages such as Dreamweaver or Fireworks. If you are using a Mac then you may have iweb or Rapid Weaver as part of your package, and they are both very easy to use, because they are visual rather than code-based packages.

Format for submission

If you are producing video work then it must be on DVD. Recommendations for the format of other work can be found at the back of the specification.

How much of a budget do I need?

This really does depend on which practical options you will offer in B324. If you are starting your course from scratch then it is likely you will need to spend a good few hundred pounds in start-up

costs, but once you are up and running you can manage with £10-15 per student per year, unless you are buying class sets of text books in which case it will be more.

Internet Access

There is an ongoing problem for many centres in getting appropriate access to the Internet when teaching Media Studies. Some centres are now prevented from streaming, be it video or audio, which means that sites such as Channel 4 and the BBC are blocked. When your internet provision is being controlled by an external body it can feel like an up-hill battle. Try to get your Head Teacher on side if you feel that you are being restricted. Many schools now use software to monitor student internet usage in designated computer rooms. The software can be installed onto the teacher console or one dedicated computer in a computer room and allows the teacher to monitor, and if necessary, block the websites that students are visiting.

Although many students have access to the Internet at home this should not be used as an excuse not to have proper access to the internet for Media Studies. This can lead to inequality of opportunities issues.

Suitable internet access for research (B321 & B324) is also necessary, as is the ability to present student work if web design or podcasting is chosen.

Health and Safety Policy

It is important to have a health and safety policy in the department if students are to go out filming. Get them to sit a small test demonstrating their competency with the equipment before they are allowed to film. Also get the students to draw up their own risk assessment before they film, so that they are aware of any potential areas of dangers. Filming in many city centres is now heavily restricted, particularly around train stations, and students need to be aware of this when they plan their work. Written permission should be acquired by centres, from those individuals whose pictures are taken and this can be obtained using a Model Release Form. An example of which can be requested from the Qualifications Manager at OCR.

Is there any way of getting hold of old TV programmes that are not commercially available?

Yes – Richmond College provides this service to centres who hold an off-air licence.

Other forms of Support

In order to help you implement the new GCSE Media Studies Specification effectively, OCR offers a comprehensive package of support. This includes:

Published Resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- Better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications
- Quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials
- More resources for specifications with lower candidate entries
- Materials that are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement

Hodder Education is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Media Studies.



Hodder Education is producing the following resources for OCR GCSE Media Studies for first teaching in September 2009, which will be available in Summer 2009.

OCR Media Studies for GCSE Student's Book – Eileen Lewis
ISBN: 978 0340 98341 6

Approved publications

OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.



Endorsement

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's "Official Publishing Partner" or "Approved publication" logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher's materials rests with the publisher.

These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification. Any resource lists which are produced by OCR shall include a range of appropriate texts.

Professional Development

The 2012-13 OCR Professional Development Programme offers more accessible and more cost effective training, with the same valued content that you expect from us.

At OCR, we are constantly looking for ways in which we can improve the support we offer to teachers. Most recently we have been considering the increasing challenges that schools face in releasing teachers for INSET, and how OCR can make its professional development programme more accessible and convenient for all.

From September 2012, our new improved programme will include:

- FREE online professional development units available when and where you want them
- FREE live web broadcasts of professional development events
- FREE face to face training for GCSE controlled assessment and GCE coursework
- A series of 'not to be missed' premier professional development events.

For more information, please email training@ocr.org.uk or visit www.ocr.org.uk/training.

OCR Social

Visit our social media site (<http://www.social.ocr.org.uk>). By registering you will have free access to a dedicated platform where teachers can engage with each other - and OCR - to share best practice, offer guidance and access a range of support materials produced by other teachers; such as lesson plans, presentations, videos and links to other helpful sites.

Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate and free access to candidate information at your convenience. Sign up at <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>

Frequently Asked Questions

When are the examinations and the Controlled Assessment deadlines?

Units B321 and B324, the controlled assessment units, will be available in June each year. B322 and B323, the textual analysis units, will be available in January and June each year (from January 2010).

Details of the examination dates and deadlines for Controlled Assessment can be found on the OCR website or through your examination's office.

The first certification will be Summer 2011.

How many guided learning hours should I set aside?

Between 120-140 guided learning hours is the requirement for GCSE Media Studies. Anything less than 2 hours a week for a two year course and lead to problems in completing the course.

In what order should the units be taught?

Tackling the units in their sequential order is probably the best way as it allows for good skills development, however this is entirely up to centres. It would certainly make sense to tackle B321 before B324 so that students can begin to develop their skills of production and then test them further. Keeping them in order, sandwiching B322/323 between the two controlled assessment units, gives students an excellent opportunity to practically apply their knowledge and understanding of media language to a real media product.

If you are considering running the GCSE over one year, in order to meet the controlled assessment external deadline you could think about running B321 and B324 before B322/323, which would allow you the rest of the term after the external deadline for controlled assessment to complete the examination work. Further details on teaching GCSE in one year can be found at the end of the booklet.

From September 2012, assessment tasks may be undertaken at any point between release of the task by the centre/OCR and the examination series for which the task must be submitted. Each assessment task will be valid for submission in a single examination series only. **Centres must ensure that candidates undertake a task that is valid for submission in the year in which the candidate intends to submit it.**

The series in which each task can be submitted will be clearly marked on the front cover of each task. Tasks will not be valid for submission in any examination series other than that indicated.

Will candidates be able to re-enter units?

Yes. Controlled assessment units can be carried forward with the moderator mark from one session to the next i.e. June 2014 to June 2015. There is a separate 'carry over' code to re-enter the unit.

Should one unit be taught at a time or is it possible to teach two in parallel?

This is up to you, but it is advisable to stick to one unit at a time to allow students to focus and keep the momentum going, particularly as one of the parallel units would have a sizeable practical component. Jumping between units could also confuse weaker students if they are possibly only studying media for about 2 hours a week.

Can the whole GCSE be delivered in one year?

It can be very successfully delivered in one year, but the key to success here is very careful timing and brilliant organisation for students and staff! It is crucial that the appropriate amount of hours per week is set aside and any less than 3-4 hours a week is unrealistic. A carefully structured year plan with realistic deadlines is a must, an example of which is at the end of the Teacher Support Booklet. It would also be advisable to select either Television or Radio comedy rather than trying to tackle both in the allotted time.

If you choose to deliver the GCSE in one year remember that certification will be available in June 2013.

What should the student-teacher ratio be?

Although class sizes at GCSE are larger than A Level, class size is important because of the practical nature of the course. Individual control over class size is likely to be difficult for most teachers as this is outside of their control; however, the resource implications for a subject with a large practical component should, where possible, be borne in mind when arranging class sizes. Remember that the maximum number of students per group for B324 is five, so having enough resources for six groups in a class of thirty could dictate the topic choices you are able to offer.

Is there a minimum qualification for studying GCSE Media Studies?

The official minimum entry requirement for GCSE Media Studies is that students entering the course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to National Curriculum Level 3, or Entry 3. Students can access and enjoy the course without this minimum level requirement as long as they have the right support, for example students with English as a second language.

Are students expected to have any prior knowledge of Media Studies?

No. Many students will bring with them a prior knowledge of some sort through their study of English Language, and this can be built on, however this should not be taken for granted when designing an introductory unit for GCSE Media Studies.

How important is it to have an introductory unit at the start of the course?

An induction into the course is important, as students will have to get to grips with a vocabulary that is likely to be very new to the majority of them. It is up to you to decide whether you want to link this to the scheme or whether it is standalone.

You could start by looking briefly at the key concepts from within the frame of reference of the students. If you are doing B322 then introducing genre and audience through the analysis of a variety of clips from their favourite films will help them to develop the skills of textual analysis that they will need in order to study the Action Adventure genre. Or you may want to start with a short group practical – mobile phones can be easily used for this, either using them to take photos for a digital storyboard or getting students to make their own short films. Most mobiles now have their own basic video editing software.

These sorts of preliminary practical tasks are great for getting the students used to working together and working with technology.

Which units assess Quality of Written Communication?

QWC is now only assessed in the examinable Textual Analysis unit B322 and B323, and not in the controlled assessment. Students will be assessed on their ability to write legibly, spell, punctuate and use appropriate grammar, select an appropriate form for their writing and to structure their writing in a suitable way. To obtain Level 4 marks students will have to express their ideas clearly and fluently, with well structured sentences, with few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Appendix

Two different versions of a one year course for Media Studies GCSE

1 year course (sequential order)

Sept	Introductory unit
Oct / Nov	B321 – individual portfolio
Dec	Begin B322/3
Jan / Feb	B322/3
March / April	B324
May	Revision of B322/B323

1 year course (controlled assessment first)

Sept	Introductory unit
Oct / Nov	B321
Dec / Jan	B324
Feb / March / April	B322/3
May	Revision and submission of portfolio

2 year course

Sept Term 1	Introductory unit
Term 1	B322/3 – Section A - teach the skills of textual analysis and the concept of representation through action adventure films or lifestyle magazines
Term 2/3	B321 – Individual portfolio
Term 3	B322/3 – Section B - teach Audiences and Institutions – Radio/TV comedy
Term 3	Induction to practical production in digital video/audio/print/ICT
Term 4/5	B324 – Practical Production briefs
Term 5	Revision and submission of portfolio

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