Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students’ responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students’ scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students’ reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year’s document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk
Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student’s answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student’s answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student’s answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner’s mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative Content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.
Points To Remember

- Please mark positively
- Use the entire spread of marks and take a “best fit” approach
- Reward use of appropriate media terminology (not language expression)
- Reward unusual responses when supported by specific reference to text(s), or consult your senior examiner
- Notes must not be marked.

Critical Perspectives (MEST3)

80 raw marks - 32 marks for Section A (AO1) and 48 marks for Section B (AO2)

Weighting: AO1 40%, AO2 60%

Section A

This section assesses the following assessment objective:

**AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates**

These short answer questions are designed to encourage candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts and the production contexts within which texts are produced (AO1).

Section B

This section assesses the following assessment objective:

**AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding when analysing media productions and processes to show how meanings and responses are created**

Each question should be marked using the appropriate marking criteria.
MARKING NOTATION

Examiners are reminded that it is essential to notate while marking. It is not enough to tick every page of writing. Candidates can now ask to see their papers and they have the right to see how and why the mark their work was given was arrived at.

Use the annotations below from the toolbar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Component Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Questionable</td>
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<td>L</td>
<td>Language/Form/Narrative/Genre</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>Representation</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Audience</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Institution</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>Values and Ideology</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Focus</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>Wider Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Critical Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>Example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summative comments must be made at the end of each answer. They must demonstrate that the mark scheme has been applied and clearly indicate the reasons for the mark allocated. It is useful to take these comments from the level descriptors. An example will be presented at the standardisation meeting of a ‘Model Marked Script’. 
Question 1

How do the two products attempt to create an emotional response from an audience?  

[8 marks]

Assessment of:
- Analysis
- Concepts
- Reference to products

Indicative Content:
- Use of camera / direct address to audience
- Pace of editing
- Use of soundtrack
- Human interest stories that audience can relate to
- Use of a variety of ages / ethnicities etc to encourage audience identification
- Text on screen to appeal to audience sensitivity
- Use of emotive and somewhat persuasive language

Level 4 (7–8 marks)

A sophisticated analysis, showing very good critical autonomy.  
Sophisticated understanding of media concepts, in particular media language within both media products.  
Supported by detailed references to both media products. Articulate and engaged.

Level 3 (5–6 marks)

A proficient analysis, showing good critical autonomy.  
Good understanding of media concepts, in particular media language within both media products.  
Supported by references to both media products. Clearly expressed.

Level 2 (3–4 marks)

A satisfactory analysis, showing critical autonomy.  
Adequate understanding of media concepts, in particular media language within both media products.  
Supported by references to the media product(s). Generally clear expression.

Level 1 (1–2 marks)

A basic analysis.  
Some understanding of media concepts, in particular media language within the media product(s).  
Meaning may be obscured at times by weaknesses in written communication.

Level 0 (0 marks)

No relevant content.
Question 2

How do contemporary media products influence the creation of a British identity?
You may refer to other media products in order to support your answer.  

[12 marks]

Assessment of:
• Evaluation
• Media concepts / theories / debates
• Examples can be from unseen exam products or other media products

Indicative Content:
Awareness of the issue of what it means to “be British”?
Awareness that “being British” might mean different things to different people, based on history, age, perceived social class, ethnicity etc
Changing role/presence of social media in contemporary life – impact on how others view us and how we view them
Role of PSB/independent media producers – to what extent are our values & opinions shaped by the media we individual and collectively consume?
Extent to which audiences CAN have their values and ideologies altered as a result of engaging with media products
Changing socio-economic circumstances, particularly, perhaps, post the Brexit vote

Level 4 (10–12 marks)
A sophisticated evaluation, showing very good critical autonomy.
Detailed and sophisticated application of a wide range of media issues/debates/theories.
Supports answer with a wide range of examples.
Articulate and engaged.

Level 3 (7–9 marks)
A proficient evaluation, showing good critical autonomy.
Proficient application of a range of media issues/debates/theories.
Supports answer with a range of examples.
Clearly expressed.

Level 2 (4–6 marks)
A satisfactory evaluation, showing critical autonomy.
Adequate application of a number of media issues/debates/theories.
May support answer with examples.
Generally clear expression.

Level 1 (1–3 marks)
A basic evaluation.
Basic application of some critical issues/debates/theories.
Meaning may be obscured at times by weaknesses in written communication.
Level 0 (0 marks)
No relevant content.

Question 3

It could be argued that many popular media products are superficial, preventing us from engaging with real-life issues. To what extent do you agree with this point of view? You should refer to other media products in order to support your answer. [12 marks]

Assessment of:
- Evaluation
- Wider contexts
- Examples should be from other media products

Indicative Content:
Celebrity culture positive and negative
Transient v public sphere nature of social media ‘events’
Quality TV v proliferation of TV channels
Agenda is in the hands of a few institutions challenged by new media forms
Establishment of a consumer culture
Move towards a secular society

Level 4 (10–12 marks)
A sophisticated and detailed evaluation, showing very good critical autonomy. Sophisticated and detailed application of a wide range of wider contexts. Supports answer with a wide range of examples from other media. Articulate and engaged.

Level 3 (7–9 marks)
A proficient evaluation, showing good critical autonomy. Proficient application of a range of wider contexts. Supports answer with a range of examples of other media. Clearly expressed.

Level 2 (4–6 marks)
A satisfactory evaluation, showing critical autonomy. Adequate application of a number of wider contexts. Supports answer with examples from other media. Generally clear expression.

Level 1 (1–3 marks)
A basic evaluation. Basic application of some wider contexts. Some examples from other media included. Meaning may be obscured at times by weaknesses in written communication.
Level 0 (0 marks)

No relevant content.

Assessment of:

- Understanding of Identities and the Media or The impact of New and Digital Media
- Focus on the question
- Media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts
- Independent case study with examples
Identities and the Media

Question 4

“…we need to live in cultures that no longer make assumptions about who we are or who we want to be…”

In what ways does your case study highlight the different ways in which we construct our identity?

[48 marks]

Question 5

The media should enable individuals to develop and refine their own identity; it should not determine and control their identity. To what extent does your case study support this statement?

[48 marks]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>(37–48 marks)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A sophisticated and comprehensive essay, showing very good critical autonomy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated and detailed understanding of identities and the media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sharp focus on the question throughout.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated application of a wide range of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A comprehensive individual case study, with a wide range of detailed examples.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>(25–36 marks)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A good essay, showing good critical autonomy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient understanding of identities and the media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A clear focus on the question.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good application of a range of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A clear individual case study, with a range of examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-structured and clearly expressed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>(13–24 marks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A satisfactory essay, showing critical autonomy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate understanding of identities and the media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses mainly on the question.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate application of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An adequate individual case study, with a number of examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly well-structured and generally clear.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>(1–12 marks)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A basic essay.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some understanding of identity and the media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May lack focus on the question.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A basic application of some media issues/debates/theories or wider contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of a case study and supported by some examples.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meaning may be obscured at times by weaknesses in communication.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level 0</th>
<th>(0 marks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No relevant content.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Indicative Content:
The following are possible discussion points that may be found in candidate responses. They should not be seen as an exhaustive list. Indeed, examiners should expect to see unexpected content. Candidates should be rewarded for what they have produced, not marked down for unusual content.

Question 4:
- Increased use of social media
- Emergence of a “global village”
- Online presence can be different to real life presence
- The ability to edit / delete profiles on different platforms
- Active media users, who use / select products according to their individual tastes and interests
- Increased social acceptance of a variety of lifestyles, allied with increased media portrayal of those lifestyles

Question 5:
- Users able to engage with a wealth of products across a variety of platforms
- Online profiles can be made private / secure, though online privacy has been an issue
- Ability to use products without the need to sign in / give away personal details
- Control of the media by a select few
- Some countries restrict access to certain media platforms
- Freedom of expression versus state control of media
The Impact of New/Digital Media

Question 6

It is clear that the long-term future of media is online; media institutions need to find new and exciting ways to help audiences make the transition.

Consider this statement with reference to your case study. [48 marks]

Question 7

With reference to your case study, explore whether the range of social media platforms available encourages social and political engagement. [48 marks]

| Level 4 (37–48 marks) | A sophisticated and comprehensive essay, showing very good critical autonomy.  
| | Sophisticated and detailed understanding of the impact of new/digital media.  
| | A sharp focus on the question throughout.  
| | Sophisticated application of a wide range of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.  
| | A comprehensive individual case study, with a wide range of detailed examples.  
| | Well structured, articulate and engaged. |

| Level 3 (25–36 marks) | A good essay, showing good critical autonomy.  
| | Proficient understanding of the impact of new/digital media.  
| | A clear focus on the question.  
| | Good application of a range of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.  
| | A clear individual case study, with a range of examples.  
| | Well-structured and clearly expressed. |

| Level 2 (13–24 marks) | A satisfactory essay, showing critical autonomy.  
| | Adequate understanding of the impact of new/digital media.  
| | Focuses mainly on the question.  
| | Adequate application of media issues/debates/theories and wider contexts.  
| | An adequate individual case study, with a number of examples.  
| | Mostly well-structured and generally clear. |

| Level 1 (1–12 marks) | A basic essay.  
| | Some understanding of the impact of new/digital media.  
| | May lack focus on the question.  
| | A basic application of some media issues/debates/theories or wider contexts.  
| | Evidence of a case study and supported by some examples.  
| | Meaning may be obscured at times by weaknesses in communication. |

| Level 0 (0 marks) | No relevant content. |
Indicative Content:
The following are possible discussion points that may be found in candidate responses. They should not be seen as an exhaustive list. Indeed, examiners should expect to see unexpected content. Candidates should be rewarded for what they have produced, not marked down for unusual content.

**Question 6:**
Changing media landscape - emergence of new platforms / services
Technological developments enable new / innovative / exciting experiences
Financial limitations for institutions - online delivery can be cheaper than traditional outlets
UK Government pledge to widen access to broadband etc
Is it the role of the media to encourage people to move online, perhaps against their wishes?
Concept of audiences acting in different ways - early adopters versus those who have never been online
Audiences becoming increasingly narrow as a result of convergence

**Question 7:**
24/7 media via smartphones etc - means audiences have instant access to trending topics
Citizen journalism enables the public to have their own voice
Issues of moderation - who instigates / controls the debate?
Online debate - both positive (increased engagement?) and negative (trolling?)
Can social / political engagement be generated just because online platforms explore debate topics? Some audiences may not want to become, for example, politically engaged
Online media possibilities / opportunities are “endless” – how do audiences know what to trust / believe in?