General

This was a small entry largely comprised of second year A-level students resubmitting improved MEST 2 work as they completed the final year of the legacy specification. This meant that many schools only entered a small number of students for the unit.

Administration

There were few issues in terms of the administration of the unit. Paperwork was completed and submitted in a timely fashion and most student record forms contained information provided by teachers that aided in the moderation of the work. The most helpful notes make specific reference to the students' work and linked their achievements to the mark scheme.

There were very few serious technical problems. The most common issue is where work is submitted online and handwritten or printed urls are sent to the moderator. Illegible handwriting, inaccuracy in transcription or unclear printed information can delay the moderation process. It should be noted though that the rules about submission of work have changed for the new specification so if students are entering for the AS or A-level NEAs please check the new submission guidelines.

Some schools are sending print work as digital files only. Print productions should be printed to show the work as realistically as possible. Most schools are sending audio/video work on pen-drives and this makes accessing students' work much more reliable.

Some schools are still sending far too much research and planning material. Only 5-6 pages of research and planning work is required. This is a sample of the work undertaken. Sometimes so much work is submitted that finding the final productions, links to online submissions and/or the evaluations is difficult.

Some work is not labelled correctly. Schools as advised to ensure that moderators can easily match work to the correct student by using student names and numbers in all labelling and ensuring that all elements of the submission are labelled appropriately and accurately. Labelling work with nick-names or the informal labelling that may be used during production (group names etc.) should be avoided.

Occasionally moderators discover that they haven’t been sent all the work that has been marked by the school. All work that is sent needs to be labelled clearly and be easily accessible for moderation. Moderators may not always be able to tell that work is missing/hidden and this may mean that marks are adjusted as the original marking appears too generous.

Please see the updated submission guidelines on the AQA website for specific advice on the submission of practical work for the AS and A-level NEAs.

Production Work

Moderators reported seeing some very creative print work that demonstrated the students' knowledge and understanding of the form by using page layout conventions both accurately and with some flair. Students awarded lower in the mark scheme often demonstrated a lack of security in their knowledge of the way magazines use columns, fonts and general page design features such as pull quotes, page numbers, side-bars etc.
Stronger moving image work was characterised by presenting a cohesive narrative as well as a confident recognition of the conventions of the form. Music videos tended to be more successful than extracts from within a film. Some students seemed to misunderstand the requirements of brief one with a significant number being under the impression that they were being asked to create trailers.

With two productions required per brief, some students focused too much on one of the products at the cost of the second. A weaker second product will limit the marks that can be offered for the complete portfolio. This is sometimes reflected in the evaluation where one production is discussed at length whilst the second is given little attention, or sometimes ignored.

Some websites were no longer accessible when moderators tried to look at them – this was perhaps down to the large number of resubmissions being entered this year. Less successful work had done little more than add a little content to a wix.com template. There was evidence of some less than appropriate software being used for e-media productions. For example, adding hyperlinks to PowerPoint presentations makes it difficult for students to demonstrate their research into / understanding of codes and conventions of websites.

**Evaluations**

There is still some evidence of evaluations being used to describe the process of research and/or production. These types of evaluations show limited knowledge of media concepts and do not offer any analysis of the production work. Stronger evaluations showed a real focus on the brief and the tasks’ requirements whilst providing a clear analytical approach to discussing their own production work, recognising its strengths and weaknesses in light of the research undertaken, the brief’s requirements and the students’ knowledge and understanding of media concepts.

As ever, it has been a privilege to be able to see the product of all the hard work of teachers and students entering MEST 2.
Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator