A-LEVEL
MEDIA STUDIES
7572/C- Coursework
Report on the Examination

7572
June 2022

Version: 1.0

Introduction

This year was only the second time 7572/C had been completed and moderated externally. Ofqual, in recognition of some of the potential issues had allowed alternative production and submission methods to be used where students had experienced disruptions and lack of access to technology, models etc. As a 'one-off' students could present prototypes/mock ups of work instead of fully realised artefacts. In addition, found images and found footage were allowed to show the students intent when capturing footage/taking photos proved difficult. It should be noticed that these allowances will not apply for 2023 submissions. Practical work should be submitted as a 'working' or realistic artefact with the presentation demonstrating the students understanding of the industrial context of production. One allowance that has been made for future submissions is that students can use (rather than make) company logos. To ensure they can be rewarded fully across the mark scheme, all other images must be created by the student.

Although these allowances were given many centres submitted full productions with very little reliance on found images/footage. Perhaps responding to limitations, some creative use of imagery was evidenced and many productions showed very good attention to detail. Some centres did submit work that used non-original image and footage. This in itself did not impact on the marks that were awarded. Full prototypes/mock-ups needed notes/annotations to help explain the reasons behind the choices made to allow for an accurate application of the mark scheme.

Admin

Most centres submitted all paperwork with the students' work. Some centres did not. To remind you, each students' folder needs an accompanying Candidate Record Form signed by the student and their teacher. One Centre Declaration Sheet signed by teachers and those involved in internal standardising of marks should be included with the submission to your moderator. These forms should be signed 'by hand'. Most centres sent paper copies. Scanned copies included on a USB are allowed but the forms must be signed before scanning.

This year there was one password for all electronic submissions. Most centres sent encrypted USB drives ensuring students' work was secure. Some USB drives were not encrypted. The password will be required when the work is returned. Some centres created their own passwords – sometimes including them with the USB drive. Information about encryption can be found here.

Centres are reminded that the notes and annotations should show how the mark scheme has been applied to students' work. It is helpful when Statements of Intent are annotated and when summative comments for production work provide a brief rationale to explain why specific marks have been awarded.

Marking

Most centres were marking the work within tolerance of the national standards. The tendency was to mark a little leniently and this led to some centres being right at the edge of tolerance. Extending this leniency a little further in future could lead to the marks being out of tolerance which could lead to the whole cohort's marks being adjusted. Tolerance for this unit is +/- 4 marks so being one mark too generous in each area of the mark scheme puts the mark within one mark of being out of tolerance.

Media language and representations tended to be marked quite accurately with representations sometimes being marked a little low. Students can be rewarded when they produce imagery that offers more than simple denotation. Students can challenge stereotypes but it is often fully appropriate for them to replicate stereotypes in the context of their production.

Statements of intent were sometimes significantly over-rewarded receiving level 5 marks for observations and descriptions of plans rather than explanations. Similarly marks in the Audience and Industry section were sometimes generous. To receive level 5 in this area, students should show a clear knowledge and understanding of the codes and conventions of the form they are creating as well as the genre. They should also show their knowledge with the appropriate presentation of work.

Areas of Production

Print

A popular choice and the 'double print' option supports centres whose access to technology for broadcast and e-media production technology may be limited.

Currently, print work should be printed for submission to show the work in its appropriate medium. Care should be taken when producing print work to consider page layout, proportions, the visual relationship between text and image, font size etc. These can be considered when awarding marks in the Audience and Industry section of the mark scheme. Some work was submitted digitally and this can sometimes disguise issues in the proportions of the layout.

E-media

Whether submitted as working websites or printouts, e-media work should always demonstrate the student's understanding of the form and platform. E-media work should offer some form of audience interaction and/or multi-media experience. The dynamic nature of online media can be demonstrated in the use of hyperlinks, animations etc.

When submitted as a working website please ensure the correct URL is sent to the moderator and, as a courtesy, please send working links on a USB drive rather than printed/handwritten URLs which can be difficult to read and transcribe at times – especially the very long and complex URLs that are often generated. Please do not send the log-in and password details of the sites used to build e-media work to your moderator.

Some centres sent filmed website walk-throughs which is fine. Do ensure that the screens can be seen clearly and the multi-media aspects of the site are presented too.

Broadcast

Moving image and audio productions should show a knowledge of the form and genre identified in the brief/chosen by the student. Most broadcast work was submitted effectively as data files in USB drives.

Statements of Intent

There is still evidence that some statements of intent are written after production and this often means they are evaluations of the choices made during production rather than an engagement with the brief and research and the subsequent plans for production. Evaluations do not meet the mark scheme's requirements and marks given for work that takes this approach should reflect this.

Work at the lower end of the mark scheme tended to offer observations as to what products and effects would be created without giving much detail as to how this would be achieved. Statements that identified specific media language choices and discussed how these choices would meet the brief's requirements could be rewarded higher in the mark scheme.

Some statements included theory as a statement rather than as part of the student's reasoning or explanation. The use of theory rather than just mentioning it can help support marks higher in the mark scheme.

Some statements were submitted as bullet points and this limited the students' ability to expand on their explanations and analysis.

The Briefs

There is still evidence that some centres are selecting a brief for the students. Please note that this is not in the spirit of the specification. Students should be given as full a choice as possible from the briefs to allow them to generate and develop their own ideas in an area they have an interest. Where all students complete the same brief, the same type of approaches are taken and this inevitably holds the stronger students back.

All six briefs were seen in this year's submission. Each brief allowed for excellent work to be created but also raised some challenges for some students.

Brief 1 (print and broadcast product advertising)

Stronger work showed a clear connection between the target audience and the approach to the adverts. Products and advertising strategies were well thought through and students at the upper end of the mark scheme showed an understanding of the requirements of advertising products.

Work rewarded at the lower end tended to miss the link between the stated target audience and their approach to advertising the product. Representations were not always appropriate and adverts often missed out on important information – such as how the audience could purchase the product.

Brief 2 (hobby magazine/website)

This was a very popular brief. Work at the upper end of the mark scheme showed a real engagement with the topic chosen and this work reflected the idea of hobbies ranging from photography and crafting to train spotting and woodwork. Stronger students engaged with the codes and conventions of magazine and website design and offered engaging and interesting approaches to their topic for their niche audiences.

Work at the lower end of the range often misinterpreted the idea of a 'hobby' and whilst sport and fashion could be presented as a hobby, work at this end of the range offered straightforward fashion/sport magazines. Codes and conventions were often applied inconsistently and images used were simple illustrations/denotations rather than an attempt to create meaning and audience appeal.

In general, websites were not as successful as magazines. Some websites felt very 'old fashioned' in terms of their layout and design.

Brief 3 (documentary/posters)

There were significant number of students who approached this brief. Weaker submissions did not fully engage with the idea of the opening and title sequence and their submissions resembled adverts or trailers and were missing industry information, titles, opening credits etc.

Stronger work followed the conventions well and there was evidence of some very imaginative and original approaches in this task.

Posters tended to be approached with some knowledge and understanding of the form with some students selecting engaging images and providing clear communication of the information needed to promote the documentary.

Brief 4 (adverts and leaflets)

This was a relatively popular brief and there were some excellent submissions showing a real engagement with this marketing task. As a fully print production it was important for students to engage with the media language conventions for both tasks and stronger submissions ensured that leaflets offered information and used images that helped create a brand identity for the online supermarket. Higher level adverts created a recognisable brand and offered the appropriate 'call to action' whereas lower in the mark scheme images chosen were perfunctory and often key information was missing from the products – e.g. the web address for the online shop.

Brief 5 (online lifestyle magazine/video or audio feature for the website)

This appeared to be the least popular of the six briefs. Stronger work for this brief made clear choices regarding the target audience and focused the representations on appealing to this group. There was a lot of freedom offered in this brief and so students who had a less than clear view of their audience struggled to communicate a clear definition of lifestyle across the two tasks.

Brief 6 (celebrity magazine and Instagram posts)

A popular brief which allowed many students to demonstrate strong knowledge and understanding of the way celebrity focused media addresses its audiences across the two forms.

Work at the lower end lacked the solid knowledge and understanding of the tone and approach of celebrity magazines. Stronger work recreated images that reflected the conventions of the form and focused on creating gossip/scandal focused content. Many students clearly enjoyed the Instagram task and this was evidenced in the way images were used to create a brand identity for the celebrity and demonstrated how Instagram is used to encourage audience interaction and generate an income using sponsored posts etc. At the other end of the mark scheme the Instagram posts lacked an attempt to create audience engagement and were simple illustrations.

These submissions often missed out on the industrial connection between the magazine and the Instagram influencer.

The briefs offered students a range of opportunities to work on production tasks that reflected their interests. There were many different approaches to each brief and it has been a privilege to be able to see the creative, imaginative and thoughtful work created by this year's A Level Media cohort.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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