CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

MEDIA STUDIES **9607/02**

Paper 2 Media Texts and Contexts **October/November 2025**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

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GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

English & Media subject specific general marking principles
(To be read in conjunction with the Generic Marking Principles (and requiring further guidance on how to place marks within levels))

Components using level descriptors:

- We use level descriptors as a guide to broad understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a level.
- Level descriptors are a means of general guidance and should not be interpreted as hurdle statements.
- Where indicative content notes are supplied for a question, these are *not* a prescription of required content, and must not be treated as such. Alternative correct points and unexpected answers in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the knowledge and skills demonstrated.
- While we may have legitimate expectations as to the ground most answers may occupy, we must at all times be prepared to meet candidates on their chosen ground, provided it is relevant ground (e.g. clearly related to and derived from a relevant passage/text and meeting the mark scheme requirements for the question).

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standard isation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Unclear expression
	Credit-worthy point made
	Unclear expression
AN	Valid point/answer
BP	Blank page
EG	Example used
K	Knowledge
NAR	Response is mainly narrative
Q	Directly addressing the question

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Annotation	Meaning
SEEN	Page has been seen by examiner
T	Use of appropriate terminology

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Assessment Objectives

The Assessment Objectives are applied to each question. The assessment objectives for the paper are:

- **AO1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. (60%)
- **AO2** Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence. (40%)

The Level Descriptors guide examiners to an understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a band. They are a means of general guidance and must not be interpreted as hurdle statements. For the purposes of standardisation of marking, they are to be used in conjunction with the Standardisation scripts discussed during the coordination meeting and with Team Leaders, as well as the question-specific notes.

The indicative content provided is for general guidance; it is not designed as prescriptions of required content and must not be treated as such. Whilst there are legitimate expectations of the content of most answers, examiners may see responses that include ideas not covered in the indicative content. For these cases, examiners should credit valid responses fairly and not penalise candidates for including valid points outside the mark scheme.

Using a banded mark scheme

Place the answer in a level first. Look for the "best fit" of the answer into a level. An answer needs to show evidence of most but not necessarily ALL of the qualities described in a level in order to be placed in that band. Then award a mark for the relative position of the answer within the level.

Higher level responses (Levels 4 & 5) will demonstrate excellent knowledge and understanding of the key concepts (AO1). They should use a wide range of terminology accurately (AO1). They should show clear understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They should support their answer with many detailed references to the text (AO2).

Middle range responses (Level 3) will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the key concepts – there may be uneven coverage or some misunderstanding (AO1). They should use some terminology, but not always accurately (AO1). They should show some understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They should support their answer with some references to the text (AO2).

Basic responses (Levels 1 & 2) will demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of the key concepts –misunderstanding might be common (AO1). They might use some terminology, but rarely accurately (AO1). They will have limited understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They rarely support their answer with references to the text (AO2).

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Section A: Media Texts

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	**Analyse how the extract from *Slow Horses* constructs meaning, including the specific representations of individuals, groups, events or places, through the following technical elements:** • **camera shots, angles, movement and composition** • **sound** • **mise-en-scène** • **editing.** <u>Specific notes on the sequence – likely areas of coverage</u> NB: Jack Lowden is White Scottish (River Cartwright) – Spy; Freddie Fox is White English (James 'Spider' Web) – Comms; Kristin Scott Thomas is White British (Diana Taverner) – In charge **Camera**: • CU Tapping of item on the leg, nerves. • Unsteady, moving = action, danger • MCU main character master shot – focus on this character's story, protagonist. • 2 Shot (Spider & Taverner) – they are united in their mission; Cartwright is on his own out in the 'wild'. • Lower angle on Cartwright – he has the power in this situation. • Zoom into Taverner – tension. • CCTV – surveillance culture, always watching. • Unstable camera – lack of control of the situation, chaos, wrong suspect • CU – emotions, tension, fear, stakes are high. • LS – location, people, planes etc. **Sound**: • Tannoy announcement – sets the scene as public, travel (airport) • High energy fast paced soundtrack • Sounds of sirens = danger • SO15 – abbreviations • High vis car – danger, and emergency	**25**	Candidates will be assessed on their ability to understand how meaning is constructed in a media text through the analysis of different technical areas. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria, and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. A positive approach to marking is encouraged. Reward alternative valid responses. **Clip details:** Extract: *Slow Horses*, episode 1, 'Failure's Contagious' (dir. Smith)

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	**Mise-en-scene:** • Airport – Tannoy announcements • White authorities, Asian suspects – representation and stereotypes. • Female in power, in charge – representation. • Suits and power dressing – power and influence, in charge **Editing**: • Continuity • Crosscutting, parallel editing linking the two locations in action. • Short length of clip increasing the pace, and tension. **Meaning:** West v East. Terrorism, security, surveillance, monitoring. Power of the white man. The opening of Slow Horses depicts what appear to be government agents attempting to apprehend a suspected terrorist. The desaturated colours with a predominance of blue connote a cool seriousness. The main character, Cartwright, in the airport connects us with a remote-control room and creates anticipation as he negotiates with his colleagues via an audio link and tries to decide on a course of action on the ground. Our privileged viewpoint from the control room emphasises the limitations of his perspective in the thick of the action. Midway through the clip the rhythmic soundtrack, which has been building tension, stops, there is silence and then an explosion of sound and action as he is authorised to apprehend the suspect. The cutting becomes more rapid from this point, creating excitement, as the suspect is tackled but it becomes apparent that a mistake has been made. Cartwright's refusal to obey the order to stand down positions him as a maverick in this high-stakes political game.		

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Marking criteria for Section A Question 1				
AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2:** Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Sophisticated understanding of and insightful reference to the key concepts of language and representation 5 marks	Insightful understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 5 marks	A wide range of media terminology is used precisely and accurately, and with sophistication, to make subtle points. 5 marks	Sophisticated and insightful analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 5 marks	Insightful and fully appropriate selection of examples fully supports expression. 5 marks
Thorough understanding of and effective reference to the key concepts of language and representation 4 marks	Effective understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 4 marks	A range of media terminology is used accurately, and help to make effective points. 4 marks	Thorough and effective analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 4 marks	Effective and appropriate selection of examples fully supports expression. 4 marks
Clear understanding of and appropriate reference to the key concepts of language and representation 3 marks	Clear understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 3 marks	Media terminology is used appropriately, to make clear points. 3 marks	Clear analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract 3 marks	Clear and appropriate selection of examples supports expression. 3 marks

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2:** Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Limited understanding of but generally appropriate reference to the key concepts of language and representation 2 marks	Limited understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 2 marks	Limited use of media terminology is mainly used accurately, to make simple or obvious points. 2 marks	Limited analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate selection of examples supports expression. 2 marks
Basic understanding of and minimal reference to the key concepts of language and representation 1 mark	Basic understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 1 mark	Basic use of media terminology, with frequent errors which impede communication. 1 mark	Basic analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract 1 mark	Basic and minimal selection of examples, may lack relevance in parts. 1 mark
No creditable content 0 marks	No creditable content 0 marks	No creditable content 0 marks	No creditable content 0 marks	No creditable content 0 marks

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Section B: Media Contexts

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2	**EITHER** **Explain the significance of new marketing technologies in the media area you have studied.** <u>Indicative content</u> With detailed reference to at least one case study, candidates *may* address: • Specific media texts or campaigns which exemplify the use of new marketing technologies i.e. case studies, successful, failure (Barbenheimer); • The ways in which audiences are targeted and built i.e. how to target an audience (audience theory); • The use of specific and platforms, such as social media i.e. data, websites, email, social media, analytics and data, SEO, ad tech, automation, AR/VR, chatbots; • The use of specific technologies such as mobile devices, games consoles, for example. Candidates should make some attempt to answer the 'significance' aspect of the question and be able to argue that the marketing technologies they're assessing are, for example, more effective, more personalised, or have greater reach. They might also argue that these new technologies constitute something more negative for consumers – they might be more invasive, make more use of private data, limit choice, or have adverse environmental impact, for example. Theories: Curran & Seaton (profit over creativity); Hesmondhalgh ('safe', guaranteed, successful, but repetitive products); Henry Jenkins - Fandoms, Subcultures; Blumer & Katz – Uses and Gratifications (specialist interest, genre, individual).	**25**	Candidates should be given credit for their knowledge and understanding, illustrated through case study material, relevant to the question. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria individually and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. The indicative content demonstrates how candidates might approach the question. It is a description of possible content only. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3	**OR** **Analyse how media organisations retain existing audiences and build new ones.** <u>Indicative content</u> With detailed reference to at least one case study, candidates *may* address: • The persistence and legitimacy of audience models such as traditional demographic ones, and new ways of understanding audiences through, for example, notions of lifestyle i.e. Barbie (bringing audiences back to the cinema); • Ways in which specific audiences are addressed in particular ways through image, language, style and form i.e. Dead tree media (newspapers); • Ways in which younger audiences are targeted and encouraged to 'grow' through different channels and products – BBC radio, for example, where transitions from Radio 1 to Radio 2 and 6 Music are brought about i.e. How audiences are built (targeted) by organisations, Audience retention, Branding, Loyalty; • Ways in which readers for newspapers are 'hailed' in particular ways; • The ways in which marketing campaigns and materials target particular audiences; • How political identity is reinforced through mode of address and selection processes; • How audiences may be brought to organisations through related products and experiences (e.g. Disney, Amazon). Theories: Richard Dyer - Star Theory, celebrities constructed by institutions to make money; Henry Jenkins - Fandoms, Subcultures; Blumer & Katz - Uses and Gratifications (specialist interest, genre, individual)	**25**	Candidates should be given credit for their knowledge and understanding, illustrated through case study material, relevant to the question. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria individually and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. The indicative content demonstrates how candidates might approach the question. It is a description of possible content only. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers.

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Marking criteria for Section B Question 2 and Question 3				
AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Sophisticated understanding of and insightful reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 5 marks	Insightful understanding of the wider issues, explored with sophistication in the response. Factual knowledge of contexts and debates is relevant, detailed and accurate, and sophisticatedly linked to the question. 5 marks	A wide range of media terminology is used precisely and accurately, and with sophistication, to make subtle points. 5 marks	Sophisticated and insightful analysis of texts from multiple case studies is used to explore the chosen area in depth. Relevant theories are sophisticatedly used to explore the question. 5 marks	Insightful and fully appropriate selection of examples from a wide range of texts. 5 marks
Thorough understanding of and effective reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 4 marks	Effective understanding of the wider issues explored. Factual knowledge of contexts and debates is relevant, and effectively linked to the question. 4 marks	A range of media terminology is used accurately, and helps to make effective points. 4 marks	Thorough and effective analysis of texts from multiple case studies is used explore the chosen area. Relevant theories are used effectively in response to the question. 4 marks	Effective and appropriate selection of examples from a range of texts fully. 4 marks

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Clear understanding of and appropriate reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 3 marks	Clear understanding of the wider issues explored. Some factual knowledge of contexts and debates, appropriately linked to the question. 3 marks	Media terminology is used appropriately, to make clear points. 3 marks	Clear analysis of texts from one or more case study is used to respond appropriately. Occasional references to relevant theories, not always accurately used or understood. 3 marks	Clear and appropriate selection of examples from a range of texts. 3 marks
Limited understanding of but generally appropriate reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 2 marks	Limited understanding of the wider issues explored. Limited relevant knowledge of contexts and debates. 2 marks	Limited use of media terminology is mainly used accurately, to make simple or obvious points. 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate analysis of texts, normally from only one case study Media theory may be considered, but not securely. 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate selection of examples, normally from only one case study. 2 marks
Basic understanding of and minimal reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 1 mark	Basic understanding of the wider issues explored. Minimal knowledge of the relevant contexts and debates. 1 mark	Basic use of media terminology, with frequent errors which impede communication. 1 mark	Basic analysis, from case studies which may not be appropriate to the question. Minimal references to even basic media theory. 1 mark	Basic and minimal selection of examples, which may lack relevance in parts. 1 mark

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks

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