

SYLLABUS

**Cambridge International AS and A Level
Media Studies**

9607

For examination in June and November 2018 and 2019

Changes to syllabus for 2018 and 2019

This syllabus is version 1, published June 2017.

From first assessment in 2018, this syllabus will be available to all centres, including the UK.

Information on page 10 regarding availability has been updated.

Changes to previous version of this syllabus, published October 2015.

Changes have been made to page 8. Reference to Section 9 has been removed.

Changes have been made to page 23. Reference to Section 9 has been removed.

▮ Changes are indicated by single black vertical lines on either side of the text. ▮

You are advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Acknowledgement

This syllabus is an adaptation of OCR's GCE Media Studies specification. We are grateful to OCR for permission to draw on their specification.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Why choose Cambridge?

Cambridge International Examinations is part of the University of Cambridge. We prepare school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

Our programmes set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, are rooted in academic rigour, and provide a strong platform for progression. Over 10 000 schools in 160 countries work with us to prepare nearly a million learners for their future with an international education from Cambridge.

Cambridge learners

Cambridge programmes and qualifications develop not only subject knowledge but also skills. We encourage Cambridge learners to be:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

Recognition

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are recognised around the world by schools, universities and employers. The qualifications are accepted as proof of academic ability for entry to universities worldwide, although some courses do require specific subjects.

Cambridge AS and A Levels are accepted in all UK universities. University course credit and advanced standing is often available for Cambridge International AS and A Levels in countries such as the USA and Canada.

Learn more at www.cie.org.uk/recognition

1.2 Why choose Cambridge International AS and A Level?

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are international in outlook, but retain a local relevance. The syllabuses provide opportunities for contextualised learning and the content has been created to suit a wide variety of schools, avoid cultural bias and develop essential lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our programmes and qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey. Cambridge International AS and A Levels give learners building blocks for an individualised curriculum that develops their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Schools can offer almost any combination of 60 subjects and learners can specialise or study a range of subjects, ensuring a breadth of knowledge. Giving learners the power to choose helps motivate them throughout their studies.

Cambridge International A Levels typically take two years to complete and offer a flexible course of study that gives learners the freedom to select subjects that are right for them.

Cambridge International AS Levels often represent the first half of an A Level course but may also be taken as a freestanding qualification. The content and difficulty of a Cambridge International AS Level examination is equivalent to the first half of a corresponding Cambridge International A Level.

Through our professional development courses and our support materials for Cambridge International AS and A Levels, we provide the tools to enable teachers to prepare learners to the best of their ability and work with us in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Cambridge International AS and A Levels have a proven reputation for preparing learners well for university, employment and life. They help develop the in-depth subject knowledge and understanding which are so important to universities and employers.

Learners studying Cambridge International AS and A Levels have opportunities to:

- acquire an in-depth subject knowledge
- develop independent thinking skills
- apply knowledge and understanding to new as well as familiar situations
- handle and evaluate different types of information sources
- think logically and present ordered and coherent arguments
- make judgements, recommendations and decisions
- present reasoned explanations, understand implications and communicate them clearly and logically
- work and communicate in English.

Guided learning hours

Cambridge International A Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 360 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course. Cambridge International AS Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 180 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course. This is for guidance only and the number of hours required to gain the qualification may vary according to local curricular practice and the learners' prior experience of the subject.

1.3 Why choose Cambridge International AS and A Level Media Studies?

Cambridge International AS and A Level Media Studies is recognised by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and understanding of the media and its role in our daily lives.

Successful candidates gain lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to apply practical skills creatively
- research and evaluation skills
- information management and project management skills
- the ability to analyse text and media products critically
- the ability to reflect critically upon their own learning.

Technical requirements

Centres starting this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the foundation and advanced portfolio units are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- Internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

Prior learning

No prior knowledge of the subject is required. We recommend that candidates who are beginning this course should have attained communication and literacy skills at a level equivalent to Cambridge O Level or Cambridge IGCSE Grade C in English Language.

Progression

Cambridge International AS and A Level Media Studies provides a suitable foundation for the study of media studies or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable for candidates intending to pursue business careers or further study in business studies, or social sciences, or as part of a course of general education.

1.4 Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma is the group award of the Cambridge International AS and A Level. It gives schools the opportunity to benefit from offering a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of candidates who pass examinations in different curriculum groups.

Learn more about the Cambridge AICE Diploma at www.cie.org.uk/aice

1.5 How can I find out more?

If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at **info@cie.org.uk**

If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school at **www.cie.org.uk/startcambridge**. Email us at **info@cie.org.uk** to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

2. Teacher support

2.1 Support materials

We send Cambridge syllabuses, past question papers and examiner reports to cover the last examination series to all Cambridge schools.

You can also go to our public website at **www.cie.org.uk/alevel** to download current and future syllabuses together with specimen papers or past question papers and examiner reports from one series.

For teachers at registered Cambridge schools a range of additional support materials for specific syllabuses is available from Teacher Support, our secure online support for Cambridge teachers. Go to **<http://teachers.cie.org.uk>** (username and password required).

2.2 Endorsed resources

We work with publishers providing a range of resources for our syllabuses including print and digital materials. Resources endorsed by Cambridge go through a detailed quality assurance process to ensure they provide a high level of support for teachers and learners.

We have resource lists which can be filtered to show all resources, or just those which are endorsed by Cambridge. The resource lists include further suggestions for resources to support teaching.

2.3 Training

We offer a range of support activities for teachers to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver our qualifications. See **www.cie.org.uk/events** for further information.

3. Syllabus content at a glance

AS Level and A Level candidates study the following topics:

Component 1 Foundation Portfolio

The following set briefs are offered:

- film opening task
- magazine task.

Component 2 Key Media Concepts

- Section A: Textual analysis and representation:
 - camera shots, angle, movement and composition
 - editing
 - sound
 - mise-en-scène.
- Section B: Institutions and audiences, in relation to **one** of the media areas specified below:
 - film
 - music
 - print
 - radio
 - video games.

A Level candidates also study the following topics:

Component 3 Advanced Portfolio

The following set briefs are offered:

- music promotion package
- film promotion package
- documentary package
- short film package.

Component 4 Critical Perspectives

- Section A: Evaluation of production skills development
- Section B: Contemporary media issues, in relation to **one** of the topics specified below:
 - contemporary media regulation
 - global media
 - media and collective identity
 - media in the online age
 - post-modern media.

4. Assessment at a glance

An A Level qualification in media studies can be achieved either as a staged assessment over different examination series or in one examination series.

Centres entering candidates for this course must complete the Outline Proposal Form in advance of embarking upon the course.

Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level candidates take:

Components All candidates take:	Weighting
<p>Component 1 Foundation Portfolio</p> <p>Coursework in which candidates work individually, or as a group, to produce a media product, digital evidence of the process of their work and a creative critical reflection.</p> <p>100 marks Internally assessed and externally moderated</p> <p>and</p>	50%
<p>Component 2 Key Media Concepts 2 hours</p> <p>Written examination consisting of two questions.</p> <p>There are two sections to this paper:</p> <p>Section A: Textual analysis and representation (50 marks) Candidates answer one question based on an unseen moving image extract.</p> <p>Section B: Institutions and audiences (50 marks) Candidates answer one question from a choice of two.</p> <p>100 marks Externally assessed</p>	50%

Advanced (A) Level candidates take:

Components All candidates take:	Weighting
<p>Component 1 Foundation Portfolio</p> <p>Coursework in which candidates work individually, or as a group, to produce a media product, digital evidence of the process of their work and a creative critical reflection.</p> <p>100 marks Internally assessed and externally moderated</p> <p>and</p> <p>Component 2 Key Media Concepts 2 hours</p> <p>Written examination consisting of two questions.</p> <p>There are two sections to this paper:</p> <p>Section A: Textual analysis and representation (50 marks) Candidates answer one question based on an unseen moving image extract.</p> <p>Section B: Institutions and audiences (50 marks) Candidates answer one question from a choice of two.</p> <p>100 marks Externally assessed</p>	<p>25%</p> <p>25%</p>
<p>Component 3 Advanced Portfolio</p> <p>Coursework in which candidates produce a campaign of media products, digital evidence of the process of their work and a creative critical reflection.</p> <p>100 marks Internally assessed and externally moderated</p> <p>and</p> <p>Component 4 Critical Perspectives 2 hours</p> <p>Written examination consisting of two questions.</p> <p>There are two sections to this paper:</p> <p>Section A: Evaluation of production skills development (50 marks) Candidates answer a two-part compulsory question.</p> <p>Section B: Contemporary media issues (50 marks) Candidates answer one question from a choice of five topic areas. There will be a choice of two questions for each topic area.</p> <p>100 marks Externally assessed</p>	<p>25%</p> <p>25%</p>

Availability

This syllabus is examined in the June and November examination series.

This syllabus is not available to private candidates.

Detailed timetables are available from **www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers**

From first assessment in 2018, this syllabus is available to all centres, including the UK.

Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge syllabus, except:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

5. Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

5.1 Syllabus aims

The syllabus aims to:

- develop critical understanding of the media through engagement with media products and concepts and through the creative application of practical skills
- explore production processes, technologies and contexts
- encourage independence in research skills and their application
- enhance learners' enjoyment and appreciation of the media and its role in their daily lives.

5.2 Assessment objectives

Candidates are assessed on their ability to:

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.

AO3: Plan and construct media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.

AO4: Undertake and apply appropriate research.

5.3 Relationship between assessment objectives and components

The weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

For the **Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level** qualification, each component is worth 50% of the total marks.

Assessment objective	Component 1	Component 2	Weighting for qualification
AO1	–	30%	30%
AO2	10%	20%	30%
AO3	30%	–	30%
AO4	10%	–	10%

For the **Advanced (A) Level** qualification, each component is worth 25% of the total marks.

Assessment objective	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Weighting for qualification
AO1	–	15%	–	15%	30%
AO2	5%	10%	5%	10%	30%
AO3	15%	–	15%	–	30%
AO4	5%	–	5%	–	10%

6. Description of components

6.1 Component 1: Foundation Portfolio

This is a coursework component, internally assessed and externally moderated.

Candidates produce a media product from a choice of two set briefs – a film opening or a magazine. They present evidence of the process of their work (research, planning and production) on an online blog. Candidates also reflect critically on their finished media product in a creative digital format of their choice, answering a series of set prompt questions. All work involved in creating the portfolio, including process, finished product, and creative critical reflection, is put online for moderation purposes.

The work may be undertaken individually or by a group (maximum group size is four candidates). Where candidates have worked in a group, the evidence for assessment may be presented collectively but Centres must assess candidates on an individual basis. Each candidate's blog should clearly indicate the candidate's own role in any group activity to allow the teacher to assess the contribution of each individual within the group.

Centres starting this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the foundation portfolio are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

This component assesses the following objectives:

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.

AO3: Plan and construct media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.

AO4: Undertake and apply appropriate research.

Set briefs

Candidates must work to either the video brief or the print brief below. Centres may select one or other brief to offer to candidates, or may wish to let candidates choose between these two briefs themselves.

When Centres choose briefs to offer to candidates, they should be guided by their strengths in terms of resources and expertise. Centres should also bear in mind that the key areas to address in the creative critical reflection will be: forms and conventions, production contexts, the role of technologies, audiences and representations.

The set briefs are as follows:

Film opening task (video)

Main task: the titles and opening of a new fiction film (to last a maximum of two minutes). Titles should follow the institutional conventions of commercial cinema. The task may be undertaken individually or as a group. There should be a maximum of four members to a group.

All images and text used in the main task must be original, and produced by the candidate(s). Sound should be predominantly original (dialogue and atmospheric sound), though music taken from an acknowledged source may be used as part of the soundtrack.

This task should be preceded by preliminary exercises to build up learners' skills with equipment and their understanding of conventions.

Magazine task (print)

Main task: the front page, contents and double-page spread of a new magazine (if done as a group task, each member of the group to produce an individual edition of the magazine, following the same house style). There should be a maximum of four members to a group.

All images and text used in the main task must be original and produced by the candidate(s) with a minimum of **four** images per candidate.

This task should be preceded by preliminary exercises to build up learners' skills with equipment and their understanding of conventions.

Process

Each candidate **must** have an individual blog which is started at the beginning of the project.

The process of research, planning and production, including refinement, changes and reflection on key moments, and any individual contribution to a task undertaken as a group, is to be evidenced by each candidate on their online blog. Some production elements such as storyboards may be shared by all members of a group. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on research, planning and/or production **must** be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'.

Each candidate's blog should also contain evidence of any preliminary exercises, the finished product and the creative critical reflection (see below) and will comprise the complete evidence for the moderator at the end of each project.

Centres should select blog software with appropriate capabilities to embed other applications.

Creative critical reflection

On completion of the product, candidates must reflect upon their work, using digital formats such as director commentaries, slideshows with voiceover, podcasts, prezis or screencasts. The emphasis should be on creative use of such tools to critically reflect on the production, guided by the following **compulsory** questions:

1. How does your product use or challenge conventions and how does it represent social groups or issues?
2. How does your product engage with audiences and how would it be distributed as a real media text?
3. How did your production skills develop throughout this project?
4. How did you integrate technologies – software, hardware and online – in this project?

This critical reflection should be presented individually, though candidates may collaborate in the production of responses. In their critical reflection, each candidate should give a clear indication of their contribution to such collaboration to allow teachers to allocate an appropriate mark. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on creative critical reflection **must** be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'.

Portfolios are marked out of 100, using the criteria detailed in Section 7.

6.2 Component 2: Key Media Concepts

This is an externally assessed written component which covers two areas:

- Section A: Textual analysis and representation
- Section B: Institutions and audiences.

In Section A, candidates analyse a moving image extract in terms of technical codes and representation.

In Section B, candidates study a specific media industry from a choice of: film, music, print, radio or video games.

The examination is two hours long (including 30 minutes for watching and making notes on the moving image extract and 45 minutes writing time for each question) and candidates are required to answer two questions. The unit is marked out of a total of 100, with each question marked out of 50.

This component assesses the following objectives:

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.

Section A: Textual analysis and representation (50 marks)

The moving image extract will be provided by Cambridge in DVD format, with full instructions for the administration of the examination, viewing conditions and note-taking time.

Centres must prepare candidates, in advance of the examination, to analyse how technical aspects of the language and conventions of the moving image medium are used to create meaning for an audience. Candidates should study a range of texts so that they can discuss, in response to the question, how the following technical elements create specific representations of individuals, groups, events or places and help to articulate specific messages and values that have social significance:

Camera shots, angle, movement and composition:

- shots: establishing shot, master shot, close-up, mid-shot, long shot, wide shot, two-shot, aerial shot, point-of-view shot, over-the-shoulder shot, and variations of these
- angle: high angle, low angle, canted angle
- movement: pan, tilt, track, dolly, crane, steadicam, hand-held, zoom, reverse zoom
- composition: framing, rule of thirds, depth of field – deep and shallow focus, focus pulls.

Editing:

This includes transition of image and sound – continuity and non-continuity systems.

- cutting: shot/reverse shot, eyeline match, graphic match, action match, jump cut, crosscutting, parallel editing, cutaway, insert
- other transitions: dissolve, fade-in, fade-out, wipe, superimposition, long take, short take, slow motion, ellipsis and expansion of time, post-production, visual effects.

Sound:

- diegetic and non-diegetic sound, synchronous/asynchronous sound, sound effects, sound motif, sound bridge, dialogue, voiceover, mode of address/direct address, sound mixing, sound perspective
- soundtrack: score, incidental music, themes and stings, ambient sound.

Mise-en-scène:

- production design: location, studio, set design, costume and make-up, properties
- lighting, colour design.

It is acknowledged that not every one of the above technical areas will feature in equal measure in any given extract, and other areas may also be credited where appropriate. Examiners are instructed to bear this in mind when marking the candidates' answers and should not expect each aspect to be covered in the same degree of detail, but as appropriate to the genre and extract provided and to the discussion of the extract's representation.

Candidates should be prepared to discuss, in response to the question, how these technical elements contribute to the process of creating meaning.

For each series in 2017, the extract will be from an American TV drama and will last for a maximum of five minutes. It will be played four times. The screening time will last a total of 30 minutes, including note-taking. Centres need to consider the optimum conditions for screening the extract, so that no candidates are disadvantaged.

Section B: Institutions and audiences (50 marks)

One question is to be answered from a choice of two.

Candidates should be prepared to discuss the processes of production, distribution and marketing as they relate to contemporary media institutions, as well as the nature of audience consumption and the relationships between audiences and institutions. In addition, candidates should be familiar with:

- the issues raised by media ownership and funding in contemporary media practice
- the importance of cross-media convergence and synergy in production, distribution and marketing
- the technologies that have been introduced in recent years at the levels of production, distribution, marketing and at the point of consumption
- the significance of the spread of such technologies for institutions and audiences
- the importance of technological convergence for institutions and audiences
- the issues raised in the targeting of national and local audiences by international or global institutions
- the ways in which the candidates' own experiences of media consumption illustrate wider patterns and trends in audience behaviour.

This component should be approached through contemporary examples in the form of contrasting case studies within **one** of the media areas specified below. Case studies may be global or local or both. Examples should include the following:

Film

A study of specific studios or production companies, including patterns of production, distribution, exhibition and consumption by audiences. This should be accompanied by study of contemporary film distribution practices (digital cinemas, DVD, 3D, downloads, etc.) and their impact upon production, marketing and consumption.

Music

A study of particular record labels within the contemporary music industry, including patterns of production, distribution, marketing and consumption by audiences. This should be accompanied by study of wider issues around digital distribution of music.

Print

A study of contemporary newspaper and/or magazine publishing, including the ways in which the web is raising issues for the production, distribution and consumption of print media.

Radio

A study of examples from the contemporary radio industry, examining production, distribution and broadcast practices, as well as audience consumption. This should be accompanied by study of the impact of DAB and internet broadcasting on radio production practices, marketing and audience consumption.

Video games

A study of the production, distribution and marketing of a specific game within one or across various gaming platforms, along with its reception by a variety of audiences. This should be accompanied by study of the impact of next generation capabilities on the production, distribution, marketing and consumption of games.

6.3 Component 3: Advanced Portfolio

This is a coursework component, internally assessed and externally moderated.

Candidates build on the skills developed in Component 1 to engage with contemporary media technologies. They produce a media campaign through a combination of three media (video, print and website), selecting from a choice of set briefs and detailing the process of the planning, research and production of their work online, in a blog format. Finished products and creative critical reflection will also be presented on this blog.

The work may be undertaken individually or by a group (maximum group size is four candidates). Where candidates have worked in a group, the evidence for assessment may be presented collectively but Centres must assess candidates on an individual basis. Each candidate's blog should clearly indicate the candidate's own role in any group activity to allow the teacher to assess the contribution of each individual within the group.

Centres starting this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the advanced portfolio unit are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- Internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

This component assesses the following objectives:

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.

AO3: Plan and construct media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.

AO4: Undertake and apply appropriate research.

When Centres choose briefs to offer to candidates, they should be guided by their strengths in terms of resources and expertise. Centres should also bear in mind that the key areas to address in the creative critical reflection will be: forms and conventions, production contexts, the role of technologies, audiences and representations.

Set briefs

The set briefs each contain a major task along with two associated minor tasks; the weighting of each element should be roughly two thirds to the major and one third to the minor tasks combined. This should guide expectations about the scope of the separate elements.

The set brief options are as follows:

Option 1: music promotion package

A promotion package for the release of an album, to include a music video (major task), together with a website for the band and a digipak for the album's release (minor tasks).

Option 2: film promotion package

A promotion package for a new film, to include two trailers (major task), together with a website for the film and a poster for the film (minor tasks).

Option 3: documentary package

An extract from an original documentary TV programme, lasting approximately five minutes (major task), together with a website for the documentary and a poster for the documentary (minor tasks).

Option 4: short film package

A short film in its entirety, lasting approximately five minutes (major task), which may be live action or animated or a combination of both, together with a website for the short film and a postcard advertisement for the film at a short film festival (minor tasks).

Tasks may be undertaken individually or as a group. There should be a maximum of four members to a group. Images and video should be original material only. Sound should be predominantly original (dialogue and atmospheric sound), though music taken from an acknowledged source may be used as part of the soundtrack.

Process

Each candidate **must** have an individual blog which is started at the beginning of the project.

The process of research, planning and production, including refinement, changes and reflection on key moments, and any individual contribution to a task undertaken as a group, is to be evidenced by each candidate on their online blog. Some production elements such as storyboards may be shared by all members of a group. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on research, planning and/or production **must** be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'.

Each candidate's blog should also contain evidence of any preliminary exercises, the finished product and the creative critical reflection (see below) and will comprise the complete evidence for the moderator at the end of each project.

Centres should select blog software with appropriate capabilities to embed other applications.

Creative critical reflection

On completion of production, candidates must reflect upon their work, using digital formats such as director commentaries, slideshows with voiceover, podcasts, prezis or screencasts. The emphasis should be upon creative use of such tools to critically reflect on the work, guided by the following **compulsory** questions:

1. How do your products use or challenge conventions and how do they represent social groups or issues?
2. How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?
3. How do your products engage with the audience and how would they be distributed as real media products?
4. How did you integrate technologies – software, hardware and online – in this project?

This critical reflection should be presented individually, though candidates may collaborate in the production of responses. In their critical reflection, each candidate should give a clear indication of their contribution to such collaboration to allow teachers to allocate an appropriate mark. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on creative critical reflection **must** be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'.

Portfolios are marked out of 100, using the criteria detailed in Section 7.

6.4 Component 4: Critical Perspectives

This is an externally assessed written component which covers two areas:

- Section A: Evaluation of production skills development
- Section B: Contemporary media issues.

In Section A, candidates describe and evaluate their skills development in their production work from Components 1 and 3.

In Section B, candidates choose one topic and demonstrate their understanding of a contemporary issue through reference to a range of texts, institutions, audiences and debates.

The examination is two hours long. Candidates are required to answer two questions. The component is marked out of a total of 100, with each question marked out of 50.

This component assesses the following objectives:

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.

Section A: Evaluation of production skills development (50 marks)

There will be a two-part question in this section.

Part (a) will require candidates to focus the discussion of their own skills development on to one or two specific production practices from the list below:

- use of digital technology
- creativity
- research and planning
- using conventions from real media texts.

Part (b) will require candidates to select one of their own productions and evaluate it in relation to a media concept from the list below:

- genre
- narrative
- representation
- audience
- media language.

Section B: Contemporary media issues

One question is to be answered from a choice of five topic areas. There will be a choice of two questions from each topic area.

The topic areas require understanding of contemporary media texts, industries, audiences and debates. For the purposes of examination, a contemporary media text is defined as being a media text that was published or released within five years of the examination date. For example, in June 2017 a contemporary media text would be any media text from the period of 2012 onwards.

Centres must choose **one** of the following topic areas in advance of the examination and, through specific case studies, texts and debates of the centre's choice, prepare candidates to demonstrate understanding of the contemporary issue.

This understanding must combine knowledge of at least **two** media and a range of texts, industries, audiences and debates. These are to be selected by the centre/candidate. The assessment of the response will be generic, allowing for the broadest possible range of responses within the topic area chosen. Each topic is accompanied by four prompt questions, and candidates must be prepared to answer an exam question which relates to one or more of these four prompts. There should be consideration of both the historical and the contemporary in relation to the chosen topic, with most attention on the contemporary. Centres are therefore advised to ensure that study materials for this unit are up to date and relevant.

The five topic areas and their prompt questions are listed below.

Contemporary media regulation:

- What is the nature of contemporary media regulation compared with previous practices?
- What are the arguments for and against specific forms of contemporary media regulation?
- How effective are regulatory practices?
- What are the wider social issues relating to media regulation?

Candidates might explore combinations of:

Film censorship, the regulation of advertising, the press and regulation/control, computer/video game classification, the regulation of online media, social networking and virtual worlds, contemporary broadcasting and political control, the effects debate and alternative theories of audience, children and television, violence and the media, or a range of other study contexts relating to the regulation of contemporary media. Regulation might be researched in regard to media content, access, ownership and control and/or in relation to politics, public interest and democracy.

Global media:

- What kinds of media are increasingly global in terms of production and distribution?
- How have global media developed, in historical terms, and how inclusive is this trend in reality?
- What kinds of audience behaviour and consumption are increasingly global?
- What are the arguments for and against global media, in relation to content, access, representation and identity?

Candidates may explore combinations of any two media in relation to the above prompts. Examples are film and debates around cultural imperialism, television and national versus imported broadcasting, national press in relation to global news provision, media marketing aimed at cross-national territories, examples of media that contradict theories of globalisation, or a range of other examples of global media practices.

Media and collective identity:

- How do the contemporary media represent nations, regions and ethnic/social/collective groups of people in different ways?
- How does contemporary representation compare to previous time periods?
- What are the social implications of different media representations of groups of people?
- To what extent is human identity increasingly 'mediated'?

Candidates may analyse the representation of, and/or the collective identity of, one or more group(s) of people. Candidates might explore combinations of any media representation across two media, or two different representations across two media. Examples might include national cinema, television representations, magazines and gender, representations of youth and youth culture, or absence/presence of people with disability in two media.

Media in the online age:

- How have online media developed?
- What has been the impact of the internet on media production?
- How far has the worldwide web had a democratising effect for audiences?
- To what extent has convergence transformed the media?

Candidates might explore combinations of any two media, considering how each (or the two in converged forms) can be analysed from the above prompts. Examples might be music downloading and distribution, the film industry and the internet, online gaming and online television, or user-generated content and online news.

Post-modern media:

- What are the different versions of post-modernism (historical period, style, theoretical approach)?
- What are the arguments for and against understanding some forms of media as post-modern?
- How do post-modern media texts challenge traditional text-reader relations and the concept of representation?
- In what ways do media audiences and industries operate differently in a post-modern world?

Candidates might explore combinations of: ways in which post-modern media relate to genre and narrative across two media, computer/video games, virtual worlds, augmented reality and new forms of representation, post-modern cinema, interactive media, social media and social networking, reality TV, music video, advertising, post-modern audience theories, aspects of globalisation, parody and pastiche in media texts, or a range of other applications of post-modern media theory.

7. Coursework assessment

Teachers must get written approval from Cambridge before they enter candidates and begin school-based assessment. This must be done using the Outline Proposal Form.

Approval will be given to teachers based on prior experience and/or whether they have undertaken special training in assessment and satisfy Cambridge requirements concerning moderation.

7.1 The role of the teacher for components 1 and 3 (coursework)

Supervision and Authentication

As with all coursework, teachers must be able to verify that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own work. Sufficient work must be carried out under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate the coursework marks with confidence.

Assistance with projects

It is expected that teachers will train candidates in the use of technology for their coursework and that schools and colleges will provide the necessary equipment for candidates to produce their media texts.

As acting is not a skill that is assessed in media studies, but the quality of finished work is quite clearly affected by the quality of acting, groups may use personnel external to the group to appear in their productions in photos, video or audio. The ability of candidates to direct actors is part of the assessment.

7.2 Assessment criteria for components 1 and 3 (coursework)

The marking grids shown are generic and teachers are advised adopt a 'best-fit' approach. For each of the three assessment criteria the teacher must select the set of descriptors that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked. As the teacher works upwards through the levels, s/he will eventually arrive at a set of descriptors that fits the candidate's performance. When s/he reaches this point, the teacher should always then check the descriptors at the level above to confirm whether or not there is just enough evidence to award a mark at the higher level.

To select the most appropriate mark within each set of descriptors, teachers should use the following guidance:

- If most of the descriptors fit the piece, then the teacher will award at or near the middle of the level.
- If the descriptors fully fit the piece (and the teacher had perhaps been considering the level above), then the teacher will award at or near the top of the level.
- If there is just enough evidence (and the teacher had perhaps been considering the level below), then the teacher will award at or near the bottom of the level.

Component 1: Assessment objectives and sources of evidence

Assessment Objective	Description	Sources of Evidence
A02	Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media product designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media product.
A03	Plan and construct media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media product designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media product.
A04	Undertake and apply appropriate research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media product designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media product.

For each assessment objective, a best-fit approach is to be taken, with evidence to be cited from across the portfolio as appropriate.

Component 1: A02

Level 5	16–20	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is excellent, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished product and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 4	12–15	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is competent, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished product and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 3	8–11	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is apparent at a satisfactory level, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished product and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 2	4–7	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is limited, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished product and in the creative critical reflection.

Level 1	1–3	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is minimal, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished product and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of the application of knowledge and understanding.

Component 1: A03

Markers **must** take close account of the following elements when applying the mark scheme below:

- For the **film opening task**: use of conventions and genre, storyboards and/or animatics, scripts, shot lists, location recces, mise-en-scène including props and costume, organisation and direction of actors, camerawork, use of sound, editing and titling.
- For the **magazine task**: use of conventions and genre, flatplans, page design and layout, fonts, use of language and register, planning and variety of photo shoots (including location, camera, costume, lighting, organisation and direction of actors, mise-en-scène), manipulation and framing of images, integration of illustration and text.

Level 5	48–60	The ability to plan a media product is excellent, with detailed evidence visible within the film opening or magazine task. Decisions and revisions are detailed as part of the process, showing a clear journey of the production. The finished product shows clear evidence of being the outcome of this process and is clearly readable as a film opening or magazine, as appropriate. Its meaning is clear to the viewer/reader and there is an excellent sense of branding. The appropriate use of elements relating to film or magazine production (see above) is excellent, and digital creative tools are used to excellent effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 4	36–47	The ability to plan a media product is competent, with clear evidence within the film opening or magazine task. Decisions and revisions are evident as part of the process, showing a clear sense of the journey of the production. The finished product shows evidence of being the outcome of this process and is readable as a film opening or magazine, as appropriate. Its meaning is apparent to the viewer/reader and there is a competent sense of branding. The appropriate use of elements relating to film or magazine production (see above) is competent, and digital creative tools are used competently in the creative critical reflection.
Level 3	24–35	The ability to plan a media product is satisfactory, with evidence visible within the film opening or magazine task. There is some evidence of decisions and revisions as part of the process, indicating some sense of the journey of the production. The finished product shows some evidence of being the outcome of this process and there is some indication that it is a film opening or magazine, as appropriate. It conveys some meaning to the viewer/reader and there is a satisfactory sense of branding. The appropriate use of elements relating to film or magazine production (see above) is satisfactory. Digital creative tools are used to satisfactory effect in the creative critical reflection.

Level 2	12–23	The ability to plan a media product is limited: some areas of the film opening or magazine task may be incomplete. There is limited evidence of decisions and revisions throughout the process, indicating a limited sense of the journey of the production. The finished product shows limited evidence of being the outcome of this process and the indications that it is a film opening or magazine (as appropriate) are limited. It conveys limited meaning to the viewer/reader and there is only a limited sense of branding. The appropriate use of elements relating to film or magazine production (see above) is limited, and digital creative tools are used to limited effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 1	1–11	The ability to plan a media product is minimal: various areas of the film opening or magazine task may be incomplete. There is minimal evidence of decisions and revisions throughout the process, barely indicating a sense of the journey of the production. The finished product shows minimal evidence of being the outcome of this process and the indications that it is a film opening or magazine (as appropriate) are minimal. Its meaning is unclear to the viewer/reader and a sense of branding is barely apparent. The appropriate use of elements relating to film or magazine production (see above) is minimal, and digital creative tools are used to minimal effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of ability to plan a media product. There is no evidence of the appropriate use of elements of film or magazine production, or creative skills.

Component 1: AO4

Markers **must** take close account of the following elements when applying the mark scheme below:

- For the **film opening task**: evidence of research into other film openings, film locations, audience and institutional factors, such as conventions of titling.
- For the **magazine task**: evidence of research into other magazines, articles, audience and institutional factors, such as brand identity.

Level 5	16–20	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is excellent, as evidenced in detail on the blog with relevant examples of film or magazine production elements. The finished product also demonstrates the effectiveness of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a high degree.
Level 4	12–15	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is competent, as evidenced on the blog with relevant examples of film or magazine production elements. The finished product also demonstrates evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a good degree.
Level 3	8–11	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a satisfactory level, as evidenced on the blog with some examples of film or magazine production elements. The finished product also demonstrates some evidence of this research. Research will inform the creative critical reflection to some degree.

Level 2	4–7	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a limited level, as evidenced on the blog, with limited examples of film or magazine production elements. The finished product also demonstrates limited evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a limited degree.
Level 1	1–3	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a minimal level, as evidenced on the blog with examples of film or magazine production elements barely apparent. The finished product also demonstrates minimal evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a minimal degree.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of ability to undertake and apply appropriate research.

Component 3: Assessment objectives and sources of evidence

Assessment Objective	Description	Sources of Evidence
A02	Apply knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created when analysing media products and when evaluating their own practical work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media package designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media package.
A03	Plan and construct media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media package designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media package.
A04	Undertake and apply appropriate research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online blog which details the process of the candidate's work (research, planning and production). • A finished media package designed by the candidate. • The candidate's creative critical reflection on their own finished media package.

For each assessment objective, a best-fit approach is to be taken, with evidence to be cited from across the portfolio as appropriate.

Component 3: A02

Level 5	16–20	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is excellent, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished products and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 4	12–15	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is competent, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished products and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 3	8–11	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is apparent at a satisfactory level, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished products and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 2	4–7	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is limited, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished products and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 1	1–3	The application of knowledge and understanding to show how meanings are created in media products is minimal, as demonstrated in the blog, in the finished products and in the creative critical reflection.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of the application of knowledge and understanding.

Component 3: AO3

Level 5	48–60	The ability to plan media products is excellent, with detailed evidence across video, print and web work. Decisions and revisions are detailed as part of the process, showing a clear journey of the production. The finished products show clear evidence of being the outcome of this process. The sense of branding across the three products is excellent. There is evidence of excellence in the appropriate use of technology in making meaning apparent for the viewer. Digital creative tools are used to excellent effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 4	36–47	The ability to plan media products is competent, with evidence across video, print and web work. Decisions and revisions are evident as part of the process, showing the journey of the production. The finished products show evidence of being the outcome of this process. There is competence in terms of a sense of branding across the three products. There is evidence of competence in the appropriate use of technology in making meaning apparent for the viewer. Digital creative tools are used competently in the creative critical reflection.
Level 3	24–35	The ability to plan media products is satisfactory, with evidence across video, print and web work. There is some evidence of decisions and revisions as part of the process, indicating some sense of the journey of the production. The finished products show some evidence of being the outcome of this process. There is a satisfactory sense of branding across the three products. There is satisfactory evidence of the appropriate use of technology in making meaning apparent for the viewer. Digital creative tools are used to satisfactory effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 2	12–23	The ability to plan media products is limited; some areas of video, print and web work may be incomplete. There is limited evidence of decisions and revisions throughout the process, indicating a limited sense of the journey of the production. The finished products show limited evidence of being the outcome of this process. There is little sense of branding across the three products. There is limited evidence of the appropriate use of technology in making meaning apparent for the viewer. Digital creative tools are used to limited effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 1	1–11	The ability to plan media products is minimal; some areas of video, print and web work may be incomplete. There is minimal evidence of decisions and revisions throughout the process, barely indicating a sense of the journey of the production. The finished products show minimal evidence of being the outcome of this process. A sense of branding across the three products is barely apparent. There is minimal evidence of the appropriate use of technology in making meaning apparent for the viewer. Digital creative tools are used to minimal effect in the creative critical reflection.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of ability to plan media products, and no evidence of use of technical or creative skills.

Component 3: AO4

Level 5	16–20	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is excellent, as evidenced in detail on the blog with relevant examples of other media texts, research into conventions, audience and institutional factors. The finished products also demonstrate the effectiveness of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a high degree.
Level 4	12–15	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is competent, as evidenced on the blog with examples of other media texts, research into conventions, audience and institutional factors. The finished products also demonstrate evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to a good degree.
Level 3	8–11	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a satisfactory level, as evidenced on the blog with some examples of other media texts, research into conventions, audience and institutional factors. The finished products also demonstrate some evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to some degree.
Level 2	4–7	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a limited level, as evidenced on the blog with limited examples of other media texts, research into conventions, audience and institutional factors. The finished products also demonstrate limited evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to only a limited degree.
Level 1	1–3	The ability to undertake and apply appropriate research is apparent at a minimal level, as evidenced on the blog with examples of other media texts, research into conventions, audience and institutional factors barely apparent. The finished products also demonstrate minimal evidence of this research. Research informs the creative critical reflection to only a minimal degree.
Level 0	0	There is no evidence of ability to undertake and apply appropriate research.

7.3 Moderation procedures for coursework components

Internal moderation

When more than one teacher in a Centre is giving internal assessments, the Centre must make arrangements for all candidates to be assessed to a common standard.

The internally moderated marks for all candidates must be recorded on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form. This form, and the instructions for completing it, may be downloaded from **www.cie.org.uk/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (e.g. 9607) and your Centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions when completing the form.

External moderation

External moderation of internal assessment is carried out by Cambridge. Centres must submit candidates' internally assessed marks to Cambridge. The deadlines and methods for submitting internally assessed marks are in the *Cambridge Administrative Guide* available on our website.

Candidates' marks must be recorded on the Individual Candidate Record Card produced by Cambridge. These forms, and the instructions for completing them, may be downloaded from **www.cie.org.uk/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (e.g. 9607) and your Centre number, after which it will take you to the correct forms. Follow the instructions when completing each form.

All work by candidates should be presented online.

The blogs containing all candidate portfolios must be accessible online for the duration of the moderation period. During this period no changes may be made to the portfolios. Centres should make each candidate's blog accessible via a hub or gateway which links to the work of each individual candidate, properly signalled with the candidate numbers. Cambridge must receive notification of the URL of the centre's hub when the internally assessed marks are submitted.

The *Cambridge Handbook* and the *Cambridge Administrative Guide* both contain general instructions on the moderation of coursework.

Centres should keep all records and supporting candidate work until after publication of results.

8. Other information

Equality and inclusion

Cambridge International Examinations has taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), Cambridge has designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is found in the *Cambridge Handbook* which can be downloaded from the website www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers

Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available in English only.

Grading and reporting

Cambridge International A Level results are shown by one of the grades A*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no results) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

Cambridge International AS Level results are shown by one of the grades a, b, c, d or e, indicating the standard achieved, 'a' being the highest and 'e' the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade 'e'. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no results) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on these components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

For languages other than English, Cambridge also reports separate speaking endorsement grades (Distinction, Merit and Pass), for candidates who satisfy the conditions stated in the syllabus.

Entry codes

To maintain the security of our examinations, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. Where the component entry code has two digits, the first digit is the component number given in the syllabus. The second digit is the location code, specific to an administrative zone. Information about entry codes for your administrative zone can be found in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

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