AQA

GCSE
MEDIA STUDIES
8572/2

PAPER 2

Mark scheme

SAMs

V1.0

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

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

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Level of response marking instructions

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

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

Step 1 Determine a level

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

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

Step 2 Determine a mark

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

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

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

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

When deciding upon a mark in a level, examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives and be careful not to over or under reward a particular skill.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
01	1	AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies Acceptable answers include: A genre which combines the properties of several distinct (or different) genres (2 marks) A combination of two or more things joined together (1 mark) A type or category of media product (1 mark) (Award one mark for a reasonable attempt to define genre or hybrid in isolation. Award one mark for a reasonable attempt to define **both** genre **and** hybrid in isolation.)	2

01	2					8

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="3">Assessment Objective – AO2 1a

Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Mark range</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>
• Excellent analysis of the product(s) that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how genre is demonstrated in the extract.
• Consistently appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework throughout.
• Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>
• Good analysis of the product(s) that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how genre is demonstrated in the extract.
• Generally appropriate use of the theoretical framework but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions.
• Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>
• Satisfactory analysis of the product(s) that engages with obvious or straightforward aspects of how genre is demonstrated in the extract.
• Some use of the theoretical framework is present but it is often of limited effectiveness.
• Occasionally appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>
• Basic analysis of the product(s) only focusing on the more straightforward aspects of how genre is demonstrated in the extract, this is likely to be more descriptive than analytical.
• Very little, if any, appropriate use of the theoretical framework.
• Very little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td>
</tr>
</table>

Indicative content:

Responses may demonstrate ability to analyse a media product using the theoretical framework (media language) by referring to:

• The hybridity of the episode is demonstrated in the extract through use of mise-en-scene, choice of characters, typical storylines, lighting, colour palette, typography and use of sound reflecting a range of codes and conventions recognisably drawn from all three genres.
• The characteristic mise-en-scene of the teen drama is

demonstrated in the extract with locations such as school rooms and teen bedrooms while wide angle shots of other worlds and dystopian landscapes establish sci-fi conventions and medieval castles lit by flaming torches suggest fantasy to the viewer. The dramatic nature of the genre is reinforced with high contrast, low key lighting with blue hues, a dominant code in the sci-fi genre being evident in many shots in the extract.

- Costumes, hair and makeup range from the everyday contemporary teen drama college wear of April and her friends, to Quill's severe sci-fi blond bob and black leathers, with the humanesque, red eyed, rotten teeth lizards dressed in gladiatorial leathers spanning both sci-fi and fantasy genres. In an early shot, Quill is seen firing a blue laser gun, a common sci-fi prop while the fantasy genre is reflected in the aliens' weapons which appear to be a cross between a medieval broad sword and a scimitar made out of celtic knotwork metal.

- The dominant storyline established in the extract is a typical sci-fi plot of humans being threatened by aliens symbolised through the device of Corakinus, the Shadow King, sharing April's heart. This, together with the fantasy element, is developed in a main scene in the extract set in the medieval citadel when the king's helper tries and fails to give Corakinus control of the heart. Success would mean April's death. Charlie clearly has a different/parallel plotline. He is seen gazing into a computer, then anti-realist codes are employed as a close up shot of his head encased in a black square retreats off into an advancing shot of a sepia tinted barren alien landscape. Themes of alienation and acceptance are common in the teen drama genre as well as dealing with personal relationships which are suggested in the extract by brief shots of young couples kissing.

- The extract introduces some easily recognisable genre characters. Corakinus demonstrates all the characteristics of a sci-fi/fantasy villain; in the extract he kills his helper for failing in his duty and presents the main threat in the storyline and in line with genre codes, talks in an electronically distorted voice. Quill is the expressionless, robotic, enigmatic character with special skills while April is positioned to be the hero. The extract suggests she is the 'final girl' character common to a range of genres as she is in direct conflict with the evil king and 'accepts' the medieval sword when it arrives in her bedroom. Genre expectations would be that she now has a weapon with which to defeat the aliens.

- The teen drama genre is supported throughout with fast-paced, driving drum beat rock music which changes to a more eerie minor key typical of sci-fi when the action moves to the alien landscape. The one caption used in the first shot of the extract uses capital letters in a narrow futuristic sans serif typeface to demonstrate the sci-fi genre nature of the action to come.

Better answers may demonstrate a detailed and more critical engagement and a more nuanced approach by dealing with the ways in which fantasy, sci-fi and teen aspects are integrated in the extract. Mid-range answers are more likely to list elements of the extract associated with each of the three components of the hybrid.

		Responses must focus on the extract shown from Co-owner of a Lonely Heart. Credit must not be given to responses covering the different genres or the show without focus on the extract.	

01	3		12

Assessment Objectives – AO2 1a and AO2 1b

Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts (6 marks)
Make judgements and draw conclusions (6 marks)

Level	Mark range	Description
3	9-12	• Excellent analysis of the product(s) that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the use of narrative features. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
2	5-8	• Satisfactory analysis of the product(s) that engages with obvious or straightforward aspects of the use of narrative features. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Some appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
1	1-4	• Basic analysis of the product(s) that focuses on the more straightforward aspects of the use of narrative features, this is likely to be more descriptive than analytical. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

Responses may demonstrate the ability to analyse a media product using the theoretical framework (media representations, media audiences) and ability to reach judgments and draw conclusions by making references such as the following:

Responses may conclude that narrative techniques go a long way towards grabbing and holding audience attention because the action starts immediately and is sustained throughout the pre-title sequence. Alternatively, it is equally valid to conclude that the audience's attention is not grabbed and held to much extent because the emphasis on action and narrative disruption is confusing.

• In an attempt to grab the attention of the audience, the episode

begins with a fast-paced montage recap sequence signalled by a 'Previously' caption on the first shot. This can hold the audience's attention by quickly establishing genre while refreshing the audience's memory of ongoing storylines. Based on previous knowledge of the genre, audiences can easily recognise the dominant plotlines and may remain engaged as they watch to see if their narrative predictions are satisfied. They may however fail to engage if the plotlines seem too familiar offering only clichés.

- The extract reintroduces the six main characters drawn from both genders and a range of ethnic backgrounds. This may grab the audiences' attention as they carry on watching to see how the characters will interact and how they will deal with the threat from the aliens as well as the complications of their teenage lives. Attention may be held as the target audience is rewarded with characters, drawn from their demographic, overcoming threat and appearing more capable/empathetic than the 'adults.' Audience attention may also be held as the characters offer a range of spectating positions from which to engage in the narrative. The audience may however fail to engage if the characters appear to conform to adult stereotypes of teenagers or their function in the narrative is seen as too predictable.

- Narrative is driven by conflict. The brief first shot showing April being attacked by the alien king grabs the audience's attention by establishing a conflict between two opposing sides suggesting that a disruption to narrative equilibrium has taken place. Attention is held as the audience joins the quest to resolve the conflict, restore the equilibrium and find catharsis through narrative closure. Audiences may however reject the invitation to join the quest being unwilling to invest in the effort of engaging with the multiple disruptions suggested in the pre-title sequence. The extract may suggest that a degree of commitment is needed to engage with multiple characters and storylines over an extended period of time. Some audience members may be unwilling to commit their attention and involvement to the degree suggested by narrative features in the extract.

- The narrative enigma is a common technique used to grab and retain audience interest. A series of enigmas are posed in the pre-title sequence, many of which will span the lifetime of the series and will engage the audience as they get narrative pleasure from helping solve the puzzles and tasks set and seeing their decisions have positive outcomes for the main characters. However a specific enigma which will be the narrative complication for this episode holds the audience's attention as it offers the audience the possibility of resolution if they watch on – effectively can the king's heart be made whole again? Solving some enigmas will satisfy audience needs and encourage loyalty to the show but again predictability or lack of credible solutions can lead to loss of interest.

- Variations in narrative style can also grab the audience's attention.

The extracts begins with a high octane cross cut sequence which builds excitement and tension which is meant to reflect the style and pace of the show promising the audience a rollercoaster ride. However the action is front-loaded and audiences may become dissatisfied as the pace of storytelling slows replacing action with dialogue driven or character development scenes. The pace of crosscutting in the pre-title sequence could also cause confusion and put viewers off. Consequently the snippets of dialogue used in the re-cap sequence to remind audiences of the narrative device of the 'shared heart' could also leave audiences feeling uncertain as to what is happening and their attention may not be held.

- The 'previously' section of the sequence merges with the new episode using a curtain lift transition which moves the audience from the alien fortress to April's bedroom where the audience see her horror as she realises that an alien weapon has materialised on her floor symbolising that she now has emerging alien characteristics. On this further disruption the title sequence begins. While this could be seen as an exciting point at which to pick up the action for the new episode, it could be seen as too disruptive if viewers would prefer to experience a more conventional or traditional narrative arc: exposition – climax – resolution.

Responses may conclude that narrative techniques go a long way towards grabbing and holding audience attention because the action starts immediately and is sustained throughout the pre-title sequence, because there are disruptions, enigmas and conflicts. Audience attention may be enhanced because genre expectations are reinforced by narrative features

Alternatively, it is equally valid to conclude that the audience's attention is not grabbed and held to much extent because the emphasis on action and narrative disruption is confusing or suggests commitment that some are unwilling to make. Some may find that there is a disjunction between their genre expectations and narrative features

Finally, valid answers may combine aspects of the two conclusions outlined immediately above.

02				20

Assessment Objectives – AO1 2a, AO1 2b and AO2 1b

Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (5 marks)
Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes (5 marks)
Make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)

Level	Mark range	Description

5	17-20	• Excellent knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural contexts of media, demonstrated by consistently effective discussion of how media contexts influence issues of representation in the media products. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
4	13-16	• Good knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural contexts of media, demonstrated by frequent effective discussion of how media contexts influence issues of representation in the media products. • Good judgements and conclusions that are usually supported by relevant examples. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
3	9-12	• Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural contexts of media, demonstrated by some appropriate and effective discussion of how media contexts influence issues of representation in the media products. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by relevant examples. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.
2	5-8	• Basic knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural contexts of media, demonstrated by little appropriate discussion of how media contexts influence issues of representation in the media products. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.
1	1-4	• Minimal knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural contexts of media, demonstrated by very rare, if any, appropriate discussion of how media contexts influence issues of representation in the media products. • Minimal, if any, judgements and conclusions that are rarely unsupported by examples – the response lacks reasoning. • Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

Answers in the higher bands must show extended responses that demonstrate the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning that is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

Responses may demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes and ability to reach judgements and draw conclusions by discussing issues such as the following:

- The representation of teenagers in television drama shows elements of both continuity and change. Both of these trends are illustrated by the two CSPs. This demonstrates how, though social and cultural norms change those norms and contexts impact on media products, some elements remain constant.

- The dominant attitudes and values in the 1960s included the expectation of greater respect and obedience to be shown by teenagers towards adults. Any representation of a teenager breaking these cultural codes would be more shocking in the 1960s than it would today.

- Modern social and cultural contexts place a high premium on diversity so any representation of teenagers which excluded diversity in (for example) ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, ability/disability or sexual preference would be more shocking to today's audience than those of the 1960s.

- The dominant representation of teenagers in media products is generally negative. Stereotypically they are represented as a problem: selfish, lazy, uncommunicative, rebellious with a focus on bad behaviour. These ideas are reinforced to an extent in the two Close Study Products but the two dramas also offer more positive representations as well. Despite the social and cultural contexts being separated by 50 years, both of these elements can be seen in both products.

- Despite being made more than 50 years apart, there are many similarities between Susan in An Unearthly Child and April in Co-Owner of a Lonely Heart. Both girls are intelligent, articulate, high achieving students challenging the dominant stereotypes of teenagers. At the same time Susan and April conform to the dominant representation by being rebellious and by confronting the knowledge and authority of their teachers. In three flashback scenes Susan rejects the tasks set by her tutors while April shocks her history teacher and fellow students by making an opinionated negative speech about soldiers at Dunkirk. In both cases, these teenage characters are represented as having more interest in the approval of their peers than of adults in general and, specifically, their teachers.

- Both girls live in single adult households; Susan with her grandfather and April with her wheelchair-bound mother. Both girls

are seen to challenge parental authority and both behave petulantly when they don't get their own way. In spite of this continuity, the issue of single parenthood is foregrounded in the 2016 example. April in particular and teenagers in general are often represented as carrying burdens of stress and anxiety placed on them by the adult world. In the social context of the 1960s, the 'teenager' was less well developed as a distinctive category and teenagers such as Susan were often represented as having more childlike qualities.

- Susan is a lone teenager in an adult world; she is less prominent in the story than her teachers and her grandfather and does not have the power to assert her own will. April however offers a more modern, active representation. She makes her own decisions and is physically capable of defending herself and her mother which would indicate some changes in the social and cultural contexts.

- The main difference is that April is part of a tight friendship group – a very important feature of contemporary representations of teenage. The group is diverse and represents a range of teenage identities, male/female, white/Asian/black, straight/gay. The group is loyal, supportive, reasoning, socially aware and thoughtful of each other's needs. This reflects changes in the contexts as seen in the products.

- The differences relate directly to the choices media producers make about how to represent teenagers as a social group. In the cultural context of 1963, with only two channels on offer, producers had to appeal to a much broader audience demographic. To succeed, Dr Who had to appeal to a family audience and the representation of teenage offered by Susan is one that is acceptable to older viewers of that time.

- In today's cultural context, the range of products and platforms on offer is vast. Class is positioned to aim directly at the Young Adult niche audience. To be successful it must offer a range of representations of teenage that meets the needs of the core BBC3 audience.

- It could be concluded that other factors: technical, technological, the demands of the audience, for example, have also influenced the representations of teenagers in tv drama, but it could also be concluded that these other factors are themselves inextricably bound up with social and cultural contexts.

- Alternatively, responses may conclude that any changes in social and cultural contexts have had little influence because representations of teenagers have demonstrated greater continuity than change.

- Another viable conclusion would be that, in spite of a certain degree of continuity, the social and cultural context of drama on television today has led to radical changes in the representation of

		teenagers.	

03		AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies Acceptable answers include: PEGI provides age ratings for video games (or games apps) PEGI rates the content of video games (or games apps) PEGI provides information about video games PEGI provides descriptions of the content of video games (to help consumers make informed choices) PEGI gives information about games (1 mark) PEGI does age ratings (1 mark) PEGI protects young people (1 mark)	2

04		Assessment Objectives – AO1 1a, AO1 1b and AO2 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media (5 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media (5 marks) Make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks)			20
		Level	Mark range	Description	
		5	17-20	• Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective discussion of gender representation in the specified video games. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.	
		4	13-16	• Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by frequent effective discussion of gender representation in the specified video games. • Good judgements and conclusions that are usually supported by relevant examples. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.	
		3	9-12	• Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally appropriate but inconsistently effective discussion of gender representation in the specified video games. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by examples. • Often appropriate use of subject specific terminology, but inconsistently effective.	
		2	5-8	• Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by occasional appropriate discussion of gender representation in the specified video games but with limited effectiveness. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology and with limited effect.	
		1	1-4	• Minimal knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by very little appropriate discussion of gender representation in the specified video games. • Minimal, if any, judgements and conclusions that are rarely supported by examples – the response lacks reasoning.	

		• Little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology with no real effectiveness.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

Answers in the higher bands must show extended responses that demonstrate the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning that is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

Responses may demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework (media language, media representations) and ability to reach judgments and draw conclusions by discussing points such as the following:

- Protagonists and hero characters in video games are much more likely to be male than female. The world re-presented in video games is one in which traditional sex role stereotypes are, in the overwhelming majority of cases, strongly reinforced.
- A high proportion of video games include acts of violence or cruelty often directed by male characters towards females.
- Over the history of video games, female characters have had much less important roles in the action, often appearing as 'damsel in distress', or 'princesses made available as the reward for successful male characters.
- Other common stereotypes have included the highly sexualised but non-active vamp, the ditzy blond and the evil witch.
- Male characters are similarly stereotypical: men of action, rational thinkers, winners, skilled in handling cars, weapons and machines.
- Gender stereotyping has been very common in video games, but there has been evidence of slight improvement in recent years.
- *Tomb Raider* (1996) was the first major video game to have a female protagonist – Lara Croft – and it has continued to be a successful franchise including the successful mobile game app *Lara Croft Go*.
- Lara Croft is strong, resilient and self-reliant but the depiction of her body is sexualised.
- As a turn-based puzzle game, the actions of Lara Croft in *Lara Croft Go* are dictated by the player and puzzle solutions often involve killing opponents.
- The emphasis, though, is on the solution to puzzles with minimal sex-role stereotyping, making *LCGo* unusual in the context of video games.
- The dominance of male gamers has declined over the past 5-10 years and more games reflect the needs of a female or mixed gender audience. However, even those games directed at a primarily female audience such as *Kim Kardashian Hollywood* are based largely on a set of stereotypical assumptions that girls like to dress up, go to parties and seek the attention of boys.
- Feminist critics have pointed out that the diversity of women's real-life roles is barely reflected at all in video game representations of women.

16		Points such as these may be used to support an argument that gender representation in video games is fair and balanced or that it is unfair and unbalanced. Responses in the higher levels may draw distinctions between 'fair' and 'balanced' and may suggest that such representations are part of a process of change and development.	

05					20

Assessment Objectives – AO2 1a and AO2 1b		
Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts (10 marks). Make judgements and draw conclusions (10 marks).		
Level	Mark Range	Description
4	16-20	• Excellent analysis of the product(s) that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of the Zoella products and the impact of social media sites on them. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by relevant examples. • Consistent appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology throughout.
3	11-15	• Good analysis of the product(s) that is clear and often engages with the nuanced aspects of the Zoella products and the impact of social media sites on them. • Good judgements and conclusions that are usually supported by relevant examples. • Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject specific terminology.
2	6-10	• Satisfactory analysis of the product(s) that engages with generally obvious or straightforward aspects of the Zoella products and the impact of social media sites on them. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by relevant examples. • Occasional appropriate use of subject specific terminology.
1	1-5	• Basic analysis of the product(s) that only engages with more straightforward aspects of the Zoella products and the impact of social media sites on them, this is likely to be more descriptive than analytical. • Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by examples. • Very little, if any, appropriate use of subject specific terminology throughout.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Indicative content:

There is no expectation that the responses will be entirely balanced. If a student constructs a clear argument on either side of this debate, showing astute analysis using the theoretical framework, then this should not prevent them from reaching the higher mark bands.

Similarly, if their analysis using the framework leads to them to a balanced conclusion that is logical and well supported, this should be rewarded and could also reach the higher mark bands.

Answers in the higher bands must:
- demonstrate the drawing together of areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across the full course of study
- show extended responses that demonstrate the ability to construct and develop a line of reasoning that is coherent, relevant, sustained and logically structured.

If answers do not demonstrate both of these then they must not be awarded marks in the highest band (i.e. the maximum mark should be 15). If they do not demonstrate either, they must not be awarded a mark in the top two bands (i.e. the maximum mark should be 10).

Responses could cover the following aspects of the theoretical framework:
- How choice of elements of media language influences meaning in media products
- The relationship between technology and media products
- The codes and conventions of media language
- Intertextuality
- The ways in which the media re-present the world and construct versions of reality
- Representation of social groups and ideas and the use of stereotypes
- How representations convey particular viewpoints, messages, values and beliefs, which may be reinforced across a wide range of media products.
- How representations reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were produced.
- The impact of the increasingly convergent nature of media industries across different platforms and different national settings.
- Theoretical perspectives on audiences
- Uses and Gratifications theory
- How audiences may respond to and interpret media products.
- The ways in which people's media practices are connected to their identity, including their sense of actual and desired self.
- The social, cultural and political significance of media products.

With reference to Zoella:

- The extent of an individual's success can be easily seen by the number of followers/subscribers/hits/likes on social media sites. Zoella is certainly successful in terms of attracting an online audience. Her YouTube channels have over 11 million subscribers and have been viewed over 900 million times. This information can be useful in showing the overall appeal of Zoella but it does not show that these people are young. The assumption might be that they are because of the general demographic of the users of YouTube but it is not a guarantee of the age of the audience.

- Social media enables the creation of shared social networks, which reinforces the appeal and reach of individuals. The use of frequent intertextual references ensures that the stars and fans of social media build a shared lexicon and understanding of the world that is being inhabited/shared and can create a sense of familiarity. Most of Zoella's friends are also vloggers; all of them appearing on each other's vlogs. This shared intimacy creates a social network of attractive and interesting people who reveal their life and times together.

- In terms of Uses and Gratifications, audiences are looking for information, relaxation, diversion and companionship. Social media sites can be seen to fulfill all of these audience goals by providing interesting and informative content, the opportunity to 'switch-off' from real life and be distracted. The additional opportunity to interact with other user heightens the sense of companionship that could be created by other media products. Zoella provides opportunities for all of these recognised audience goals by offering:
    - information about make-up, clothes/trends and fashion, relationships
    - her videos are very easy to watch and do not require a high level of engagement with the audience so clearly offer an opportunity to relax
    - the videos are engaging and provide an easy diversion and distraction from other concerns in life – they offer escapism for viewers
    - the chatty, close-up style of the videos and the personal nature of some of the content provides a sense of companionship for viewers – they create a sense of friendship and shared experience
    - the opportunity to interact with other viewers/readers

    All of these are likely to be very appealing and interesting to a young audience and, as they are likely to be familiar with the format this supports the idea that social media sites have helped a new type of celebrity to build a huge audience of young fans. However, the topics that Zoella covers are likely to be of interest to older viewers/readers. Additionally, audiences of all ages are motivated by the same desires in terms of the media they consume (information, distraction, companionship etc.) so Zoella could equally appeal to an older audience. Also as Zoella dispenses sought-after advice on, for example, applying make-up, matching clothes and choosing accessories as well, occasionally, as relationship advice that would likely appeal to a large fan base regardless of how it was dispensed and without the use of social media sites.

- Social media sites offer the sense of being part of a group and sees the audience cast in the role of active rather than passive consumer – either as part of the circle represented in the content or as a part of the fan base. An analysis of Zoella supports this – she appears friendly and approachable and some of her content includes her friends and family which makes you feel like part of the group and

there is ample opportunity to interact with other fans. Again, however, this is appealing to a broad age range of media users and is not isolated to the young. Additionally, there are many ways in which fans can feel like they are part of a community that are not dependent on social media sites (music and sports fans, for example, have often formed real life friendships as a result of their shared interest before social media sites existed).

- The fans roles as active consumers can help to shape the nature of the output on social media sites and this helps to make them feel more involved – Zoella will often reference her fans and what they like and say that is why she is making a particular type of video/producing particular content. However, it could be argued that this has always been the case and that the only real difference between social media sites and more conventional media formats is that customer feedback is more immediate – it has, however, always been sought through, for example, focus groups.

- People's media practices are connected to their identities and social media sites create an opportunity for celebrities to show their audiences that they are 'real' and just like them which, in turn, can increase their appeal as they show young fans that it is normal to struggle with the problems they might encounter. Zoella is careful to produce videos that show the balance of fantasy and reality, for example, there are videos where she is dressed nicely with full make-up on and there are others where she is wearing no make-up and talks about her issues with anxiety. However, it could be argued that celebrities have, for a long time and without the use of social media sites, exposed a range of vulnerabilities to their fans and that the context of Zoella's various sites could easily appeal to audiences from a broad age range, focusing as she does on issues with her skin and her anxiety.

- Social media sites are often seen as the domain of young people and the age exclusivity of YouTube is likely to appeal to a young audience therefore it is the perfect domain for vloggers such as Zoella; it is unlikely they will have to share this interest with their parents. However, as more people are becoming digitally literate, even more content is appearing on sites like YouTube and the internet is getting easier and cheaper to access from anywhere, it could be argued that this age exclusivity is not actually a factor as anyone could find the content and may find it entertaining.

- The accessibility of multi-platform online products (via mobile phone, tablets, computers and television), the 24/7 availability of media content is not reliant on the social media aspect. However, without YouTube Zoella would not have been able to launch her career and may not have been able to find a more traditional route to stardom. It could be argued, however, that stars have always been able to build huge audiences via other media forms and social media sites are not really that much more effective than other media forms. The social and cultural context is one in which the popularity of online vloggers such as Zoella matches that of the

most successful music, sport, film or television celebrities especially in pre-teen and teenage age groups. It could be argued that she doesn't have any more of an audience than other celebrities do and that her success isn't necessarily dependent on social media sites.

Answers in higher bands must draw together knowledge and understanding from the course as a whole by referring to, for example:
- The significance of vlogging as a cultural phenomenon amongst, primarily, youth audiences
- The genre conventions of vlogs, particularly the 'authenticity' of low budget production and including the expected setting of Zoella's home
- The relationship between vloggers and advertisers or sponsors
- The way in which vloggers such as Zoella construct reality and how this is done in order to present a narrative to the audience
- The appeal of celebrity vloggers in relation to the appeal of celebrities created by traditional media institutions and forms
- The social and cultural significance of the increase in the number and popularity of vlogs
- How vlogs reflect the viewpoints and beliefs of the target audience and how this can attract new viewers and/or cause controversy.