

MEDIA STUDIES

Paper 9607/01
Foundation Portfolio

Key Messages

For success in this coursework paper, candidates need to complete one of the two set tasks (video or print), keep a detailed blog of the process of the project, and reflect upon their work in the creative critical reflection. Each of these elements needs to be done to a high standard, demonstrating knowledge and understanding, research and planning and appropriate skilled use of media tools. Expectations of evidence from each assessment objective are listed on pages 24-27 of the syllabus. Coursework coversheets need to be completed with clear comments to show how marks have been arrived at for each assessment objective.

It is important that Centres note that the Foundation Portfolio and the Advanced Portfolio are two entirely separate units. Candidates are not allowed to submit trailers for the film openings made in this unit as Unit 3 work, nor are they allowed to turn the openings into short films for Unit 3. Work cannot be submitted (even partially) for both units.

General Comments

For film openings, some excellent work was submitted for this component, demonstrating detailed research into existing texts, which fed into the planning and construction of candidates' own media products. There was some high level of skill shown in the use of media tools, in both the products and in the creative critical reflections. In the best work, knowledge and understanding of conventions of all aspects of the media products was coupled with comprehensive evidence of the process. There were very few submissions of magazine work on this occasion, so the full range of outcomes was not evident.

Comments on Specific Tasks

Blogs

Centres which set up blog hubs made the process of moderation much smoother, so that each candidate's work could be clicked on without the need to type in long URLs with the risk of errors. The finished product should be placed at the top of the blog so that it is clear which one is the final version. The best work was comprehensive, with blog posts which followed the whole process of the project and showed clear evidence of research into all aspects which then fed into the finished work. Very short blogs did not evidence enough of the process to justify more than Level 2 marks on the whole. All elements of the project should be online, either on, or linked to the blog; there is no need to send any disks or printouts of items.

Creative critical reflections

Candidates who fully addressed the four questions using varied digital formats performed best in this area. There are a number of social media tools which enabled really interesting and reflective work, appropriate to the task. There were some excellent voiceover videos with extracts from the finished product and from the process and some really imaginative approaches to which adequate time had been allocated. Weaker work tended to be text-heavy and just used PowerPoint; often in very abrupt slides with little illustration. Such work could only meet the criteria for marks in the lower bands.

Products

Magazines

The syllabus requires candidates to produce the front cover, contents page and a double page spread of a new magazine, including a minimum of four images and made up of entirely original material. The few candidates who attempted this task all fulfilled the brief, with understanding of features of design, layout, font choice and size in evidence, as well as some well-shot photographs. Some candidates would have benefited from more support in building their skills with the software- a DTP package such as InDesign is really needed for this task, particularly with their understanding and interpretation of conventions. Opportunities for interim feedback need to be built in to the task so that candidates can benefit from the critical eye of peers and teachers, particularly in relation to how far they have carried through their research into their own products.

Film Openings

This task involves the production of the first two minutes of an imaginary feature film, including the titles, adhering to commercial cinema conventions. This worked best when candidates had researched film openings relevant to their own genre choice and had developed a systematic understanding of the institutional conventions of opening titles. Much of the work demonstrated strong skills with camera, editing, sound and mise en scène. Weaker examples tended to be marked appropriately by Centres.

MEDIA STUDIES

Paper 9607/02
Key Media Concepts

Key Messages

For this examination, candidates need to analyse the extract from TV drama in terms of how it constructs meaning through camerawork, editing, mise-en-scène and sound. They also need to be able to adapt their learning about the media industry they have studied to one of two optional questions, which in this session were about audience consumption and technological convergence. For the textual analysis question, an understanding of technical codes in moving image media is essential for candidates to be able to attempt the question.

General Comments

There was a good range of work seen in the spread of marks across both sections of the paper, with many candidates showing evidence of thorough preparation; writing at length and with relevant detail by supporting points with appropriate examples.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

The extract provoked some good responses on how meaning was set up through camerawork and mise-en-scène in particular. Candidates were less confident on the use of sound and editing. A common approach was to deal with each technical area in turn, though candidates with little to say on particular areas were exposed by this strategy, meaning that responses were at times uneven. There was a tendency to list features and to describe rather than analyse in the work of weaker candidates. A number of candidates focused solely on gender, rather than on meaning more generally. Those who explored the idea of 'meaning' in its broadest sense tended to be more successful.

Section B

Question 2

Candidates answering on technological convergence usually showed a grasp of the topic and the ability to apply it to the media industry they had studied. Examples which worked well tended to be based on the film industry. Weaker responses lacked evidence to support points or misunderstood the terms used in the question.

Question 3

The question on audience consumption tended to be answered in a way that suggested candidates had not studied the topic in any depth. Such responses sometimes became a discussion of what the candidate happened to like, rather than looking at patterns of audience consumption more broadly and lacked detailed evidence to support points made. These responses ranged across all media areas.

The few strong responses to this question showed evidence of study of the topic and an awareness of the issues involved, backed up by examples.

MEDIA STUDIES

Paper 9607/03
Advanced Portfolio

Key Messages

For success in this coursework paper, candidates need to complete one of the four optional tasks, keep a detailed blog of the process of the project, and reflect upon their work in the creative critical reflection. Each of these elements needs to be done to a high standard, demonstrating knowledge and understanding, research and planning and appropriate skilled use of media tools. Expectations of evidence from each assessment objective are listed on pages 27-30 of the syllabus. Coursework coversheets need to be completed with clear comments for each candidate to show how marks have been arrived at for each assessment objective.

This component needs to be seen as completely separate from the AS level coursework. Tasks may not be double entered from the Foundation Portfolio or 'continued' as part of the Advanced Portfolio, but must be completely new tasks. Likewise, a new blog should be set up for each candidate at A2.

General Comments

There were only a handful of candidates on this occasion, with most working on the trailer task and one doing the documentary package task. In the best work, knowledge and understanding of conventions of all aspects of the media products was coupled with comprehensive evidence of the process.

Comments on Specific Tasks

Blogs

The process of moderation is made much smoother with the use of blog hubs, so that each candidate's work may be clicked on without the need to type in long URLs with the risk of errors. The finished products should be placed at the top of the blog so that it is clear which pieces of work are the final versions and evidence the end result of the task. Both major and minor task final versions should be prominent and easily accessible on the blog. In this session, most blogs tended to be far too brief and did not evidence the development of the process, or reflect on ideas in enough detail to justify more than Level 2 marks on the whole.

Creative critical reflections

Candidates who fully addressed and developed their responses to the four questions using varied digital formats performed best in this area. Examples of weaker work tended to be text-heavy and often just used PowerPoint in very abrupt slides with little illustration; such work can only meet the criteria for minimal marks.

Set Briefs

Film Promotion Package

The best examples of work here featured well-paced trailers which showed a clear grasp of the conventions of the form. Posters and a website which captured the sense of branding were most effective. This task requires candidates to develop a real sense of what the whole film would be like in a simulation of the film industry's marketing practice so needs to be based upon quite a lot of research into existing examples. The best work showed this and also showed strong skills with photography, editing and image manipulation programs.

Documentary Package

There were only a limited number of responses submitted in response to this task this session. The work submitted on this occasion showed some limited sense of conventions and competence in terms of technical skills.

No work was submitted this session for the other tasks.

MEDIA STUDIES

Paper 9607/04
Critical Perspectives

Key Messages

This paper requires reflection on the coursework undertaken and the skills developed, analysis of one piece of coursework using a theoretical framework, and an extended response on one contemporary media theme.

General Comments

The small number of entries for this component were spread across the ability range. At the top end, there was evidence of high level analytical skill and the ability to mobilise examples succinctly. At the bottom end, candidates wrote in less detail and struggled with concepts and examples.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates wrote about both Foundation and Advanced Portfolio work and were able to identify how research and planning had informed their work, with examples to illustrate their points.
- (b) All candidates were able to make use of the concept of genre at some level and the stronger responses referenced a range of relevant theoretical positions and applied them to their work.

Section B

Questions 2 and 3: Regulation

There were no responses to this topic

Questions 4 and 5: Global media

The responses to this topic were strong and very interesting to read, applying theory very effectively to contemporary examples.

Questions 6 and 7: Media and collective identity

This topic did not produce any responses with detailed examples, but relied too much on opinion and generalised assertions.

Questions 8 and 9: Media in the online age

The responses to this topic made some use of relevant theory but tended to treat examples at a rather superficial level.

Questions 10 and 11: Post-modern media

There was some good use of examples for this topic, with a grasp of the key ideas applied quite effectively.