

Further information on Higher Media Course Assessment (November 2013)

Key points

The Higher Media Course builds on the structure and focus of the National 5 Course and creates many opportunities for personalisation and choice for learners. It challenges learners to apply knowledge and understanding in a theoretical context, and to apply skills in planning and problem-solving to create media content.

At Higher, Course assessment will have two components: a question paper (50 marks) and an assignment (50 marks).

The question paper will sample and assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the key aspects, contexts and roles of media content, and the ways in which these affect, and are affected by, each other.

The style of the question paper will build on National 5, with a focus on media analysis, but requiring greater integration and depth of analysis. There will be two mandatory questions requiring extended responses: the first will focus on media content in context (30 marks), and the second will focus on the role of media (20 marks).

The assignment will require learners to plan and create media content in response to a brief. Like National 5, it will have two sections. In section 1, candidates will research and plan media content in response to a brief set by centres; in section 2, candidates will develop their ideas to a level of finish specified in the brief, and reflect on their work. Each section will be worth 25 marks.

Course assessment will total 100 marks.

Higher Specimen Question Paper (publication by 28 February 2013)

The purpose of the question paper is to assess the candidate's ability to integrate and apply skills, knowledge and understanding from across the Course content.

In the question paper, candidates will analyse and discuss media content in context, and the role of media. The question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ the ability to analyse familiar media content
- ◆ the ability to analyse media contexts
- ◆ the ability to analyse the role of media within society
- ◆ application of knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of media literacy
- ◆ the ability to explain the relationship between contexts, roles and key aspects of media content

The question paper will have a total of 50 marks.

It will have one section comprising mandatory extended response questions which focus on the

contexts, roles and key aspects of media content.

(For sample questions from the current draft of the Specimen Question paper, please see Appendix 1.)

Higher Specimen Assignment (publication by 30 April 2013)

The purpose of the assignment is to assess the learner's ability to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the Course in a production of media content.

The assignment will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding of media production in an assignment which:

- ◆ involves a degree of personalisation and choice
- ◆ requires consideration of possibilities and problem-solving in research, planning and production processes
- ◆ requires application of knowledge and understanding of relevant key aspects of media literacy
- ◆ requires application of production skills
- ◆ allows the learner to reflect on actual or possible production constraints

The assignment will have a total of 50 marks. It will be completed over a period of time and under supervision.

The assignment will have two sections: planning and development. The candidate will negotiate the brief for the assignment. The guidelines for carrying out the assignment will be set by SQA.

The assignment will be externally marked by SQA.

Appendix 1

Media (Higher) Specimen Question and Marking Instructions

Sample questions taken from current draft.

1. Media Content in Context

How audiences respond to media content can depend on the extent to which genre markers are used to construct it.

Analyse how this statement could apply to media content you have studied. In your response you must cover:

- a) the ways in which genre markers are used in the construction of narrative structures, codes and/or conventions (10 marks)
- b) the ways in which genre markers are used in the construction of at least one other key aspect from categories, language or representation (10 marks)
- c) the ways in which different audiences might respond to the expected and/or unexpected uses of genre markers you have referenced (10 marks)

Total Marks 30

2. The Role of Media

The media is consistently criticised as being intrusive, out of control, or problematic in some other way. Often, the response from the media is that it is simply fulfilling its role of meeting the needs of its audiences.

Discuss this with reference to media content you have studied. In your response you must:

- a) give detailed information or ideas about the role of media referenced above, and discuss this by giving some opinions, arguments or conclusions about it (10 marks)
- b) give specific examples from media content which illustrate your information, ideas or discussion (10 marks)

Total Marks 20

General marking instructions

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles which will be applied when marking candidate responses to questions in this Paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the specific Marking Instructions for each question. The marking

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schemes are written to assist in determining the 'minimal acceptable answer' rather than listing every possible correct and incorrect answer.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific Marking Instructions for the relevant question.
- (b) Marking should always be positive, ie marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (c) Where there is choice, candidates can make reference to one or more media texts and can discuss these in a general or thematic way, or by close analysis and exemplification, as appropriate to the question asked?
- (d) Key aspects, contexts and roles of media are broad concepts. They can incorporate many models, theories or approaches to media analysis, and these may vary between particular media, forms and genres. Where candidates are given the choice of key aspects, contexts or roles to use in their answer, markers should accept the use of any appropriate model, theory or approach if it is relevant to the content and question, and corresponds to the following:

Content-based key aspect analysis

Categories: genre, purpose, tone, style

Language: medium/form specific technical codes, cultural codes, anchorage

Narrative: structures, codes, conventions

Representation: representations, selection and portrayal, ideological discourses

Context-based analysis

Audience: target audience, preferred reading, differential decoding

Institution: internal controls and constraints, external controls and constraints

Society: time, place

Role of media analysis

Meeting needs: entertain, educate, inform

Influencing attitudes and behaviours: intentional, unintentional

Meeting particular purposes: profit, promotion, public service

- (e)
 - i For credit to be given, points must relate to the question asked.
 - ii There are two main types of question used in this question paper:
 - A. *Questions that ask candidates to analyse . . .*
 - B. *Questions that ask candidates to discuss . . .*
 - iii For each of the question types (in ii above), the following provides an overview of marking principles.

A Questions that ask candidates to analyse . . .

Analysis requires candidates to identify parts, the relationship between them, and

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

their relationship with the whole. It may involve drawing out and relating implications.

Analysis questions will usually focus on media content in context, with candidates given a question stem and three elements (a, b, c) which they must cover in their response.

Candidates must identify content and/or content based media analysis concepts as appropriate to the a, b or c element of the question, exemplify these by reference to media content and relate these to the focus of the stem. Points made do not need to be in any particular order. Candidates may provide a number of detailed points or a smaller number of points in depth, or a combination of these.

Candidates can use elements a, b and c to structure their response, or can provide a response in which the three elements are integrated. Either approach is acceptable. Each element should be marked separately, even where an integrated response has been produced.

For each of **elements a, b and c**, markers will allocate up to a maximum of 10 marks as follows. The marker should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the standard of the response. Once the best fit has been selected:

- ◆ Where the response just meets the standard described, the lowest mark from the range should be awarded.
- ◆ Where the response almost matches the band above, the highest available mark from the range should be awarded.
- ◆ Where the response fully meets all the standards described in the top band descriptor the highest mark should be awarded for that element.

B Questions that ask candidates to discuss . . .

Questions that ask candidates to discuss will require them to communicate ideas and information on a subject, and it may be possible to debate two sides of a statement.

These questions will usually focus on the role of media. Candidates must make points that communicate ideas and information on the role of media referenced in the question.

Candidates may debate two sides of an argument, develop or explore a point of view, or take some other approach appropriate to the question. Candidates are expected to exemplify or justify points made with reference to media content.

Where a number of points are made, these do not need to be in any particular order. Candidates may provide a number of detailed points or a smaller number of points in depth, or a combination of these.

Candidates will be awarded marks for their discussion of the role of media, and their use of media content to exemplify or illustrate the discussion.

For each of **role of media** and **use of media content**, markers will allocate up to a maximum of 10 marks as follows. The marker should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the standard of the response. Once the best fit has been selected:

- ◆ Where the response just meets the standard described, the lowest mark from the range should be awarded.
- ◆ Where the response almost matches the band above, the highest available mark from the range should be awarded.

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

- ◆ Where the response fully meets all the standards described in the top band descriptor the highest mark should be awarded for that element.

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

Appendix 2

Media (Higher) Assignment

Overview of assessment taken from current draft.

In the assignment for Higher Media, candidates plan and develop media content in response to a negotiated brief. The assessment tasks will be set and externally marked by SQA and conducted in centres under the conditions specified by SQA.

The candidate might have a brief to plan and develop an extract or complete piece of media content individually, or to plan and develop one part of media content which can be combined with the work of other candidates to make an extract or complete piece

Candidates will submit their finished content, along with responses to planning and development tasks, as indicated in the assignment.

The assignment has been developed to ensure that all candidates are assessed in the same way, regardless of the technical capabilities of the equipment at their disposal, or the medium, form or genre they will be working in.

Consequently, the instructions for the assignment direct all candidates to adopt a common approach regardless of their brief or resources.

In Section 1: Planning, evidence that the candidate has actively planned content by carrying out appropriate research and making decisions based on this is assessed. Candidates complete three tasks:

1. Negotiate the brief
2. Compile a research and planning portfolio
3. Summarise plans and justify decisions

Tasks 1 and 2 direct candidates to negotiate the brief and advise them on the research and planning they should do. This research and planning is assessed through task 3.

In task 3, candidates summarise their plans and justify their planning decisions with reference to the brief, creative intentions and research. Responses are submitted to SQA for marking.

Assessment judgements are based on the justifications given for specific planning decisions. Up to a total of 25, marks are available for justifications relating to each of the following areas:

- a) The brief (5 marks)
- b) Creative intentions (5 marks)
- c) Audience research (5 marks)
- d) Content research (5 marks)
- e) Institutional context research (5 marks)

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

In Section 2: Development, evidence that the candidate can work within institutional controls to achieve creative intentions is assessed. Candidates complete two tasks:

1. Make the planned media content
2. Evaluate the development process

In task 1, candidates make their planned media content using media codes and techniques.

In task 2, candidates evaluate the development process. Up to a total of 25, marks are available for evaluation of:

- a) how effectively the candidate worked within institutional contexts to develop content (10 marks)
- b) how effectively the candidate used media codes and techniques to achieve creative intentions (15 marks)

The finished content and evaluations are considered together. Assessment judgements are based on the extent to which candidates demonstrate the ability to work within institutional controls and achieve creative intentions. This may be evident through their developed content, through their explanations, or through a mixture of the two.

It is acknowledged that some candidates may be able to produce content of a very high finish, but some may not, despite their creative intentions. Artistic or technical skills are not assessed because the Course does not have a specific focus on these, and because of possible resource implications within the centre which may make a high technical finish difficult.