



External Assessment Report 2012

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| Subject(s) | Media Studies |
| Level(s) | Intermediate 1 |

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

There was a number of very well-prepared candidates. Overall, candidates performed better than last year.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Paper 1

Section 1: Media Analysis

Candidates showed good knowledge of Representation and Narrative. There were very strong answers given by well-prepared candidates. These candidates answered well on most aspects of Section 1 and the texts chosen were mainly rich and offered candidates the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

Section 2: Media Production

In Section 2, Media Production, Question 1, the reflective question on a group production, the best answers showed a good understanding of how to overcome or deal with specific constraints.

Also, for Question 1 (e) worth 16 marks, on codes used in the group production, the best answers described fully how specific codes revealed the reasons for their use.

Section 2, Media Production, there were good answers for Question 2, the advertising brief question – adventurous holidays in Scotland - with good reasons given for design choices. There were some excellent answers to the scenario question. Many candidates were well prepared and justified decisions fully. Production issues in the scenario Media Production Question Three were well handled by candidates.

Paper 2: Unseen Analysis

There was again an improved standard of response in the Unseen Analysis Paper. Some candidates' and centres' performances were very good, attaining high marks. Some excellent responses were given by candidates to questions on Purpose(s), Genre and technical and cultural codes. As in previous years, many candidates were obviously well prepared and used textual reference effectively. Rich texts were provided and this too helped candidates.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Paper 1 Section 1: Media Analysis

Institutional factors and their effect on the text appeared to be unfamiliar to some candidates, who did not describe the effect of a specific institutional factor on the text they had studied. In Section 1, Media Analysis, weaker responses did not refer closely to the text where this was specified in the question.

Paper 1 Section 2: Media Production

Media Production, Question One (e) was worth 16 marks and asked about the use of codes in the product that was planned and made. Weaker answers gave little detail when answering the question on how specific codes were used in the group production. Some candidates could not explain the reason behind specific production choices. Also, in Question One Media Production: decisions made as a result of research were generally not well answered.

In the production Question One, where candidates were asked to write about how constraints affected the planning and making of their product. Weaker answers were often simply a statement of an imposed limitation inflicted on the group, rather than describing solutions that were found that overcame limited, specific production constraints.

In the advertising brief question, some candidates did not take the opportunity to show adventurous holidays in their treatment of the brief.

Paper 2: Unseen Analysis

Markers noted that candidates did not do well answering unseen analysis questions on the medium of the unseen text. Also, questions on the 'form' of the unseen text also have little resonance with candidates.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

Paper 1

Section 1: Media Analysis

The effect of specific institutional factors on the text should be known by candidates.

Section 2: Media Production

Question 1, the Reflective question on the media product made as part of a group, is often less successfully answered because candidates do not write sufficiently specific answers. The effect of research findings on planning decisions should be known.

Familiarity with how to give relevant and specific details would greatly improve candidates' answers. How specific constraints were dealt with should be known and practised by candidates. This knowledge is an important aspect of media production, attuning learners to the realities of working to a specific production brief.

Familiarity with specific use of codes and their reasons for use in the group production would boost candidates' knowledge of media production planning and making.

Paper 2: Unseen Analysis

The Question Bank should be the exclusive source for the instrument of assessment for Unseen Analysis at Intermediate 1.

Information provided on the flyleaf should be carefully completed.

The Intermediate 1 Unseen Analysis Question Item Bank can be found at: www.sqa.org.uk > Qualifications > NQ > Subjects > Media Studies > Intermediate 1 under the Guidance documents tab.

It is strongly recommended that questions on the medium of the unseen text be avoided in Unseen Analysis. Questions on Purpose(s) and Genre are highlighted by Markers as being well answered by candidates.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 1

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2011 | 617 |
|------------------------------------|-----|

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2012 | 671 |
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

| Distribution of Course awards | % | Cum. % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark 100 | | | | |
| A | 25.6% | 25.6% | 172 | 66 |
| B | 22.7% | 48.3% | 152 | 55 |
| C | 22.4% | 70.6% | 150 | 45 |
| D | 8.0% | 78.7% | 54 | 40 |
| No award | 21.3% | 100.0% | 143 | - |

General commentary on grade boundaries

- While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- Each year SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related as they do not contain identical questions.
- SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

