

# Guidelines for Understanding Standards in Media Studies at Higher level

First edition: August 2003  
Publication code: BB1882

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority  
Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ,  
and Ironmills Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1LE

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## Notes

The bullet points in the tables that follow give guidance on what should be covered during teaching. Those points marked with an asterisk (\*) are items that are 'good' to know rather than 'need' to know.

# Guidelines for Unseen Analysis

	Minimum requirements	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
<b>CATEGORIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Medium</li> <li>◆ Purpose</li> <li>◆ Form</li> <li>◆ Genre</li> <li>◆ Tone</li> <li>◆ Style</li> <li>◆ Other Categories</li> <li>◆ Institution &amp; Audience</li> <li>◆ Integrate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clear and valid</b> application of <b>at least</b> two appropriate categories.</p> <p>These categories should be <b>analysed in depth</b> not merely described or explained.</p> <p>The choice of categories should be <b>justified with reference</b> from the text.</p> <p><b>Reference</b> should be made to <b>institution and target audience</b>.</p>	<p>Clear and valid application of <b>two or more</b> categories analysed in <b>some depth</b> and <b>limited detail</b>.</p> <p><b>Adequate justification</b> is made by reference to the text.</p> <p><b>Clear understanding</b> of how the text was created by the Institution to attract the target audience.</p> <p><b>Some</b> reference is made to the use of narrative and/or representations to engage target audience.</p>	<p>Two or more categories are dealt in <b>depth and detail, convincingly justified</b> by reference to the text.</p> <p><b>Full understanding</b> of why these categories are appropriate to the needs of the target audience and institution.</p> <p><b>Detailed understanding</b> of how these categories affect narrative (where appropriate) and/or representations <b>convincingly justified</b> by reference to the text.</p>
<b>LANGUAGE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Analyse the use of cultural codes</li> <li>◆ Analyse the use of technical codes</li> <li>◆ Anchorage</li> <li>◆ Denotation/Connotation</li> <li>◆ Polysemy</li> <li>◆ Integrate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identifies</b> accurately cultural &amp; technical codes. <b>Interprets</b> their use correctly.</p> <p>Shows <b>some understanding</b> of how to read the signs (iconic, index, symbolic, arbitrary) by application of Denotation/Connotation, Anchorage and Polysemy.</p>	<p><b>Clear and valid interpretation</b> of language shows in <b>some detail</b> with <b>some insight</b> how the overall meaning of the text is created.</p> <p><b>Clear understanding</b> of how to read signs.</p> <p><b>Clear understanding</b> of how the codes are used to reinforce representations and engage target audience.</p> <p><b>Some understanding</b> of how the maker (institution) has used technical codes to create preferred reading, eg cropping, lighting, special effects.</p>	<p><b>Language</b> is interpreted fluently in <b>detail</b> with <b>considerable insight</b> into how meaning is created. (Very clear semiotics).</p> <p><b>Appropriate reference</b> is made to how and why the signs and codes are used to enhance narrative (where appropriate), reinforce representations and engage audience.</p> <p><b>Clear understanding</b> as to how codes are used to create preferred reading.</p>

Wherever possible reference should be made to **Technology**

- ◆ Where possible analyse the technical codes in order to determine what technology has been used.
- ◆ Consider the technology used to reach audience.

## General advice for Unseen Analysis

Give a reasonable amount to be analysed — **one** page of newspaper or **3–4 minutes** of moving image. Being asked to analyse too much in the time given disadvantages many candidates.

- ◆ Keep analysis to **Categories and Language**. A good answer must integrate other key aspects when relevant to categories and language (many candidates spend too much time on other key aspects when these are irrelevant).
- ◆ Do two separate answers — one for categories, one for language.
- ◆ Categories are generally badly done. Candidates identify but don't analyse.
- ◆ Familiarise candidates with cover leaf.
- ◆ It is helpful when analysing moving image to supply each candidate with an extra sheet of SQA paper for notes or a concept map during the initial viewing (this can be included if they run out of time).

## Suggested format for Unseen Analysis

Because of the diversity of media used for Unseen Analysis it is impossible to give a general format. The table overleaf shows an example for analysing War Documentary.

## Categories

<b>MEDIUM</b>	TV — Primary or secondary (explain) — Institution — Channel (Minority viewing, remit?) — Scheduling (series, audience familiar with time and day) — Controls (watershed etc) — close up medium (good at revealing character, make audience feel involved) — target audience (with justification of choice).
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Educate, inform (John Grierson) — possibly entertain (meet audience expectation of technology and enjoyment, eg colour, special effects, good acting) — satisfy licence payers by providing quality — provide minority viewing — meet BBC2, Ch 4 remit) — possibly make profit by selling abroad (eg BBC reputation for quality).
<b>GENRE</b>	Documentary — historical account of World War 2 — ideology (British) — preferred readings — differential decoding (Germans/officers/enlisted men) — uses classic documentary narrative conventions, eg archive footage, voice over, interviews reconstructions.
<b>FORM</b>	Factual — faction — docu-drama — Conventions (reconstructions, dramatised using narrative associated with fiction, ie actors, costumes, enigma, creating characters for audience to identify with) — Direct, indirect forms of address to show a variety of viewpoints.
<b>TOPE</b>	Serious (war is tragic) — Tries to be objective (voice-over describes events in a factual, unbiased manner but being produced by Britain reflects a propagandist, ideological, cultural view) — Personal (people involved in or affected by war) — Formal (interviews, experts) — Conventional or non-conventional (compare to World at War).
<b>STYLE</b>	Historical — uses footage to prove statements — Propaganda.
<b>OTHERS</b>	Well-known actors/presenters (representations?).

## Language

<b>CULTURAL CODES</b>	Dress/costume — gestures — accent — mise-en-scene — intertextual reference — iconography — symbolism. GIVE EXAMPLES & ANALYSE WHY THEY HAVE BEEN USED (Denotation/Connotation, Polysemy, Anchorage).
<b>TECHNICAL CODES</b>	Lighting — cropping — camera angle, editing — framing — sound GIVE EXAMPLES & ANALYSE WHY THEY HAVE BEEN USED (Denotation/Connotation, Polysemy, Anchorage).
<b>SIGNS HOW TO READ SIGNS</b>	Iconic — Index — Symbolic — Arbitrary (Denotation/Connotation, Polysemy, Anchorage).
<b>ARCHIVE</b>	Actuality material from the time (library material) film, photos, radio recording — gives authenticity — real events recorded at the time — Iconic Signs (Churchill, Hitler)
<b>INTERVIEWS/ TALKING HEADS</b>	Associated with authority and presentation of facts — often eye witness, participants. Experts (sometimes used as voice over) Representations (working class, accent. Ordinary soldier/educated, upper class, officer) — often anchored by mise-en-scene and caption — preferred reading — differential decoding — Technical codes (eye line piece to camera signifying honesty)
<b>DRAMATISATION/ RECONSTRUCTION</b>	Much more entertaining — meet audience expectation for technology (colour, special effects) — use dramatic devices (actors, costumes, mise-en-scene, lighting, music) — Narrative (enigmas, symbolism, cultural/technical codes) Preferred reading/differential decoding — polysemy ( a British soldier could be a man, husband, father, good guy/ A German soldier could be a man, son, father, good guy, bad guy)
<b>VOICE – OVER</b>	Generally an actor giving factual, unbiased (arguable in war documentary) account of events-plays an invisible controlling role that unifies the narrative — often a commanding authoritative, serious tone of voice — female voice give neutrality
<b>CAPTIONS/ GRAPHICS</b>	Anchor name designation/status, usually superimposed by mixing typography created by a caption generator over a MCU of person speaking – the same technique is used for anchoring information (font and colour may be relevant — denotation/connotation)
<b>NARRATIVE</b>	Compare to another documentary you have studied (World of War) — discuss cultural and technical codes in terms of why they are used to engage audience.

## Analysis (Section 1): Guidelines for a fully integrated answer on Narrative, Representations, Audience and Institution

	Minimum requirements	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
<p><b>NARRATIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Technical and Cultural codes*</li> <li>◆ Structure(s), eg Barthes, Propp</li> <li>◆ Devices used, eg voice-overs, point of view, font, colour.</li> <li>◆ Audience engagement, eg enigmas, teasers</li> <li>◆ Integrate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Analyses</b> narrative codes, technical and cultural, gives <b>examples</b> from text and <b>justifies</b> choice.</p> <p><b>Analyses</b> overall narrative structure with <b>some</b> understanding of why they have been used to <b>engage</b> audience.</p>	<p>Shows <b>understanding</b> of narrative codes and structure in <b>some detail justifying</b> with reference to the text. <b>Clear understanding</b> is shown by correct <b>application</b> of terms (eg equilibrium/disruption, technical terminology etc).</p> <p><b>Clear understanding</b> of devices used for audience engagement with <b>valid</b> reasons for <b>representations</b> and justification for maker's choice (<b>institution</b>).</p>	<p>A <b>fully integrated</b> answer that categorises the text in relation to other key aspects.</p> <p><b>In depth</b> reference is made to technical and cultural codes (language) and their meaning when they affect narrative <b>convincingly exemplified</b> using <b>complex, fluent</b> terminology.</p> <p><b>Detailed understanding</b> of overall narrative structure with <b>exemplification</b> of Barthesian and/or other codes</p>
<p><b>REPRESENTATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ People</li> <li>◆ Places</li> <li>◆ Ideas</li> <li>◆ Stereotypes</li> <li>◆ Ideology/discourses</li> <li>◆ Mediation</li> <li>◆ Integrates</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identifies</b> representations in text.</p> <p><b>Accurately</b> interprets representations and <b>links</b> them to <b>ideological discourses</b>.</p> <p><b>Selection</b> of representations is <b>justified</b>.</p>	<p><b>Interprets</b> in some detail.</p> <p><b>Insight</b> is shown in relation to <b>ideological discourses</b>.</p> <p>Reason for <b>selection</b> is <b>justified</b> in terms of <b>narrative, audience and/or institution</b>.</p> <p>Some reference may be made to intertextuality.</p> <p><b>Understanding</b> is shown of <b>mediation</b></p>	<p><b>Links</b> are <b>consistently made</b> between narrative and the representations used <b>appropriate</b> to genre and audience expectation.</p> <p><b>Considerable insight</b> into how representations relate to <b>ideological discourses</b>.</p> <p><b>Detailed exemplification</b> of the effect of mediation.</p> <p>Application of <b>intertextuality</b> shows wide knowledge of texts.</p>

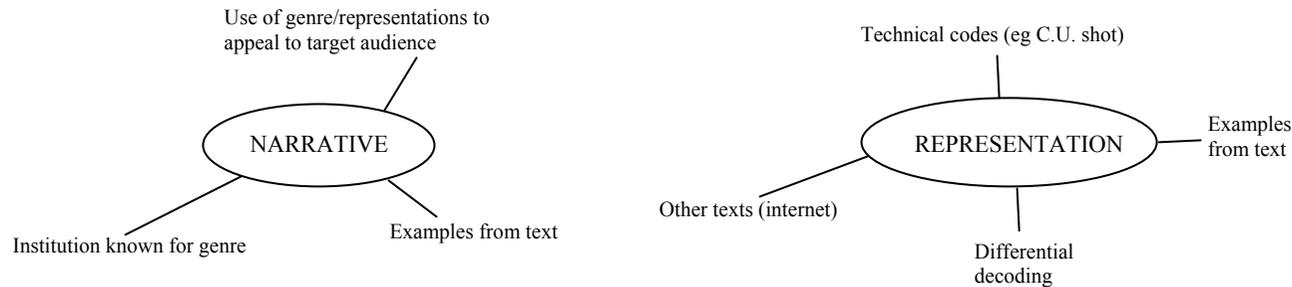
<p><b>AUDIENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Target audience</li> <li>◆ Mode of address</li> <li>◆ Preferred reading</li> <li>◆ Differential decoding</li> <li>◆ Intertextuality*</li> <li>◆ Integrate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recognises</b> target audience with <b>justification</b> of identification from text.</p> <p><b>Describes</b> mode of address <b>justifying</b> choice in terms of target audience.</p> <p>Gives <b>examples</b> of differential decoding and preferred readings.</p>	<p>Shows in some depth how the text is created to appeal to the target audience.</p> <p>Some detail and insight into mode of address, preferred readings and differential decoding.</p> <p>Clear understanding of different audience requirements and interpretation of narrative and representations, how the institution meets those needs.</p>	<p><b>Considerable insight</b> into the <b>application</b> of technical and cultural codes on representations.</p> <p><b>Detailed interpretation</b> of audience with <b>considerable insight</b> into target audience, mode of address, preferred reading and differential decoding. <b>Convincingly</b> justified by reference to the text.</p> <p><b>Valid</b> application of readership reception theory.</p>
<p><b>INSTITUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ownership/Finance</li> <li>◆ Statutory controls</li> <li>◆ Self regulatory codes of practice</li> <li>◆ Marketing controls</li> <li>◆ Distribution</li> <li>◆ Intertextualisation*</li> <li>◆ Integrate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Analyses</b> internal and external controls <b>accurately</b>.</p> <p>Gives <b>valid</b> analysis of the <b>effect</b> of these controls on the text.</p>	<p><b>Clear understanding</b> of the effects of a <b>range</b> of internal and external controls.</p> <p><b>Analysis</b> is <b>clear</b> on ownership, market controls, distribution and finance.</p> <p>How the above <b>affect</b> audience expectation, narrative and representations.</p>	<p>Analyses a <b>range</b> of internal and external controls <b>accurately</b> with <b>considerable insight</b> into their effect on the text.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of how the text is <b>constructed</b> in terms of narrative and representations to engage the audience and so meet the needs of the maker.</p> <p><b><u>The response answers the question throughout</u></b></p>

Wherever possible reference should be made to **Technology**

- ◆ Where possible analyse the technical codes in order to determine what technology has been used.
- ◆ Consider the technology used to reach audience.

## General advice on Analysis

- ◆ The single most important piece of advice is to **answer the question**. Many candidates regurgitate learned responses.
- ◆ Before answering the question it may be useful to complete a concept map identifying key aspects to be analysed, ie:



- ◆ Prepare candidates from the beginning of the Course to integrate key aspects by cross referencing.
- ◆ While answering a narrative question ask the candidate to mark in the margin or in brackets when they recognise a cross-reference eg X Reps (type of character, political bias etc), X Inst./Aud. — (Channel 4, minority viewing etc). *The information in the brackets is not needed in the candidate's answer — it is exemplification for the teacher.*

## Suggested format for answering Analysis questions

### Opening paragraph

Identify the text/s studied and the key aspects to be used for the analysis after careful breakdown of the question. Categorise the text/s in relation to these key aspects.

### Narrative

- ◆ Structures: Classic (equilibrium/disruption etc) — Barthes — Propp — Levi-Strauss order (chronological/ flashback) – investigation – multiple storylines — etc.
- ◆ Technical and cultural codes used that affect narrative — exemplify from text using appropriate language (eg cropping, soft focus-romance).
- ◆ Devices — voice-overs — point of view — format — colour — mise-en-scene etc.
- ◆ Audience engagement — enigmas — teasers — genre — treatment — stars — etc.

- ◆ The use of representations, ideology and myth in the narrative.
- ◆ The effect of institution on the narrative — bias, genre, finance etc.

## **Representations**

- ◆ Give examples of how they are conveyed by use of cultural and technical codes.
- ◆ Identify stereotypes.
- ◆ Examine discourses and whether they express particular ideologies or myths. Are technical codes used to reinforce, eg cropping, costume?
- ◆ Mediation. Consider the effect of target audience, regulatory controls, sources of funding, ownership and news value on the maker's (institution) selection of what reaches the audience.
- ◆ Do other texts reinforce the representations in this text? (intertextuality)

## **Audience**

- ◆ Identify the target audience in terms of categories, intertextual references, narrative and representations.
- ◆ Mode of address — direct/indirect, individual/collective etc?
- ◆ Preferred reading — what the maker would like you to think, the bias.
- ◆ Differential decoding — how different individuals or groups react differently to a text. Consider age, gender, ethnic background, knowledge etc.

## **Institution**

- ◆ Ownership. Consider the effects of media companies/products in terms of editorial controls, genre, finance etc.
- ◆ Who produced the text and why?
- ◆ Who financed the text and why? Does this have an effect on the text and why? eg market controls/sponsors invest to access the audience.
- ◆ How was the text distributed (cinema, internet, channel)? Did this have an effect on the audience?
- ◆ What statutory constraints affect the text, eg Acts of Parliament, certification, libel etc.
- ◆ What self-imposed controls affect the text, eg Broadcasting Complaints Commission, watershed, taste.

## Production (Section 2)

	Minimum requirements	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
◆ The answer should be written from the point of view of the creator (director, editor etc)	A pass (but not a good pass) is possible if it is written from the <b>point of view of the audience</b> .	<b>Clear</b> knowledge and understanding of production skills and procedures. The answer suggests a production that could work successfully.	<b>Very good</b> knowledge and understanding of production skills and procedures. <b>Imaginative</b> . <b>Confident</b> .
◆ Planning and Research Clearly state and justify medium, audience, content and style. Key personnel.	Appropriate choice, with <b>some justification</b> . In some cases inappropriate choices are acceptable if well justified.	<b>Obvious understanding</b> of what works well <b>appropriate to medium and audience</b> with <b>clear justification</b> .	Choices are <b>knowledgeable</b> , show some <b>insight</b> and are <b>fully</b> justified.
◆ Outline the format with justification.	Even if the <b>outline would not work</b> the answer could pass with <b>adequate justification</b> .  <b>Simple</b> outline with <b>little justification</b>	The outline is <b>effective</b> and shows understanding of <b>audience engagement</b> through <b>narrative</b> and <b>representations</b> . Some <b>clear</b> justification.	Fairly <b>complex</b> and <b>varied</b> use of techniques to engage audience. Choices are fully justified.
◆ Technical terms appropriate to medium and form.	<b>Competent</b> . Mainly <b>accurate</b> . <b>Limited</b> .	<b>Clearly</b> competent. Accurate. <b>Varied</b>	<b>Highly</b> competent. <b>Fluent</b> . <b>Creative</b> .
◆ Constraints	<b>Some mention</b> of constraints (eg funding).	Clear understanding of a <b>few</b> constraints ( eg timing, resources, taste).	Considers constraints <b>in depth</b> .
◆ Narrative	<b>Simple</b> use of codes and conventions.	<b>Varied</b> use of codes and conventions appropriate to <b>engagement</b> of target audience.	<b>Complex</b> use of codes and conventions <b>creatively combined</b> showing <b>insight</b> into target audience.
◆ Representations	Simple choices with some justification.	<b>Appropriate</b> choices clearly justified. Some understanding of the use of <b>cultural/technical</b> codes to reinforce representations.	<b>Effective</b> choices show <b>insight</b> and are <b>fully justified</b> . <b>Good</b> use of cultural/technical codes.
◆ Institution	Some mention of controls (eg ownership, finance, distribution, codes of practice, market controls etc)	<b>Clear understanding</b> of controls.	<b>Clear understanding</b> of controls dealt with in <b>some depth</b> .
◆ Key aspects	Demonstrates <b>some understanding</b> .	<b>Clear understanding</b> .	<b>In depth</b> understanding.

Not all points will be appropriate or necessary, but a good answer will address as many as possible.

## General advice on Production

- ◆ Keep productions brief, eg 10 minute short, advert, item in a magazine programme (**no feature films**).
- ◆ Write in the first person.
- ◆ Ensure understanding of what works, ie no car chases at night down a mountain. How would you justify the cost (stunt men, equipment), what about health and safety, camera position, lighting, studio dummies etc? A pass is possible with adequate justification but should be discouraged in order to gain a good pass.
- ◆ It is easier to do well (and much more interesting for the candidate), to answer a question that requires inventing a product, rather than discussing their experience in production.
- ◆ Basic understanding and application of technical terms should generate a pass. Less able candidates benefit from a structured approach e.g. a set opening sequence which could double as an advert, a bank of appropriate music/presenters/font/colour.
- ◆ Give plenty of headroom — able candidates have imagination and creativity.
- ◆ Lists in the **Introduction** and **Review** can save time, but remember to justify choices.

## Suggested format for answering Production questions

### Introduction

Categorise, eg I would make a television advert to be scheduled at 6.00pm on Channel 4 because this would reach my target audience, which is teenagers (see **Guidelines : Planning & Research**)

### Main body of answer

The outline. This is where most of the marks are allocated therefore good knowledge and application of appropriate technical terms is essential. A good answer will also show appropriate use of narrative and representations. Choices should also be fully justified. (A top grade requires creativity but a good pass is clearly attainable with sound knowledge and application) (see **Guidelines:Outline, Technical terms, Narrative, Representations, Institution, Key Aspects**)

## **Review**

The final part of the answer should look back on how the production could be realised; in other words consider constraints, eg I would justify this expense by getting sponsorship, I would ask Ewan McGregor to do the voice-over free because he is Scottish and I would appeal to his better nature as it is for a good cause. **(see Guidelines:Constraints)**

# Summary

## Unseen Analysis

Minimum	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
<p>Clear and valid application of at least two appropriate categories justified with examples from the text. Reference is made to institution and target audience.</p> <p>Identifies and interprets the language validly showing some understanding of how to read signs and codes.</p>	<p>Clear and valid application of two or more categories analysed in some depth with limited detail adequately justified.</p> <p>Clear understanding of how and why the text was created by the institution for the audience integrating with appropriate key aspects.</p> <p>Clear and valid interpretation of language shows in some detail with some insight how the overall meaning of the text is created.</p> <p>Clear understanding of how to read signs and codes.</p>	<p>Two or more categories are dealt with in depth and detail, convincingly justified by reference to the text. Full understanding on why these categories are appropriate to the needs of the institution and the audience. Integrates with other key aspects when appropriate.</p> <p>Language is interpreted fluently in detail with considerable insight into how meaning is created.</p> <p>Signs and codes are read with detailed understanding into meaning referring when appropriate to other key aspects.</p>

## Analysis (Section 1)

Minimum	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
<p>Identifies appropriate key aspects accurately with valid interpretation of their application to the text.</p> <p>Analyses text with some understanding giving appropriate examples with justification.</p>	<p>Interprets in some detail the appropriate key aspects with clear understanding of their application.</p> <p>Clear analytical understanding justified in some detail by reference to the text.</p> <p>Clear integration of relevant key aspects (including categories and language).</p>	<p>A fully integrated answer categorising the text using language fluently.</p> <p>Detailed in depth understanding, convincingly exemplified.</p> <p>Considerable insight into the application of key aspects.</p>

## Production (Section 2)

Minimum	Beyond minimum	Well beyond minimum
<p>Technical and aesthetic choices are appropriate with some justification. If choices are inappropriate they have been well justified.</p> <p>Technical terms are appropriate to medium, competent and accurate but limited and simple.</p> <p>Some understanding is shown of how to meet the needs of the target audience.</p> <p>Some understanding is shown of the key aspects. It is desirable to show some understanding of constraints and/or possible improvements/alternatives.</p>	<p>Clear understanding of production skills and procedures.</p> <p>Choices are effective and varied showing understanding of how to engage the target audience. These choices are justified in relation to key aspects.</p> <p>Technical terms are clearly competent, accurate and varied.</p> <p>Some understanding of how to make the production work taking into account constraints, controls and/or improvements.</p>	<p>Very good knowledge and understanding of production skills and procedures.</p> <p>Choices are imaginative, complex, creative and fully justified.</p> <p>Technical terms are highly competent, fluent, creative and fully justified.</p> <p>Key aspects are applied showing considerable insight into engagement of target audience and are fully justified.</p> <p>Controls, constraints and/or improvements are dealt with in depth and with insight.</p>