CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

MEDIA STUDIES **9607/21**

Paper 2 Key Media Concepts **May/June 2025**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

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GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5: Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).
GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6: Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

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English & Media subject specific general marking principles
(To be read in conjunction with the Generic Marking Principles (and requiring further guidance on how to place marks within levels))

Components using level descriptors:

- We use level descriptors as a guide to broad understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a level.
- Level descriptors are a means of general guidance and should not be interpreted as hurdle statements.
- Where indicative content notes are supplied for a question, these are *not* a prescription of required content, and must not be treated as such. Alternative correct points and unexpected answers in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the knowledge and skills demonstrated.
- While we may have legitimate expectations as to the ground most answers may occupy, we must at all times be prepared to meet candidates on their chosen ground, provided it is relevant ground (e.g. clearly related to and derived from a relevant passage/text and meeting the mark scheme requirements for the question).

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Unclear expression
	Credit-worthy point made
	Unclear expression
AN	Valid point/answer
BP	Blank page
EG	Example used
K	Knowledge
NAR	Response is mainly narrative
Q	Directly addressing the question
SEEN	Page has been seen by examiner
T	Use of appropriate terminology

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Assessment Objectives

The Assessment Objectives are applied to each question. The assessment objectives for the paper are:

- **AO1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately (60%).
- **AO2** Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence (40%).

The Level Descriptors guide examiners to an understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a band. They are a means of general guidance and must not be interpreted as hurdle statements. For the purposes of standardisation of marking, they are to be used in conjunction with the Standardisation scripts discussed during the coordination meeting and with Team Leaders, as well as the question-specific notes.

The indicative content provided is for general guidance; it is not designed as prescriptions of required content and must not be treated as such. Whilst there are legitimate expectations of the content of most answers, examiners may see responses that include ideas not covered in the indicative content. For these cases, examiners should credit valid responses fairly and not penalise candidates for including valid points outside the mark scheme

Using a banded mark scheme

Place the answer in a level first. Look for the "best fit" of the answer into a level. An answer needs to show evidence of most but not necessarily ALL of the qualities described in a level in order to be placed in that band. Then award a mark for the relative position of the answer within the level.

Higher level responses (Levels 4 & 5) will demonstrate excellent knowledge and understanding of the key concepts (AO1). They should use a wide range of terminology accurately (AO1). They should show clear understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They should support their answer with many detailed references to the text (AO2).

Middle range responses (Level 3) will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the key concepts – there may be uneven coverage or some misunderstanding (AO1). They should use some terminology, but not always accurately (AO1). They should show some understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They should support their answer with some references to the text (AO2).

Basic responses (Levels 1 & 2) will demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of the key concepts –misunderstanding might be common (AO1). They might use some terminology, but rarely accurately (AO1). They will have limited understanding of how meaning is created in the text (AO2). They rarely support their answer with references to the text (AO2).

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Section A: Media Texts

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	**Analyse how the extract from *The Man Who Fell to Earth* constructs meaning, including the specific representations of individuals, groups, events or places, through the following technical elements:** • **camera shots, angles, movement and composition** • **sound** • **mise-en-scène** • **editing.** <u>Specific notes on the sequence – likely areas of coverage:</u> NB: Chiwetel Ejiofor (Faraday) [British; Black African (Nigerian)] **Camera:** • CU – focus on this character, protagonist – serious expression, enigmatic • XCU of face, changing, alien, horror/scary • OTS watching his journey • BEV feet stomping • Movement, panning – action **Sound:** • Sound of control room, space station vibes • Voice is deep, scary, authoritative • Immigrant, refugee – connotations • Reborn – connotations • SFX • Human being • Music is dramatic	**25**	Candidates will be assessed on their ability to understand how meaning is constructed in a media text through the analysis of different technical areas. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria, and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. A positive approach to marking is encouraged. Reward alternative valid responses. **Clip details:** Extract: *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (episode 1, 'Hallo Spaceboy', 2022, dir Kurtzman)

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	**Mise-en-scene:** • Massive auditorium full of people, and cameras (flashes) • CGI space, genre Sci-Fi • Black male bodies (the other) • TED talk, screens, importance, messages on screen • Prop, silver metallic box – curious, technology • He is often in the dark, shadows, scared, unknown, scary • City landscape, modern **Editing:** • Black screen opening, with audio. **Meaning:** The opening of *The Man Who Fell to Earth* introduces our main character, Faraday. Over a black screen we hear studio talk back in preparation for his address to an audience – it sounds like control room chatter from NASA. In the sequence we hear Newton's speech describing being an immigrant and stepping into a new skin – metaphors, his audience assumes, but we see the literal meaning – intercut flashbacks of his arrival on Earth from an alien planet. It sets up our expectations of this character as a 'tech god' – a Steve Jobs or Elon Musk figure. The blackness of the actor/character adds another dimension of alienation to this figure in the modern world.		

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Marking criteria for Section A Question 1				
AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Sophisticated understanding of and insightful reference to the key concepts of language and representation. 5 marks	Insightful understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 5 marks	A wide range of media terminology is used precisely and accurately, and with sophistication, to make subtle points. 5 marks	Sophisticated and insightful analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 5 marks	Insightful and fully appropriate selection of examples fully supports expression. 5 marks
Thorough understanding of and effective reference to the key concepts of language and representation. 4 marks	Effective understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 4 marks	A range of media terminology is used accurately, and helps to make effective points. 4 marks	Thorough and effective analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 4 marks	Effective and appropriate selection of examples fully supports expression. 4 marks
Clear understanding of and appropriate reference to the key concepts of language and representation. 3 marks	Clear understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 3 marks	Media terminology is used appropriately, to make clear points. 3 marks	Clear analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 3 marks	Clear and appropriate selection of examples supports expression. 3 marks

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Limited understanding of but generally appropriate reference to the key concepts of language and representation. 2 marks	Limited understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 2 marks	Limited use of media terminology is mainly used accurately, to make simple or obvious points. 2 marks	Limited analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate selection of examples supports expression. 2 marks
Basic understanding of and minimal reference to the key concepts of language and representation. 1 mark	Basic understanding of the social significances explored in the extract. 1 mark	Basic use of media terminology, with frequent errors which impede communication. 1 mark	Basic analysis of the ways technical aspects are used to construct meaning in the extract. 1 mark	Basic and minimal selection of examples may lack relevance in parts. 1 mark
No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks

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Section B: Media Contexts

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2	**EITHER** **Explain why synergies between different media products are beneficial to media producers.** <u>Indicative content</u> With detailed reference to at least one case study, candidates *may* address: • Reach, impact, effectiveness – Save money, make profit • Collaboration, shared resources • Distribution increases reach and accessibility • Free marketing – cross media promotion • Cohesive brand message – integrated marketing • Synergies between games, films and other content reinforcing brand presence and value • An exploration of the possible benefits to media producers – financial benefit is an obvious one to discuss, but more oblique benefits, such as increase in audience and competitive advantage may be others • Leveraging the affordances of different media platforms to augment the message • Cross-platform storytelling (MCU) – more immersive and engaging • The concept of synergy as 'the combined power of a group of things working together which is greater than the sum of their power taken separately' • The ways in which different media products interact with each other in different ways, perhaps through fully planned and strategic campaigns, or through the identification of opportunities post hoc • Convergence of technology • Combinations of old and new media • Data integration – more informative (audience demographics) • Could include social media influencers, podcasters, interviews.	**25**	Candidates should be given credit for their knowledge and understanding, illustrated through case study material, relevant to the question. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria individually and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. The indicative content demonstrates how candidates might approach the question. It is a description of possible content only. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3	**OR** **Analyse the ways in which local and national audiences are targeted differently.** <u>Indicative content</u> With detailed reference to at least one case study, candidates *may* address: • Language, Subtitling • Characters, Locations – Psychographic – interests, values, attitudes, lifestyles – connection with audience • Regional audiences and their needs; Platform (Netflix); Local and national news – TV, radio and press; BBC News. The ways in which some national radio stations create local sub-stations, e.g. Heart Radio with Heart Kent etc. • Targeted ads; Demographics, content aligning with preferences. Length; • Different modes of address used to target local or national audiences; Messaging, visuals, and tone. • Geo targeting, locking; Geo-location-targeted advertising via social media; Social media platforms • Mobile optimisation, apps • Influencers • Agile response to feedback • Cultural imperialism. • Whether or not the notion of a 'national audience' is even legitimate in such an atomised audience context.	**25**	Candidates should be given credit for their knowledge and understanding, illustrated through case study material, relevant to the question. Marks are awarded for exploration of the following areas of the AOs: • Media concepts (AO1) [5 marks] • Contexts and debates (AO1) [5 marks] • Use of terminology (AO1) [5 marks] • Analysis of how meaning is created (AO2) [5 marks] • Use of examples (AO2) [5 marks] Candidates' work should be judged on each of these criteria individually and marks awarded according to the level attained. It should be noted that it is possible for a candidate to achieve a different level for each assessment criterion. The indicative content demonstrates how candidates might approach the question. It is a description of possible content only. It is not prescriptive, nor is it exclusive; examiners must be careful to reward original but well-focused answers.

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Marking criteria for Section B Question 2 and Question 3				
AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Sophisticated understanding of and insightful reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 5 marks	Insightful understanding of the wider issues, explored with sophistication in the response. Factual knowledge of contexts and debates is relevant, detailed and accurate, and sophisticatedly linked to the question. 5 marks	A wide range of media terminology is used precisely and accurately, and with sophistication, to make subtle points. 5 marks	Sophisticated and insightful analysis of texts from multiple case studies is used to explore the chosen area in depth. Relevant theories are sophisticatedly used to explore the question. 5 marks	Insightful and fully appropriate selection of examples from a wide range of texts. 5 marks
Thorough understanding of and effective reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 4 marks	Effective understanding of the wider issues explored. Factual knowledge of contexts and debates is relevant, and effectively linked to the question. 4 marks	A range of media terminology is used accurately,and helps to make effective points. 4 marks	Thorough and effective analysis of texts from multiple case studies is used explore the chosen area. Relevant theories are used effectively in response to the question. 4 marks	Effective and appropriate selection of examples from a range of texts fully. 4 marks

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
Clear understanding of and appropriate reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 3 marks	Clear understanding of the wider issues explored. Some factual knowledge of contexts and debates, appropriately linked to the question. 3 marks	Media terminology is used appropriately, to make clear points. 3 marks	Clear analysis of texts from one or more case study is used to respond appropriately. Occasional references to relevant theories, not always accurately used or understood. 3 marks	Clear and appropriate selection of examples from a range of texts. 3 marks
Limited understanding of but generally appropriate reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 2 marks	Limited understanding of the wider issues explored. Limited relevant knowledge of contexts and debates. 2 marks	Limited use of media terminology is mainly used accurately, to make simple or obvious points. 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate analysis of texts, normally from only one case study Media theory may be considered, but not securely. 2 marks	Limited but generally appropriate selection of examples, normally from only one case study. 2 marks
Basic understanding of and minimal reference to the key concepts of audience and industry. 1 mark	Basic understanding of the wider issues explored. Minimal knowledge of the relevant contexts and debates. 1 mark	Basic use of media terminology, with frequent errors which impede communication. 1 mark	Basic analysis, from case studies which may not be appropriate to the question. Minimal references to even basic media theory. 1 mark	Basic and minimal selection of examples, which may lack relevance in parts. 1 mark

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AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately. **15 marks**			**AO2**: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, to explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence. **10 marks**	
Media Concepts **5 marks**	**Contexts & Critical Debates** **5 marks**	**Use of Terminology** **5 marks**	**Analysis of how meaning is created, including use of theory** **5 marks**	**Use of Examples** **5 marks**
No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks	No creditable content. 0 marks

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