



National  
Qualifications  
2025

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**2025 Media**

**Analysis of Media Content**

**Higher**

**Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions**

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## General marking principles for Higher Media: Analysis of media content

*Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.*

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) Candidates have the option to refer to one or more than one media text in their responses to the questions in section 1.
- (d) Key aspects 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 to use in their answer, 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 – medium/form specific structures, codes, conventions

Representation – selection and portrayal, stereotypes, non-stereotypes, cultural assumptions, ideological discourses.

### **Context-based key aspect analysis**

Audience – target audience, preferred reading, differential decoding, consumption

Institution – internal factors, external factors

Society – time, place (for example facts, ideas, history, events, politics, economics, technology or any other factors relevant to the society in which particular examples of media content were made and/or set).

- (e) Award marks only where points relate to the question asked.
- (f) For **analysis** questions candidates must identify relevant parts of a subject, the relationship between them and their relationship with the whole. They may need to draw out and relate implications. Candidates respond to a question stem and two parts, (a) and (b), which they must address in their response.

Candidates must identify content and/or context-based media analysis concepts as appropriate to parts (a) and (b), 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.

For each of parts (a) and (b), award up to a maximum of 10 marks as follows. 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, award the lowest mark from the range
- where the response almost matches the band above, award the highest mark from the range
- where the response fully meets all the standards described in the top band descriptor, award the highest mark from the range.

## Marking Instructions for each question

1(a) analyse audience targeting and/or responses in media content you have studied.

Candidates are expected to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of audience targeting and/or potential responses, as appropriate to the referenced content
- give specific and valid exemplification of the referenced audience factor(s) in relation to at least one example of media content
- make points which analyse the relationship between audience and the content

10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1	0
<p>Candidates decode at least two different, relevant audience factors in detail.</p> <p>Candidates make developed comment(s) on the relationship between audience factor(s) and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each audience factor with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode at least one relevant audience factor in detail. They may deal with one factor in detail, or more than one in some detail.</p> <p>Candidates make comment(s) on the relationship between audience factor(s) and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each audience factor with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode at least one relevant audience factor in some detail. They may deal with one factor in some detail, or more than one in lesser detail.</p> <p>Candidates make a link between audience factor(s) and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify each audience factor with relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates explain at least one possible audience factor.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify the explanation with one or more relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates identify at least one possible audience factor.</p> <p>Candidates give one or more relevant examples from media content.</p>	<p>Candidates give no information about audience relevant to the question.</p>

**1(b) analyse language and/or categories and/or narrative in relation to audience in media content you have studied**

Candidates are expected to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts from language and/or categories and/or narrative
- give specific and valid exemplification of the chosen key aspect(s) from at least one example of media content
- make points which analyse the chosen key aspect(s) in relation to audience

Candidates can focus on one key aspect from language, categories or narrative, or select from across these.

If candidates choose language, relevant concepts include: technical codes, cultural codes and anchorage.

If candidates choose categories, relevant concepts include: genre, purpose, tone and style.

If candidates choose narrative, relevant concepts include: structures, codes and conventions.

10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1	0
<p>Candidates decode language and/or categories and/or narrative in detail using at least two relevant concepts from within or across these key aspects.</p> <p>Candidates make developed comment(s) on the relationship between the selected key aspect(s) and audience factor(s).</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each concept with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode language and/or categories and/or narrative in detail using at least one relevant concept from within or across these key aspects. They may use one concept in detail, or more than one in some detail.</p> <p>Candidates make comment(s) on the relationship between the selected key aspect(s) and audience factor(s).</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each concept with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode language and/or categories and/or narrative in some detail using at least one relevant concept from within or across these key aspects. They may use one concept in some detail, or more than one in lesser detail.</p> <p>Candidates make a link to audience factor(s).</p> <p>Candidates exemplify each concept with relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates explain language and/or categories and/or narrative in terms of a relevant concept from within or across these key aspects.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Candidates make a link between at least one key aspect and audience factor(s).</p> <p>Candidates exemplify the explanation or link with one or more relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates identify a relevant concept from language and/or categories and/or narrative.</p> <p>Candidates give one or more relevant examples from media content.</p>	<p>There is no information relevant to the question.</p>

**2(a) analyse representations in media content you have studied.**

**Candidates are expected to:**

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant representations from: selection and portrayal, stereotypes, non-stereotypes, cultural assumptions, ideological discourses
- give specific and valid exemplification of the referenced representations from at least one example of media content
- make points which analyse the use of representations in the referenced media content

10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1	0
<p>Candidates decode representation in detail using at least two relevant concepts.</p> <p>Candidates make developed comment(s) on the relationship between the use of representation and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each concept with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode representation in detail using at least one relevant concept. They may use one concept in detail, or more than one in some detail.</p> <p>Candidates make comment(s) on the relationship between the use of representation and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each concept with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode representation in some detail using at least one relevant concept. They may use one concept in some detail, or more than one in lesser detail.</p> <p>Candidates make a link between the use of representation and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify each concept with relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates explain how at least one representation has been used.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Candidates make a link between the use of representation and the referenced content.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify the explanation or link with one or more relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates identify a relevant use of representation.</p> <p>Candidates give one or more relevant examples from media content.</p>	<p>Candidates give no information relevant to the question.</p>

**2(b) analyse how society factors and/or institutional factors have influenced these representations.**

**Candidates are expected to:**

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of appropriate society and/or institutional factor(s)
- give specific and valid exemplification of the referenced society and/or institutional factors from at least one example of media content
- make points which analyse the relationship between the society and/or institutional factors and representation(s)

Candidates can focus on factors from just society or institutional contexts, or from both.

If candidates choose society, relevant concepts include: contexts and/or ideas relevant to the time and/or place of production and/or setting of the referenced content.

If candidates choose institutions, relevant concepts include: internal controls and/or constraints and/or external controls and/or constraints as appropriate to the referenced content.

10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1	0
<p>Candidates decode society and/or institutions in detail using at least two relevant factors.</p> <p>Candidates make developed comment(s) on the relationship between the society and/or institutional factor(s) and the use of representation.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each society and/or institutional factor(s) with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode society and/or institutions in detail using at least one relevant factor. They may use one factor in detail, or more than one in some detail.</p> <p>Candidates make comment(s) on the relationship between the society and/or institutional factor(s) and the use of representation.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify and discuss each society and/or institutional factor(s) with developed references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates decode society and/or institutions in some detail using one relevant factor. They may use one factor in some detail, or more than one factor in lesser detail.</p> <p>Candidates make a link between the society and/or institutional factor(s) and the use of representation.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify each factor with relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates explain at least one society and/or institutional factor.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Candidates make a link between the society and/or institutional factor and the use of representation.</p> <p>Candidates exemplify the explanation or link with one or more relevant references to media content.</p>	<p>Candidates identify at least one society or institutional factor.</p> <p>Candidates give one or more relevant examples from media content.</p>	<p>Candidates give no information relevant to the question.</p>

3. Analyse in detail how relevant key aspects of media literacy have been used in similar and/or different ways in your chosen pair of media texts. You must make reference to both texts.

Candidates are expected to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of appropriate key aspects of media literacy
- give specific and valid exemplification to support analysis of the referenced key aspects from the chosen pair of texts
- make points which analyse the similarities and/or differences between the texts

10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1	0
<p>Candidates make at least five developed points of analysis.</p> <p>Candidates make developed comment on the similarities and/or differences between the texts.</p> <p>Candidates analyse at least two key aspects.</p>	<p>Candidates make at least three developed points of analysis or they may make more points of analysis in some detail.</p> <p>Candidates comment on the similarities and/or differences between the texts.</p> <p>Candidates analyse at least two key aspects.</p>	<p>Candidates make at least two developed points of analysis or they may make more points of analysis in lesser detail.</p> <p>Candidates make some links between the texts.</p> <p>If candidates analyse only one key aspect, award a <b>maximum of 6 marks.</b></p>	<p>Candidates give an explanation of how key aspects have been used in the media text(s).</p> <p>Candidates exemplify the explanation with some relevant references to the text(s).</p> <p>If candidates make no link between the texts, or if they only analyse one text, award a <b>maximum of 4 marks.</b></p>	<p>Candidates identify how key aspects have been used in the media text(s).</p> <p>Candidates make some relevant references to the text(s).</p>	<p>Candidates give no information about how key aspects have been used in the media texts.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]