

3.1 Overview of the assessment in GCSE Media Studies (J526)

For GCSE in Media Studies candidates must take three of the following four units.

GCSE Media Studies (J526)

Unit B321: *The Individual Media Studies Portfolio*

30% of the total GCSE
Controlled assessment
120 marks
25–30 hours

Candidates produce an individual portfolio containing a comparative analytical assignment based on at least two media texts, a production exercise and a planning and evaluative commentary.
This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Either Unit B322: *Textual Analysis and Media Studies Topic (Moving Image)*

40% of the total GCSE
1 hour 45 minutes written paper
80 marks

This examination has two sections.
Section A: candidates answer three questions to examine Genre, Media Language and Representation.
Section B: candidates answer one question on TV and/or Radio Comedy relating to Institution and Audience.
This unit is externally assessed.

Or Unit B323: *Textual Analysis and Media Studies Topic (Print)*

40% of the total GCSE
1 hour 45 minutes written paper
80 marks

This examination has two sections.
Section A: candidates answer three questions to examine Genre, Media Language and Representation.
Section B: candidates answer one question on TV and/or Radio Comedy relating to Institution and Audience.
This unit is externally assessed.

Unit B324: *Production Portfolio in Media Studies*

30% of the total GCSE marks
Controlled assessment
120 marks
25 – 30 hours

Candidates produce a major practical production portfolio in response to briefs set by OCR, together with an evaluation.
This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

3.2 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed.
AO2	Analyse and respond to media texts/topics using media key concepts and appropriate terminology.
AO3	Demonstrate research, planning and presentational skills.
AO4	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills.

3.2.1 AO weightings - GCSE

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid:

Unit	% of GCSE				Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
Unit B321: <i>The Individual Media Studies Portfolio</i>	6	6	9	9	30%
Unit B322: <i>Textual Analysis and Media Studies Topic (Moving Image)</i> or Unit B323: <i>Textual Analysis and Media Studies Topic (Print)</i>	16	24	0	0	40%
Unit B324: <i>Production Portfolio in Media Studies</i>	0	0	12	18	30%
Total	22%	30%	21%	27%	100%

3.3 Grading and awarding grades

GCSE results are awarded on the scale A* to G. Units are awarded a* to g. Grades are indicated on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G or g) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

Most GCSEs are utilised schemes. When working out candidates' overall grades OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries may have been set, and between different units. OCR uses a Uniform Mark Scale to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the candidate's raw mark on that unit. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, e.g. 40/50.

The specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

(GCSE) Unit Weighting	Maximum Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade								
		a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
30%	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
40%	160	144	128	112	96	80	64	48	32	0

A candidate's uniform marks for each unit are aggregated and grades for the specification are generated on the following scale:

Qualification	Max Uniform Mark	Qualification Grade								
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
GCSE	400	360	320	280	240	200	160	120	80	0

The written papers will have a total weighting of 40% and controlled assessment a weighting of 60%.

A candidate's uniform mark for each paper will be combined with the uniform marks for the controlled assessments to give a total uniform mark for the specification. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

3.4 Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

3.4.1 Grade F

Candidates recall and communicate limited knowledge and understanding of media products and concepts.

They show a limited understanding of media forms and conventions, and can describe some aspects of media representation using some media language and conventions.

They show a limited awareness of connections between the representations offered by media texts and their intended audience.

They use minimal research and planning to inform their production work. They use few presentational forms with little sense of identifying and targeting audiences.

They attempt to use practical processes, techniques and technologies, including ICT, to create a media product. They provide a simple review of the production.

3.4.2 Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of media products and concepts, and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed.

They identify the relationship between representations offered by media texts and the appeal of these texts to the audiences that they address. They demonstrate the ability to respond logically, with accurate use of terminology, supporting ideas and arguments with evidence.

They research and plan their production work. They use a selection of presentational skills well, showing a sense of identifying and targeting audiences, and indicating how this has informed the production process.

They construct their product(s) using appropriate production skills. They handle technology, including ICT, and use some appropriate techniques and conventions of their chosen medium and genre. They evaluate their product against straightforward production criteria.

3.4.3 Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of media products and concepts, and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed.

They use analytical techniques, underpinning concepts and a wide-ranging critical vocabulary to evaluate and compare media representations. They demonstrate an ability to respond in a logical and structured way, with precise and accurate use of terminology, supporting ideas and arguments with evidence.

They research and plan their production work effectively. They draw on relevant products, concepts and contexts. They use a range of presentational skills effectively, showing understanding of how audiences are identified and how production is tailored to audience needs and expectations.

They construct their product(s) using a broad range of production skills appropriately and effectively. They confidently handle technology, including ICT, and use the techniques and conventions of the chosen medium and genre creatively.

They evaluate their product(s), making critical connections between the experience of carrying out the production and the key concepts.

4.3.4 Marking criteria for controlled assessment tasks

Marking criteria for controlled assessment unit B321

The mark schemes below are generic and teachers are advised to adopt the 'best fit' approach. If the candidate has covered all the criteria effectively they should be awarded a mark towards the top of the level; if there are certain omissions or weaknesses, towards the bottom end.

This unit is marked and internally standardised by the centre and marks are submitted to OCR by a specified date. Teachers are asked to support marks with written comments under these categories on the controlled assessment cover sheet. A sample is then selected for external moderation. The unit is marked out of a total of 120 marks.

Marking criteria for assignment

This assignment is marked out of 60.

Level 4 (46–60 marks)

Candidates will demonstrate:

- detailed and thorough knowledge and understanding of the texts studied
- thoughtful and insightful analysis and interpretation of the texts
- very good understanding of how texts represent social and cultural messages and values, including proficient identification and interpretation of those messages and values
- very good understanding of how texts use media language and areas of representation
- very good knowledge and understanding of the codes and conventions according to generic categorisations of media texts
- accurate use of technical terms and medium-specific terminology, as appropriate
- very good understanding of the effects of techniques on texts and audiences
- confident comparison of media texts, as appropriate
- appropriate use of some examples to support points made
- personal insights and engagement with objects of study and concepts.

Level 3 (31–45 marks)

Candidates will demonstrate:

- good knowledge and understanding of the texts studied
- sound analysis and interpretation of the texts
- good understanding of how texts represent social and cultural messages and values, including competent identification and interpretation of those messages and values
- good understanding of how texts use media language and areas of representation
- good knowledge and understanding of the codes and conventions according to generic categorisations of media texts
- mostly accurate use of technical terms and medium-specific terminology, as appropriate
- good understanding of the effects of techniques on texts and audiences
- comparison of media texts, as appropriate
- appropriate use of some examples to support points made
- some personal insights and engagement with objects of study and concepts.

Level 2 (16–30 marks)

Candidates will demonstrate:

- some knowledge and understanding of the texts studied
- some analysis and interpretation of the texts
- some understanding of how texts represent social and cultural messages and values, including clear identification of those messages and values
- some understanding of how texts use media language and areas of representation
- some knowledge and understanding of the codes and conventions according to generic categorisations of media texts
- some accurate use of technical terms and medium-specific terminology, as appropriate
- some understanding of the effects of techniques on texts and audiences
- appropriate use of some examples to support points made.

Level 1 (1–15 marks)

Candidates will demonstrate:

- basic knowledge and understanding of the texts studied
- description, rather than analysis and interpretation of the texts
- basic understanding of how texts represent social and cultural messages and values, including basic identification of those messages and values
- basic understanding of how texts use media language and areas of representation
- basic knowledge and understanding of codes and conventions used according to generic categorisations of media texts
- minimal use of technical terms and medium-specific terminology, as appropriate
- basic understanding of the effects of techniques on texts and audiences
- minimal reference to appropriate examples to support points made.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Marking Criteria for Production Exercise

This assignment is marked out of 40.

Level 4 (31–40 marks)

An excellent response to the task that demonstrates:

- excellent organisation and presentational skills in the chosen medium
- excellent understanding of the media language that has been used to construct representation
- excellent understanding of the generic codes and conventions that have been used to construct representation
- excellent sense of creativity and stimulation employed in targeting a specific audience.

Level 3 (21–30 marks)

A proficient response to the task that demonstrates:

- proficient organisation and presentational skills in the chosen medium
- proficient understanding of the media language that has been used to construct representation
- proficient understanding of the generic codes and conventions that have been used to construct representation
- a proficient sense of how the production is targeted at a specific audience.

Level 2 (11–20 marks)

A basic response to the task that demonstrates:

- basic presentational skills in the chosen medium
- basic understanding of the media language that has been used to construct representation
- basic understanding of the generic codes and conventions that have been used to construct representation
- a basic sense that the production is targeted at an audience.

Level 1 (1–10 marks)

A minimal response to the task that demonstrates:

- minimal evidence of presentational skills in the chosen medium
- minimal understanding of the media language that has been used to construct representation
- minimal understanding of the generic codes and conventions that have been used to construct representation
- minimal indication that there is a target audience.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Marking Criteria for Planning and Evaluative Commentary

This assignment is marked out of 20.

Level 4 (16–20 marks)

- There is excellent research into similar media texts.
- There is excellent planning, with clear evidence of organised use of time.
- There is excellent reference to the ways the production is aimed at a target audience.
- There is an excellent understanding of the ways in which media language has been used to construct representation.
- There is an excellent understanding of the ways in which generic codes and conventions have been used to construct representation.
- The evaluation is excellent, with a clear sense of reflection on the work.
- There is an accurate command of medium-specific terminology.

Level 3 (11–15 marks)

- There is proficient research into similar media texts.
- There is proficient planning, with evidence of organised use of time.
- There is proficient reference to the ways the production is aimed at a target audience.
- There is proficient understanding of the ways in which media language has been used to construct representation.
- There is proficient understanding of the ways in which generic codes and conventions have been used to construct representation.
- The evaluation is proficient, with a sound sense of reflection on the work.
- There is a proficient grasp of medium-specific terminology.

Level 2 (6–10 marks)

- There is basic evidence of research.
- There is basic evidence of planning.
- There is basic reference to a target audience.
- There is basic understanding of the ways in which media language has been used to construct representation.
- There is basic understanding of the ways in which generic codes and conventions have been used to construct representation.
- The evaluation of the finished media text is mainly descriptive, but there may be basic reflection on the work.
- There is a basic grasp of medium-specific terminology.

Level 1 (1–5 marks)

- There is minimal evidence of research.
- There is minimal evidence of planning.
- There is minimal reference to a target audience.
- There is minimal understanding of the ways in which media language has been used to construct representation.
- There is minimal understanding of the ways in which generic codes and conventions have been used to construct representation.
- There is minimal evaluation of the finished media text.
- There is minimal use of medium-specific terminology.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Marking criteria for controlled assessment unit B324

The mark schemes below are generic and teachers are advised to adopt the 'best fit' approach. If the candidate has covered all the criteria effectively they should be awarded a mark towards the top of the level; if there are certain omissions or weaknesses, towards the bottom end.

It is possible for a candidate to be placed in different levels for each of the three categories and to receive different marks from other members of the same group responsible for the production, according to his/her contribution. Centres are asked to support marks with brief written comments on the controlled assessment cover sheet. This unit is marked and internally standardised by the centre, a sample is then selected for external moderation. Centres will assess candidates on an individual basis for their contribution to the production. Further evidence of the individual's contribution to the production will be made available to the moderator in the research and planning material provided in the individual Production Log and in the Appendix, and in the individual Evaluation. This unit is marked out of a total of 120 marks.

Marking criteria for production

Print

Level 4 (46–60 marks)

There is evidence of excellence in the creative use of most of the following technical skills:

- Framing a shot, including and excluding elements as appropriate.
- Using a variety of shot distances as appropriate.
- Shooting material appropriate to the task set.
- Selecting mise en scène, including colour, figure, lighting, objects and setting.
- Manipulating photographs as appropriate to the context for presentation, including cropping and resizing.
- Accurately using language and register.
- Appropriately integrating illustration and text.
- Showing understanding of conventions of layout and page design.
- Showing awareness of the need for variety in fonts and text size.
- Using ICT appropriately for the task set.

Level 3 (31–45 marks)

There is evidence of proficiency in the creative use of many of the following technical skills:

- Framing a shot, including and excluding elements as appropriate.
- Using a variety of shot distances as appropriate.
- Shooting material appropriate to the task set.
- Selecting mise en scène, including colour, figure, lighting, objects and setting.
- Manipulating photographs as appropriate to the context for presentation, including cropping and resizing.
- Accurately using language and register.
- Appropriately integrating illustration and text.
- Showing understanding of conventions of layout and page design.
- Showing awareness of the need for variety in fonts and text size.
- Using ICT appropriately for the task set.

Level 2 (16–30 marks)

There is evidence of a basic level of ability in the creative use of some of the following technical skills:

- Framing a shot, including and excluding elements as appropriate.
- Using a variety of shot distances as appropriate.
- Shooting material appropriate to the task set.
- Selecting mise en scène, including colour, figure, lighting, objects and setting.
- Manipulating photographs as appropriate to the context for presentation, including cropping and resizing.
- Accurately using language and register.
- Appropriately integrating illustration and text.
- Showing understanding of conventions of layout and page design.
- Showing awareness of the need for variety in fonts and text size.
- Using ICT appropriately for the task set.

Level 1 (1–15 marks)

The work is possibly incomplete. There is minimal evidence in the work of the creative use of any relevant technical skills such as:

- Framing a shot, including and excluding elements as appropriate.
- Using a variety of shot distances as appropriate.
- Shooting material appropriate to the task set.
- Selecting mise en scène including colour, figure, lighting, objects and setting.
- Manipulating photographs as appropriate to the context for presentation, including cropping and resizing.
- Accurately using language and register.
- Appropriately integrating illustration and text.
- Showing understanding of conventions of layout and page design.
- Showing awareness of the need for variety in fonts and text size.
- Using ICT appropriately for the task set.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Marking criteria for research and planning

The Production Log and Production Portfolio will provide evidence of the candidate's work towards research and planning. Where the candidate has worked in a group, they will demonstrate the contribution of the **individual** candidate to the production. Teacher observations of the candidate's work will also contribute to the mark; teachers are requested to differentiate the contributions of individuals within the group and to justify individual marks by recording their observations on the controlled assessment cover sheet. As part of the moderation sample, the moderator will request the Production Portfolio, including the Production Log.

Level 4 (24–30 marks)

- There is excellent research into similar products and a potential target audience.
- There is excellent organisation of actors, locations, costumes or props.
- There is excellent work on shotlists, layouts, drafting, scripting or storyboarding.
- Time management is excellent.

Level 3 (16–23 marks)

- There is proficient research into similar products and a potential target audience.
- There is proficient organisation of actors, locations, costumes or props.
- There is proficient work on shotlists, layouts, drafting, scripting or storyboarding.
- Time management is good.

Level 2 (8–15 marks)

- There is basic research into similar products and a potential target audience.
- There is basic organisation of actors, locations, costumes or props.
- There is basic work on shotlists, layouts, drafting, scripting or storyboarding.
- Time management may not be good.

Level 1 (1–7 marks)

- There is minimal research into similar products and a potential target audience.
- There is minimal organisation of actors, locations, costumes or props.
- There is minimal work on shotlists, layouts, drafting, scripting or storyboarding.
- Time management may be very poor.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Marking criteria for the evaluation

Candidates will produce an **individual** evaluation of their production under supervised conditions. AO4 is the focus of assessment for the evaluation: candidates' ability to evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills.

Level 4 (24–30 marks)

- There is a detailed evaluation of the monitoring of decisions and revisions.
- There is a detailed discussion of how the brief related to research into similar media texts and target audiences.
- There is excellent understanding of the forms and conventions used in the production.
- There is excellent understanding of the significance of audience feedback.
- There is excellent ability to communicate.
- There is a thorough evaluation of the success of the finished media text in meeting the original brief.
- There is an accurate command of appropriate medium-specific terminology.

Level 3 (16–23 marks)

- There is proficient reference to the monitoring of technical decisions and revisions made.
- There is proficient discussion of how the brief related to research into similar media texts and target audiences.
- There is proficient understanding of the forms and conventions used in the production.
- There is proficient understanding of the significance of audience feedback.
- There is proficient ability to communicate.
- There is a proficient evaluation of the degree to which the finished media text has met the original brief.
- There is a proficient grasp of medium-specific terminology.

Level 2 (8–15 marks)

- There is some reference to planning, to research and to the monitoring of decisions and revisions.
- There is basic understanding of the forms and conventions used in the production.
- There is basic understanding of the significance of audience feedback.
- There is basic ability to communicate.
- The evaluation is mainly descriptive, but there is some evidence of evaluation or reflection on the work.
- There is a basic grasp of appropriate medium-specific terminology.