



# **Media Studies**

**Transition Booklet**

**Year 11 to Year 12**

# **Welcome to Media Studies A Level**

**AQA specification 7572**

**2020-2022**

## **Media Studies A Level 2020-2022**

**Exam Board**

**AQA, specification 7572**

A-level Media Studies engages students in the in depth study of media products in relation to the four areas of the theoretical framework:

- media language
- media representation
- media industries
- media audiences.

During the course you will study a range of nine different Close Study Products, which you will be examined on these in your final two exams, these cover:

- television
- film
- radio
- newspapers
- magazines
- advertising and marketing
- online, social and participatory media
- video games
- music video

<b>Course Content:</b>	<b>Course content:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
Year 12 / 13	<p><b>Media One</b></p> <p>A range of questions relating to an unseen source and Close Study Products.</p> <p>Two essay questions (20 marks), one of which is an extended response question.</p> <p><b>Section A will focus on Media Language and Media Representations.</b>  Questions in this section will test the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● advertising and marketing</li> <li>● music video.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B will focus on Media Industries and Media Audiences.</b>  Questions in this section can test any two of the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● radio</li> <li>● newspapers</li> <li>● film (industries only).</li> </ul> <p><b>Media Two</b></p> <p>A range of questions will focus on the in-depth media forms of television, magazines and online, social and participatory media/video games</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One medium length unseen analysis question.</li> <li>● Three essay questions (25 marks), one of which is an extended response question and one of which is a synoptic question</li> </ul>	<p><b>Media One</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Written exam: 2 hours</li> <li>● 84 marks</li> <li>● 35% of A-level</li> </ul> <p><b>Media Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Written exam: 2 hours</li> <li>● 84 marks</li> <li>● 35% of A-level</li> </ul>

Year 12 / 13 Non Examination Assessment	Tasks:	Assessment
<p>Work on the NEA will typically start in the summer term of Year 12.</p> <p>For these tasks you will be expected to prepare, plan and produce your own original media products .</p>	<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>Application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework.</p> <p>Ability to create media products.</p> <p><b>Tasks</b></p> <p>Students produce:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a Statement of Intent of 500 words</li> <li>2. an individual cross-media production for an intended audience, applying your knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media studies</li> </ol>	<p>Choose one of six annually changing briefs, set by AQA</p> <p>60 marks</p> <p>30% of A-level</p> <p>Assessed by teachers</p> <p>Moderated by AQA</p>

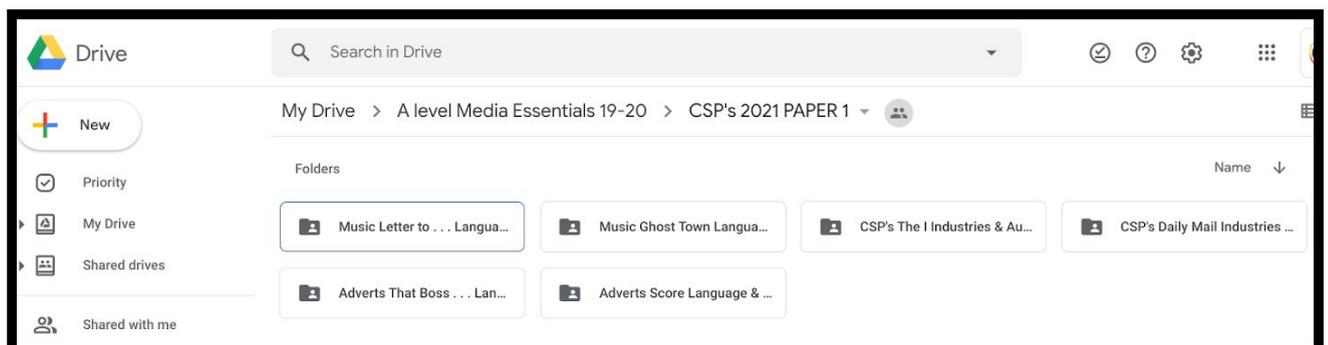
## Expectations:

The first and most important thing you need for studying Media Studies A Level is an enthusiasm for different types of media! If you enjoy watching TV and films, being online and like the idea of making your own films or magazines you will find the course challenging, interesting and rewarding. Media Studies A level will develop your ability to think critically about the world, it will help you gain a greater insight into how media texts are constructed and, crucially, it will allow you to be aware of bias within the media.

Media Studies A level is a qualification that will enable you to have an even better understanding of the world you live in and to succeed at it we recommend that you do a minimum of 5 hours work outside the classroom each week - the more you put in, the more you will get out at the end.

We adhere to our school expectations, and in sixth-form one of the most important expectations is that you keep up to date with work and meet all deadlines. Inevitably, there will be times when work in different subject areas builds up and if you are struggling with deadlines or tasks the best option is to talk to your class teacher, part of our job is to support you and help you manage your workload.

A key part of succeeding is to be well organised. Most students will use chromebooks and it is vital that you get in the habit of labelling your own documents, and ones your teacher sends out, in clear folders marked for each element of your course:



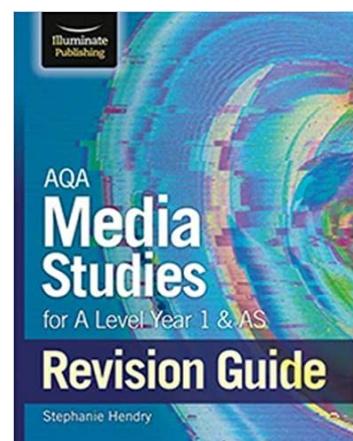
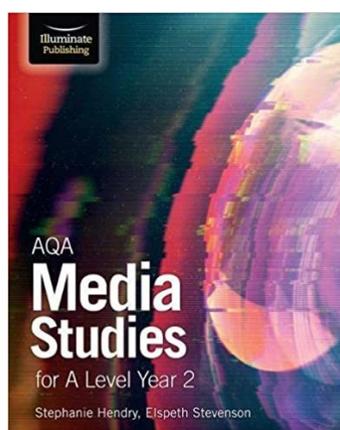
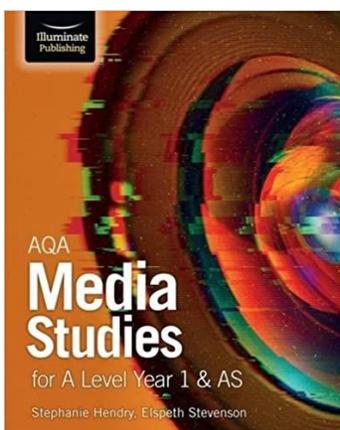
In addition to electronic folders, you are required to have subject folders. You will need to buy at least two A4 Lever arch ring binder folders to keep your notes and handouts in; these are available from any stationary store or even supermarket. It is important they are kept in a presentable order for your own revision. From time to time, both your electronic and paper folders will need to be checked by your subject teachers.



To help you study successfully get to know your Media Theories very well, you will be taught them in class first, but it is very important to read about them outside of class too - students who achieve higher grades constantly go over class notes, they do not just start to learn them near exam times. Likewise, get to know your Close Study Products very, very well – look at them, annotate them and watch them lots so your knowledge is excellent.

Some of the most useful additional course resources and revision materials are listed here:

- AQA exam site for revision materials and past papers:  
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/media-studies/as-and-a-level/media-studies-7572/assessment-resources?f.Sub-category%7CF=Sample+papers+and+mark+schemes>
- Very good revision site:  
<https://media.edusites.co.uk/>
- The AQA A Level Media Studies text books below are an excellent resource



## Transition Tasks to be handed in at the start of Year 12:

### Task One

Prepare a three slide powerpoint presentation titled:

**'My Media.'**

This is not for formal assessing, but is to give your class teacher an idea of where your interests lie

Include:

- Which TV shows you most enjoy & why
- Which films you most enjoy & why
- Which websites you most enjoy & why

There is no word count, it is up to you what you choose to say about the media you enjoy

Please be prepared to share some of your thoughts with class at the start of term

### Task Two - AQA A Level website

1 Go to this link on the AQA exam board site and download the document. Save it in your Media A Level folder. A Level Media Specification:

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/media-studies/specifications/AQA-7572-SP-2017.PDF>

2 Go to this link on the AQA exam board site. Scroll though the three elements of the course:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/media-studies/as-and-a-level/media-studies-7572/specification-at-a-glance>

Make three mindmaps showing what is in Media One, Media Two and the NEA.

### Task Three

For each of the two magazine covers, make notes on these features:

Main Image

Connotations of main image

Contents of magazine

Target audience

Appeal of the magazine



Main Image

Connotations of main image

Contents of magazine

Target audience

Appeal of the magazine



## Task Four

Explain how each magazine front cover tries to attract potential readers.

## Subject specific vocabulary

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**ABC figures** The Audit Bureau of Circulations is responsible for measuring the reach of different media across a range of platforms

**Action code** A narrative device by which a resolution is produced through action eg a gun fight.

**Active audience** The theory that media audiences do not just consume a text passively, they actively engage with it because of personal and social contexts.

**Advertising campaign** A campaign run by an advertising agency which incorporates all of the ways in which a product, event or service is beneficial to the audience. This can be in the form of packaging, television, print and online adverts.

**Advertising spots** These are the spaces in commercial breaks that are sold to advertisers. Most spots are around 30 seconds but can vary in length.

**Agenda setting** The importance ascribed to news stories by news media. Those deemed most important will take prominence in coverage.

**Audience** The people who are intended to see, hear, consume a media text.

**Augmented reality** Computer-generated content overlaid on a real-world environment, commonly used in video games.

**Avatar** In gaming this is the player's representation of themselves within the game.

**BARB** Broadcasters' Audience Research Board – the organisation that measures and collects television viewing data in the UK.

**BBFC** British Board of Film Classification – responsible for deciding the age classification and censorship of all films and video content released in the UK.

**Below the line advertising** An advertising strategy where the product is promoted on platforms other than radio, television, billboards, print and film.

**Blog** A website or web page often created by an individual or small group which is regularly updated, often written in an informal, conversational style.

**Brand** A type of product that is manufactured and marketed under a particular name, logo and design.

**Brand recognition** The extent to which a brand can be identified, this is often aided by visual codes such as logos.

**Broadsheet** This is a larger newspaper that focuses on more serious news for example, The Guardian.

**By-line** The printed line of text in a newspaper/magazine that names the writer of an article.

**Call to action** An instruction aimed at the audience with the hope to provoke an immediate response – can take the form of ‘subscribe now’, for example. Often used in advertising and marketing.

**Camera movement** The way the camera is moved during filming to add depth, interest and variation for the viewer, such as pan and track.

**Canted angle** A shot filmed from a slanted angle. Also known as ‘Dutch tilt’ or oblique angle.

**Censorship** The controls and regulations that exist about media content. Censorship powers can be held by governments or regulatory bodies.

**CGI** Computer-generated imagery is the application of computer graphics to printed or moving image media. The term CGI commonly refers to 3D computer graphics used for special effects in film sequences.

**Circulation** The number of copies of a media product that are distributed, this includes subscriptions. Circulation audits are provided by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC).

**Classification** A rating given to a film, DVD or video game which informs the audience the suitability for different ages of audience according to the criteria of violence, sexual content and inappropriate language.

**Close-up** A common camera shot that tightly focuses on a person or object.

**Code** Codes are the systems of signs that are used to create meaning in media texts.

**Commercial broadcasting** Privately owned media broadcasting of television and radio programming.

**Commissioning** When programmes get the ‘go ahead’ or ‘green light’ for production. Producers will pitch their ideas to commissioning controllers who will decide whether or not to commission the programme.

**Conglomerate** A media conglomerate is a large corporation that owns a large number of media companies, such as television, radio, internet, publishing – giving the conglomerate control in the market.

**Connotation** The way meaning is created, or the deeper meaning, in a media text.

**Content creators** People who create and share content online, for example, vloggers and bloggers.

**Conventions** The widely recognised and typical way of doing things in a particular genre or media form.

**Convergence** coming together of technologies and institutions to create a new product or media experience. This is often facilitated by digital technologies ie smartphones bring together the facility to perform different functions such as internet browsing, playing music, taking photographs, watching video content etc.

**Constructed reality** A type of TV series where people talk naturally but are placed in pre-arranged situations by the producers.

**Cookies** Small pieces of computer code that are placed on your hard drive by web sites and advertisers. They are used to track your progress through a website and allows the operator to evaluate which pages are the most popular.

**Copy** The written material, as opposed to images, that features in a media text.

**Cross platform marketing** When one form is advertised on another media platform.

**Crane shot** A camera shot that is taken from above the ground high on a crane (a jib).

**Cut** A simple editing technique. One shot ends and another begins, with no transitions or effects added.

**Decoding** The process through which an audience interprets a message.

**Deconstruction** The act of breaking something down to its separate parts in order to understand it.

**Demographics** The characteristics and make-up of a sample of the population eg age, gender, nationality.

**Demographic profiling** A way of categorising audiences by dividing consumers into groups based on age, sex, income, education, occupation, household size, marital status, home ownership or other features.

**Denotation** The literal or surface meaning in a media text.

**Desensitisation** A psychological process which suggests that audiences who are regularly exposed to acts of violence through tv programmes, films and video games etc, are increasingly less likely to feel empathy or concern when exposed to violence, bad language or other forms of aggressive behaviour.

**Diegetic sound** Actual sound from the world of the film or TV programme, whether on or off screen.

**Editing** A post-production technique – any arranging, revising and preparing of written, audio or video content to get the piece ready for audience consumption.

**Enigma** A question that is not immediately answered which draws the audience into a text.

**Establishing shot** The opening shot of a visual narrative sequence often showing the geographical location.

**Ethics** The principles and standards that are upheld in areas of the media

**Feminism** Promoting women's rights for the equality of the sexes.

**Framing** The way a camera shot is composed.

**Franchise** A media franchise is a collection of connected media products derived from a single original source, for example, a film – with a comic and video game also produced about the film.

**Genre** A style or category of a media form.

**Globalisation** The global spread of media and communications systems and businesses.

**House style** The overall design style of a newspaper, website or magazine. This might include font, colour scheme and layout. The house style sets a product apart from its competition and makes it easily recognisable to its audience.

**Hypodermic syringe model** The hypodermic syringe or needle model is an outdated effects theory that suggests a mass audience behaves in the same way in response to a media product. The assumption is that the media injects ideas into the minds of the supposed passive audience who all respond in the same manner.

**Icon** An iconic figure is somebody/thing immediately recognised as being important

**Interactivity** Interactive media allows the user/consumer to take an active involvement in the media text, even by contributing to it.

**Intertextuality** Often media texts make references to other texts and popular culture to interest and engage the audience.

**IPSO** The Independent Press Standards Organisation is the independent regulator of the newspaper and magazine industry in the UK.

**Long shot** Shot size or framing which shows the whole of a person.

**Mainstream** The most commercialised areas of media production where dominant cultural and operational norms operate.

**Mediation** Mediation is when the media takes a person or event and changes or interprets in a particular way to create a media text.

**Medium/mid shot (MS)** A commonly used camera shot. Typically it will frame the subject from the waist up or show some background detail in the shot.

**Mise-en-scene** Literally 'everything that is in the shot/scene' in a single frame. This is what helps the audience to gain meaning from a scene.

**Moral panic** The way that the media stirs up intense feelings because of the way it covers a news event or issue.

**Negotiated position** From Hall's encoding/decoding model. When making a negotiated reading the consumer of a media product may agree with some aspects of the message in the product but may also disagree with other aspects of the message.

**News values** Ways in which media companies will assess and categorise news stories and decide on their newsworthiness

**Niche audience** A relatively small segment of an audience with specific tastes and interests.

**Non-diegetic sound** Sound that is neither on the screen or features in the 'world of the film'. Typically, non-diegetic sound will be sound effects or background music added to create mood and atmosphere.

**OFCOM** The Office of Communications is a government-approved regulatory body that is responsible for ensuring that the communication and broadcasting industries in the UK operate fairly and competitively. It also protects the public from inappropriate or offensive material.

**Oppositional reading** From Hall's encoding/decoding model. When making an oppositional reading the consumer of a media product will disagree with the message in the product.

**Panning** A basic camera movement – the camera sweeps from one side to the other.

**Passive audience** A passive audience is one that merely observes and takes in a media text without interacting or responding to it. The assumption is that a passive audience will agree with the preferred meaning of a text and will not challenge the content and that passive audiences will be directly affected by the messages in media texts.

**PEGI** Pan European Game Information – the organisation that judges what the age ratings should be for games. Produces guidance for consumers (mainly aimed at parents) so that they can decide if a game is suitable.

**Pitch** An outline of an idea for the creation of a particular media product.

**Point of view (POV)** A first-person camera shot that allows the audience to see from the viewpoint of an individual character.

**Post-production** Further production work that is undertaken after moving and still images have been taken.

**Preferred reading** The reading of a media text that the producers intended the audience to have.

**Pre-production** The work, planning and research that is done on a media product before the actual production begins.

**Primary research** Original and new research that is carried out to answer particular questions or issues.

**Psychographic profiling** Audience categories based on personality, values, opinions, attitudes and lifestyle.

**PSB or public service broadcasting** Television and radio programmes that are broadcast to inform, entertain or educate the public, without trying to make a profit.

**Qualitative research** Qualitative research is used to explore and gain an understanding of audience opinions and motivations.

**Quantitative research** Quantitative research is the collection of numerical data and statistics.

**Regulation** Rules or sets of standards that are expected to be adhered to. Regulatory bodies oversee that this is being done by media companies.

**Representation** The way in which the media 're-presents' people and the world around us.

**Secondary research** Secondary research involves the collation and analysis of research that already exists.

**Semiotics** The language of codes and signs; the way in which media products are encoded by the producer and decoded by audiences.

**SFX** Special Effects. Graphics techniques that are applied to moving images to create specific effects.

**Standfirst** An introductory paragraph in an article which summarises the article.

**Storyboard** A visual representation and plan of how a moving image scene will be shot. Typically includes a sketch of each frame, camera movements, edits and timing, etc.

**Strapline** A cross-column subheading, usually found in newspapers, magazines and websites, that emphasises part of an article or advert.

**Symbol** A sign or image of some sort that symbolises an idea and is intended to make the audience respond in a certain way.

**Synergy** Where two or more media products are linked for commercial purposes, eg a film and a video game based on the film.

**Tabloid** A compact size of newspaper, smaller than a broadsheet. Tabloid refers to a lighter content which makes reference to celebrity gossip, popular sports and media.

**Tag line** Short phrases that sum up a product, can be used in print and moving image promotional material.

**Target audience** The group at which a product is aimed.

**Theoretical framework** Media language, audience, industries and representation. The tools used to critically understand the construction and meaning of media products.

**Treatment** A short outline of an intended media production. This might include written descriptions, sketches and mock-ups.

**Typography** Font styles that are used in a media product.

**User generated content (UGC)** is any content created and distributed on a particular platform by a user of that platform.

**Uses and gratifications theory** The idea that the media audiences make active use of what the media offer to them. The audience has a set of needs which the media gratify: surveillance, social integration, entertainment or 'escapism' and personal identity.

**Vlog** A video blog or video log, usually shortened to vlog, is a form of blog that uses video rather than written text.

**Vox pop** An interview which is conducted with 'ordinary' people, often in the street.

**Watershed** The time, after which is it allowed for media products (TV programmes) to contain more adult content or content that is deemed unsuitable for younger audiences. In the UK the watershed is 9pm.

**Web 2.0** A phase in the history of the internet where it involved interactivity, user participation and collaboration.