



# CAMBRIDGE

International Education

## Syllabus

# Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies 9607

Use this syllabus for exams in 2027.

Exams are available in the June and November series.



Version 1

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Cambridge  
Pathway

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## Why choose Cambridge?

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We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

### Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

### Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

### Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

### Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

### Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

### Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

### Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

### **School feedback:** 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

**Feedback from:** Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

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## **Important: Changes to this syllabus**

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2024. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

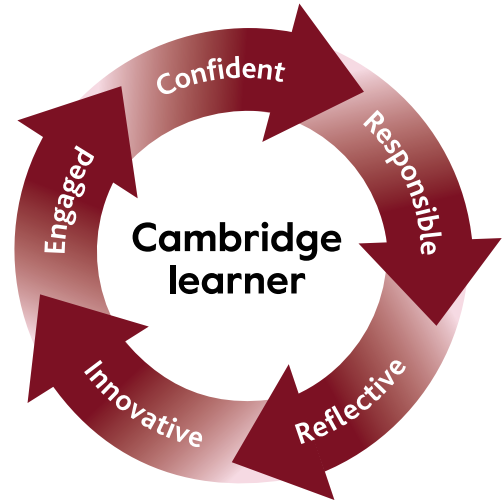
# 1 Why choose this syllabus?

## Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. Cambridge International AS & A Level give schools flexibility to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a choice of over 50 subjects. Students can select the subjects they love and that they are best at, enabling them to reach their potential and thrive.

Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep subject knowledge
- conceptual understanding and higher-level thinking skills
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.



**Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies** is recognised by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and understanding of the media and its role in our daily lives. Learners develop a set of transferable skills, including the skill of thinking critically about mediated information, understanding its rhetorical qualities, and being aware of the significance of its conditions of production and reception. Learners will also be able to practise this skill to communicate their own ideas in a variety of forms. These skills can be applied across a wide range of subjects and equip learners well for progression to higher education or directly into employment.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies supports the development of learners who are:

**confident**, using theoretical approaches to decode media texts and contexts, and applying systematic procedures to understand audience behaviour

**responsible**, challenging ideas about the nature of the media and their effects, considering the social, cultural and ethical dimensions

**reflective**, developing an awareness of personal assumptions and being prepared to adopt alternative positions in order to make sense of these

**innovative**, using creative strategies to communicate ideas, to tell stories and to demonstrate aesthetic awareness

**engaged**, by adopting a critical stance in relation to the media and its products, while retaining an appreciation of the complex pleasures for audiences and users.

**School feedback:** 'Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.'

**Feedback from:** Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

## Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

Carefully introducing and developing key concepts at the right time will help to underpin the teaching. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies are:

- **Language**  
How the media communicate meanings through their forms, codes, conventions and techniques
- **Representation**  
How the media construct the social world including the portrayal of ideas, individuals and groups
- **Industry**  
How and why media texts are produced, distributed and circulated
- **Audience**  
How audiences are constructed and addressed by media texts and how audiences interpret and respond to media texts.

The key concepts are expanded on in the subject content.

## Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. More than 2220 universities in over 90 countries formally recognise Cambridge qualifications, with many more accepting our qualifications on application.

UK ENIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

### A choice of assessment routes

Cambridge International AS & A Level offers a choice of assessment routes with staged assessment available in many subjects: Cambridge International AS Level can be offered as a standalone qualification or as part of a progression to Cambridge International A Level.

Cambridge International AS Level Media Studies makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Media Studies and provides a foundation for the study of Media Studies at Cambridge International A Level. The AS Level can also be delivered as a standalone qualification. Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in Media Studies or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International A Level Media Studies provides a foundation for the study of Media Studies or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

For more information about the relationship between the Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level see the 'Assessment overview' section of the Syllabus overview

Visit [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/) and university websites for the most up-to-date higher education entry requirements.

Learn more: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

## Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support), our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching & learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the Schools Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at [www.cambridge.org/education](http://www.cambridge.org/education) and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates)

## Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey:

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practicing teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-teachers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-teachers)

### Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers. Find out more at: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)



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## 2 Syllabus overview

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### Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- develop critical understanding of international media through engagement with media products and concepts
- develop critical understanding of international media through engagement with the creative application of practical skills
- explore production processes, technologies and contexts
- develop independence in research skills and their application
- enjoy and appreciate the media and its role in their daily lives
- appreciate and engage with a variety of global and local media texts
- explore the impact of the media within a variety of cultures and how this influences social values.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.





## Content overview

### Skills and understanding common to all areas of study

- Media forms and media platforms.
- Case studies.
- The ability to apply practical skills creatively, the ability to analyse their own and published media products critically, research and evaluation skills and information management and project management skills.
- Knowledge and understanding relating to the key concepts of Language, Representation, Industry and Audience.

### AS Level subject content

Candidates **must** study:

- Media texts
- Technical elements
- Media contexts

Candidates must study at least **one** media area specified below:

- Film
- Music
- Print
- Radio and podcasts
- Video games

### A Level subject content

In addition to the above, candidates must study at least **two** of the following topics:

- Media regulation
- Postmodern media
- Power and the media

Candidates **must** also study:

- Media ecology



#### Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies

Our School Support Hub [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support) provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

**School feedback:** ‘Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they’ve learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There’s that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It’s a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.’

**Feedback from:** US Higher Education Advisory Council

## Assessment overview

### Component 1

Foundation Portfolio  
50 marks

Candidates produce a media product that includes digital evidence of the process of their work and a creative critical reflection. Candidates work either individually or as part of a group to complete this coursework.

Internally assessed and externally moderated

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

### Component 2

Media texts and contexts 2 hours  
50 marks

Section A: Media texts (25 marks)

Candidates answer one question based on an unseen moving image extract.

Section B: Media contexts (25 marks)

Candidates answer **one** question from a choice of two questions.

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

### Component 3

Advanced Portfolio  
50 marks

Candidates produce a campaign of media products, digital evidence of the process of their work and reflect upon their finished products, in the form of an evaluative essay of around 1000 words. Candidates work either individually or as part of a group to complete this coursework.

Internally assessed and externally moderated

25% of the A Level

### Component 4

Critical Perspectives 2 hours  
60 marks

Section A: Media debates (30 marks)

Candidates answer **two** from a choice of three questions.

Section B: Media ecology (30 marks)

Candidates answer one question.

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

Check the samples database at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples) for submission information, forms and deadlines for Components 2 and 4.

There are three routes for Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies:

Route	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
<b>1 AS Level only</b> (Candidates take all AS components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	no	no
<b>2 A Level</b> (staged over two years) Year 1 AS Level*	yes	yes	no	no
Year 2 Complete the A Level			yes	yes
<b>3 A Level</b> (Candidates take all components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	yes	yes

\* Candidates carry forward their AS Level marks subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*. See **Making entries** for more information about carrying forward marks.

Candidates following an AS Level route are eligible for grades a–e. Candidates following an A Level route are eligible for grades A\*–E.

Marks achieved in Component 1, *Foundation Portfolio*, can be carried forward on their own to future series, subject to the requirements set out in the *Cambridge Handbook*. This can be done by making entries for either of the following options:

AS Level only awarding: the AS Level entry option, where Component 2 is taken and the marks of Component 1 have been carried forward.

or

A Level awarding: the A Level entry option, where components 2, 3 and 4 are taken and the marks of Component 1 have been carried forward.

**Note:** the marks from the specific entry options listed above **cannot** be used as a staged route to complete a full A Level.

## Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

### AO1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

### AO2

Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

### AO3

Research, plan and construct critically informed media products, including the creative critical reflection, using appropriate technical and creative skills.

## Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %	Weighting in A Level %
AO1	30	30
AO2	30	30
AO3	40	00
Total	100	100

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %			
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
AO1	0	60	0	60
AO2	20	40	20	40
AO3	80	0	80	0
Total	100	100	100	100

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## 3 Subject content

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This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting resources and examples, texts and subject contexts to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

### Skills and understanding common to all areas of study

#### Media forms and media platforms

Candidates are expected to support the development of their skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and topics, by studying a range of media forms and media platforms across the AS & A Level Media Studies course.

Throughout this syllabus, media form refers to the specific medium used to communicate meaning.

Examples of this include:

- time-based audio-visual media (e.g. film, TV, radio)
- print (e.g. newspapers, magazines, advertising)
- video games (e.g. mobile games, console).

There is overlap between these media forms and it is expected that candidates will analyse texts in a variety of forms over the duration of the course.

Media platform refers to the mode of distribution: digital, online or physical. This might include social media, broadcast media and print based media.

#### Case studies

Throughout the course candidates are expected to study a wide range of linked texts, referred to as case studies. These will be used to support their responses in the examinations, and might influence their production work as well. Case studies should feature a majority of contemporary texts, although any text may be used to give historical context. The term contemporary is used to mean a text which was first published no more than approximately five years before the examination year.

#### Skills

Throughout the course candidates are expected to demonstrate the following:

- understand and explain how media products construct and communicate meanings, through close analysis of the interaction of media language and audience responses
- use key theories of media studies and specialist subject-specific terminology appropriately
- critically debate key questions relating to the social, cultural, political and economic role of the media through discursive writing
- synthesise their learning to make informed judgements about developments in the media.

In the portfolio component(s) candidates are expected to demonstrate the following:

- apply knowledge and understanding of media language, representation, media industries and audiences to a media production
- use appropriate media language to express and communicate meaning to an intended audience
- use technical skills effectively to express and communicate meaning to an intended audience
- reflect critically on their creative decision making and final outcomes.

## Knowledge and understanding

The AS & A Level Media Studies course is developed around the four key concepts of Language, Representation, Industry and Audience. Candidates should be prepared to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of these across all components.

### Language

How the media communicate meanings through the use of forms, codes, conventions and techniques, including:

- the codes and conventions of media forms and products, including the processes through which media language develops as genre
- the significance of challenging and/or subverting conventions
- the ways in which media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies
- how audiences respond to and interpret media language
- the impact of developing technologies on media language
- how combinations of media language generate meaning
- the dynamic and historically relative nature of genre.

### Representation

How the media construct the social world, the portrayal of ideas, individuals and groups, including:

- the ways in which events, issues, individuals and social groups are represented through processes of selection and combination
- the ways in which, through representation, versions of reality are mediated
- the processes which lead media producers to make choices about how to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups
- the effect of social and cultural context on representations
- how and why particular social groups, in a national and global context, may be under-represented or misrepresented
- how representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media
- how audiences respond to and interpret representations in the media
- the effect of historical context on representations
- how representations may invoke discourses and ideologies, and position audiences
- how interpretations of representations reflect social, cultural and historical circumstances.

## Industry

How and why media texts are produced, distributed and consumed, including:

- how processes of production, distribution and consumption shape media products
- processes of production, distribution and consumption by organisations, groups and individuals in a global context
- the specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and consumption
- the relationship between technological change and media production, distribution and consumption
- the significance of patterns of ownership and control, including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification
- the significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding, to media industries and their products
- how media organisations maintain varieties of audiences locally, nationally and globally, including marketing
- the regulatory framework of contemporary media and the impact of technological change on media regulation
- the impact of convergent media platforms on media production, distribution and consumption.

## Audience

How audiences are constructed and addressed by media texts and how audiences interpret and respond to media texts, including:

- how audiences are grouped and categorised by media industries, including by age, gender and social class, as well as by lifestyle and taste
- how media producers target, attract, reach, address and construct audiences
- how media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and consumed
- the interrelationship between media technologies and patterns of consumption and response
- how audiences interpret the media, including how they may interpret the same texts in different ways, using a variety of theories or ideologies
- how audiences interact with the media and can be actively involved in media production
- how specialised audiences can be reached, on a local, national and global scale, through different media technologies and platforms
- how media organisations reflect the different needs of mass and specialised audiences, including through targeting
- how audiences use media in different ways, reflecting demographic factors as well as aspects of identity and culture
- the role and significance of specialised audiences, including niche and fan, to the media.

## AS Level subject content

**AS & A Level candidates should study the following subject content.**

### Media texts

Candidates should be prepared to analyse how technical aspects of the language and conventions of the moving image medium are used to create meaning for an audience.

Candidates should study a range of texts so that they can discuss, in response to the question, how the following technical elements create specific representations of individuals/groups/events/places, and help to articulate specific messages and values that have social significance.

### Technical elements

**Camera shots, angle, movement and composition:**

- shots: establishing shot, master shot, close-up, mid-shot, long shot, wide shot, two-shot, aerial shot, point-of-view shot, over-the-shoulder shot, and variations of these
- angle: high angle, low angle, canted angle
- movement: pan, tilt, track, dolly, crane, steadicam, hand-held, zoom, reverse zoom
- composition: framing, rule of thirds, depth of field – deep and shallow focus, focus pulls.

**Sound:**

- diegetic and non-diegetic sound, synchronous/asynchronous sound, sound effects, sound motif, sound bridge, dialogue, voiceover, mode of address/direct address, sound mixing, sound perspective
- soundtrack: score, incidental music, themes and stings, ambient sound.

**Mise-en-scène:**

- production design: location, studio, set design, costume and make-up, properties
- lighting, colour design.

**Editing:**

This includes transition of image and sound – continuity and non-continuity systems.

- cutting: shot/reverse shot, eyeline match, graphic match, action match, jump cut, crosscutting, parallel editing, cutaway, insert
- other transitions: dissolve, fade-in, fade-out, wipe, superimposition, long take, short take, slow motion, ellipsis and expansion of time, post-production, visual effects.



## Media contexts

Candidates should be prepared to discuss the processes of production, distribution and marketing, how they relate to contemporary media institutions, the nature of audience consumption and the relationships between audiences and institutions.

In addition, candidates should be familiar with:

- the issues raised by media ownership and funding in contemporary media practice
- the importance of cross-media convergence and synergy in production, distribution and marketing
- the technologies that have been introduced in recent years at the levels of production, distribution, marketing and at the point of consumption
- the significance of the spread of such technologies for institutions and audiences
- the importance of technological convergence for institutions and audiences
- the issues raised in the targeting of national and local audiences by international or global institutions
- the ways in which the candidates' own experiences of media consumption illustrate wider patterns and trends in audience behaviour.

## Media areas

Candidates should study at least one media area specified below:

### Film

A study of specific studios or production companies, including patterns of production, distribution, exhibition and consumption by audiences. This should be accompanied by a study of contemporary film distribution practices (digital cinemas, DVD, 3D, downloads and streaming, etc.) and their impact upon production, marketing and consumption.

### Music

A study of particular record labels and independent producers, within the contemporary music industry, including patterns of production, distribution, marketing and consumption by audiences. This should be accompanied by study of wider issues around digital distribution of music.

### Print

A study of contemporary newspaper and/or magazine publishing, including the ways in which the print platform is adapting to challenges in the production, distribution and consumption of print media as a result of technological changes.

### Radio and podcasts

A study of examples from the contemporary radio industry and/or podcasts, examining production, and distribution, as well as audience consumption. This should be accompanied by a study of the impact of DAB and internet broadcasting on radio production practices, marketing and audience consumption, and the development of podcasting as a form.

### Video games

A study of the production, distribution and marketing of a specific game within one or across various gaming platforms, along with its reception by a variety of audiences. This should be accompanied by a study of the impact of next generation capabilities on the production, distribution, marketing and consumption of games.

## A Level subject content

**Additionally, A Level candidates should study the following subject content.**

Candidates must study at least **two** topics from:

### Media regulation

Media regulation considers issues of morality and decency, accuracy of content and media ownership.

Candidates should study:

- the nature of contemporary and historical media regulation
- the arguments for and against specific forms of media regulation
- the effectiveness of regulatory practices, including the ability to impose or recommend sanctions
- the wider social issues relating to media regulation
- the roles of different regulatory bodies in relation to ownership, morality and accuracy
- the legal and ethical frameworks within which media producers and distributors must operate.

### Postmodern media

Postmodernism can be characterised by modes such as pastiche, parody, intertextuality, self-referentiality and a conscious engagement with other texts. We do not prioritise one theory or approach over another, and candidates are encouraged to explore a range of approaches and perspectives, across a range of media forms.

Candidates should study:

- the different versions of postmodernism (historical period, style, theoretical approach)
- the arguments for and against understanding some forms of media as postmodern
- the ways postmodern media texts can challenge traditional relationships between texts and audiences
- the relationship between postmodernism and popular culture
- the ways media audiences and industries operate differently in a postmodern world
- the relationship between postmodernism and narrative.

### Power and the media

Power and the media considers issues surrounding access to the media, identity, representation, ideology and democracy.

Candidates should study:

- the relationships between media texts, their producers, distributors and audiences
- the mediation of national, regional, individual and group identities
- the dynamic nature of power relationships within and between audiences and the media
- the power of rhetoric in the media
- the construction and reception of campaigning and marketing messages
- the way access to the media may be limited or controlled, including the democratic distribution of voices.

**Candidates must also study:****Media ecology**

Media ecology refers to the complex environments within which media texts, producers, distributors, technologies and audiences exist. It is a way of conceiving the structure of these environments, their content, and impact on people.

Possible areas of focus for candidates are:

- audience engagement with evolving media environments
- convergence of personal communication technology and mass communication technology
- impact on society of technological change including the collection and sharing of information and data protection
- the nature of globalisation and the responses of audiences and institutions
- the changing nature of media ownership and distribution models including net neutrality
- the representation of public and private personae
- the relationships between software, hardware and audiences
- the impact of developing technologies on media language
- changing modes of reception and their impact on audiences.

The possible areas of focus are not exhaustive but provide examples of how candidates might adapt and apply their knowledge and understanding gained throughout the course, including AS & A Level subject content.

**Faculty feedback:** ‘Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student’s education.’

**Feedback from:** Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

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## 4 Details of the assessment

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### Component 1: Foundation Portfolio

This is a coursework component, internally assessed and externally moderated, 50 marks.

Candidates produce a media product from a choice of two set briefs – a film opening or a magazine. They present evidence of the process of their work (research, planning and production) on an online blog. Candidates also reflect critically on their finished media product in a creative digital format of their choice, answering a series of set prompt questions. All work involved in creating the portfolio, including process, finished product, and creative critical reflection, is put online for moderation purposes.

The work may be undertaken individually or by a group (maximum group size is four candidates). Candidates must present the evidence for assessment individually whether they have worked in a group or individually. Centres must assess candidates on an individual basis. Each candidate's blog should clearly indicate the candidate's own role in any group activity to allow the teacher to assess the contribution of each individual within the group.

Any centre teaching this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the foundation portfolio are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

AO2: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

AO3: Research, plan and construct critically informed media products using appropriate technical and creative skills, supported with relevant textual evidence.

### Set briefs

Candidates must work to either the Film opening task (video) brief or the Magazine task (print) brief. Centres may select one or other set brief to offer to candidates, or may wish to let candidates choose between these two briefs themselves.

When centres choose which set brief(s) to offer to candidates, they should be guided by their strengths in terms of resources and expertise. Centres should also bear in mind that the key areas to address in the creative critical reflection will be: forms and conventions, production contexts, the role of technologies, audiences and representations.

The set brief options are as follows:

#### Option 1: Film opening task (video)

Main task: the titles and opening of a new fiction film (to last a maximum of two minutes). Titles should follow the institutional conventions of commercial cinema. The task may be undertaken individually or as a group. There should be a maximum of four members to a group.

All images and text used in the main task must be original, and produced by the candidate(s). Sound should be predominantly original (dialogue and atmospheric sound), though music taken from an acknowledged source may be used as part of the soundtrack.

This task should be preceded by relevant preliminary exercises to build up candidates' skills with equipment and their understanding of conventions.

#### Option 2: Magazine task (print)

Main task: the front page, contents and feature article (of at least two pages) of a new magazine. If done as a group task, each member of the group should produce a unique edition of the magazine that follows the same house style. There should be a maximum of four members to a group.

All images and text used in the main task must be original and produced by the candidate(s) with a minimum of **four** images per candidate.

This task should be preceded by relevant preliminary exercises to build up candidates' skills with equipment and their understanding of conventions.

## Process

Each candidate **must** complete an individual blog which is started at the beginning of the project. Each blog should contain:

- the process of research, planning and production
- any refinement, changes or edits made, and reflections on key moments
- all individual contributions to any task undertaken as a group
- evidence of any preliminary exercises
- the final finished product, clearly labeled
- the creative critical reflection, clearly labelled.

Some production elements such as storyboards may be shared by all members of a group. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on research, planning and/or production **must** be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'.

Centres should select dedicated blogging applications which allow posts to be read chronologically, with appropriate capabilities to embed other applications.

## Creative critical reflection

On completion of the product, candidates must **creatively** reflect upon their work. Candidates may use any digital format, such as director commentaries, a presentation with voiceover, podcasts or screencasts. Candidates may use a different digital format to explore each of the compulsory questions. The creative critical reflection should be produced and presented individually.

Candidates must explore the following **compulsory** questions:

- How does your product use or challenge conventions and how does it represent social groups or issues?
- How does your product engage with audiences and how would it be distributed as a real media text?
- How did your production skills develop throughout this project?
- How did you integrate technologies – software, hardware and online – in this project?

Please refer to the Administration of the coursework section of the syllabus for further information regarding the administration of Component 1. Portfolios are marked out of 50, using the criteria detailed in the Assessment criteria for Component 1 section of the syllabus.

## Component 2: Media Texts and Contexts

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This is an externally assessed written component which covers two areas:

- Section A: Media texts
- Section B: Media contexts

In Section A, candidates analyse a moving image extract in terms of technical codes and representation. In Section B, candidates answer **one** from a choice of two questions exploring audiences and institutions.

The examination is two hours long (including 30 minutes for watching and making notes on the moving image extract and 45 minutes writing time for each question) and candidates are required to answer two questions. The unit is marked out of a total of 50 marks, with each question marked out of 25 marks.

Candidates should be familiar with the content described in the Skills and understanding common to all areas of study section, and with the content described in the AS Level subject content section. They will need to support their responses with detailed reference to a range of contemporary media texts, in the form of a series of case studies.

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

AO2: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

## Section A: Media texts (25 marks)

The moving image extract will be provided by Cambridge International in DVD format, with full instructions for the administration of the examination, viewing conditions and note-taking time.

The extract will be from a TV drama and will last for a maximum of five minutes. It will be played four times. The screening time will last a total of 30 minutes, including note-taking. Centres need to consider the optimum conditions for screening the extract, so that no candidates are disadvantaged.

Candidates must analyse the text to establish how meaning is created. Therefore, candidates must be aware of how the technical aspects of media language, and the conventions of the moving image medium, are used to create meaning, both explicitly and implicitly. Candidates must be able to analyse an unseen media text, using technical terms, to explain how specific meaning, including representations of individuals/groups/events/places, has been created. Candidates must be familiar with the technical elements in the subject content.

It is acknowledged that not every one of the technical areas will feature in equal measure in any given extract and other areas may also be credited where appropriate; examiners are instructed to consider this when marking the candidates' answers. We do not expect each aspect to be covered in the same degree of detail, but as appropriate to the genre and extract provided and to the discussion of the extract's representation.

## Section B: Media contexts (25 marks)

Candidates answer **one** question from a choice of two. Candidates must make reference to at least one case study in their answer.

## Component 3: Advanced Portfolio

This is a coursework component, internally assessed and externally moderated, 50 marks.

Candidates build on the skills developed in Component 1 to engage with contemporary media technologies. They produce a media campaign through a combination of three media (video, print and official social media page), selecting from a choice of set briefs. Candidates will record the process of the planning, research and production of their work online in a blog format. Each candidate must also write a critical reflection, responding to four compulsory questions. The final products and the critical reflection will also be presented on their blog.

The work may be undertaken individually or by a group (maximum group size is four candidates). Candidates must present the evidence for assessment individually, whether they have worked in a group or individually. Centres must assess candidates on an individual basis. Each candidate's blog should clearly indicate the candidate's own role in any group activity to allow the teacher to assess the contribution of each individual within the group.

Any centre teaching this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the advanced portfolio unit are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

This component assesses the following Assessment Objectives:

AO2: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

AO3: Research, plan and construct critically informed media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.

## Set briefs

The set briefs each contain a major task and two associated minor tasks; candidates should spend approximately two thirds of their time on the major task, and one third on the minor tasks.

When centres choose briefs to offer to candidates, they should consider the available resources and expertise. Centres should also consider that the key areas to address in the critical reflection will be: forms and conventions, production contexts, the role of technologies, audiences and representations.

The set brief options are as follows:

### Option 1: music promotion package

A promotion package for the release of an album, to include a music video (major task), together with an official social media page for the band or artiste(s) and a digipak for the album's release (minor tasks).

### Option 2: film promotion package

A promotion package for a new film, to include two trailers (major task), together with an official social media page for the film and a poster for the film (minor tasks).

### Option 3: documentary package

An extract from an original documentary TV programme, lasting approximately five minutes (major task), together with an official social media page for the documentary and a magazine article for the documentary (minor tasks).

### Option 4: short film package

A short film in its entirety, lasting approximately five minutes (major task), which may be live action or animated or a combination of both, together with an official social media page for the short film and a postcard advertisement for the film at a short film festival (minor tasks).

Tasks may be undertaken individually or as a group. There should be a maximum of four members to a group. Images and video should be original material only. Sound should be predominantly original (dialogue and atmospheric sound), though music taken from an acknowledged source may be used as part of the soundtrack.



## Process

Each candidate **must** have an individual blog which is started at the beginning of the project, which will comprise the complete evidence for the moderator at the end of each project. Each blog should contain:

- the process of research, planning and production
- any refinement, changes or edits made, and reflections on key moments
- all individual contributions to any task undertaken as a group
- evidence of any preliminary exercises
- the final finished product, clearly labelled
- the critical reflection (see below), clearly labelled.

Some production elements such as storyboards may be shared by all members of a group. Collaborators who worked with the candidate on research, planning and/or production must be listed on the Individual Candidate Record Card under 'other group members'. Centres should select dedicated blogging applications which allow posts to be read chronologically, with appropriate capabilities to embed other applications.

## Critical reflection

Candidates must write an evaluative essay of around 1000–1500 words. This critical reflection of their work should be guided by the following **compulsory** questions:

- How do your products represent social groups or issues?
- How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?
- How do your products engage with the audience?
- How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?

This critical reflection must be completed individually, even if candidates had collaborated in the creation of their products.

Please refer to the Administration of the coursework section of the syllabus for further information regarding the administration of Component 3. Portfolios are marked out of 50, using the criteria detailed in the Assessment criteria for Component 3 section of the syllabus.

## Component 4: Critical Perspectives

Written paper, 2 hours, 60 marks

This is an externally assessed written component which covers two areas:

- Section A: Media debates
- Section B: Media ecology

The examination is two hours long. Candidates are required to answer three questions. The component is marked out of a total of 60, with each question in Section A marked out of 15 marks and the question in Section B marked out of 30 marks.

Candidates should be familiar with the content described in the Skills and understanding common to all areas of study section, and with the content described in the AS Level subject content and A Level subject content sections. They will need to support their responses with detailed reference to a range of contemporary media texts, in the form of a series of case studies.

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.

AO2: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

### Section A: Media debates (30 marks)

Candidates answer **two** questions from a choice of three. There will be one question for each topic:

- Media regulation
- Postmodern media
- Power and the media

Candidates should refer to one or more media forms in each answer.

### Section B: Media ecology (30 marks)

Section B is synoptic, requiring candidates to synthesise their knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of language, representation, industry and audience, studied throughout the course. Candidates are expected to adapt and apply this knowledge and understanding to contemporary examples from at least two media forms in order to explore evolving media environments. Candidates should answer the question referring to at least two media forms.

## Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
<b>Analyse</b>	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
<b>Assess</b>	make an informed judgement
<b>Consider</b>	review and respond to given information
<b>Discuss</b>	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
<b>Evaluate</b>	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something
<b>Explain</b>	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things clear / say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence

Phrases such as 'How far do you agree ...?' and 'To what extent ...?' may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.]

## Administration of the coursework

### Using the samples database

The samples database refers you to key information about administering coursework, speaking tests and examined coursework for each syllabus.

Use the database to find out:

- when and how to submit your marks for moderated coursework and non-coursework tests
- when and how to submit your candidates' work
- which forms to complete and return with your candidates' work.

The samples database at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)** will ask you for:

- your country/territory
- the syllabus code (i.e. [syllabus code] for this syllabus).

The database will then take you to the information you need, including dates and methods of submission of candidates' marks and work, as well as any forms you may need to complete.

### Recording and submitting candidates' marks and work

Please refer to the samples database at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)** for information, dates and methods of submission of candidates' marks and work.

You should record candidates' marks for Component 1 and Component 3 on the Individual Candidate Record Card and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form which you should download each year from the samples database at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)**. Follow the instructions on the form itself to complete it. You must include a brief description in each Assessment Objective box on the Individual Candidate Record card explaining where the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives, justifying the mark awarded.

The marks on these forms must be identical to the marks you submit to Cambridge International.

### Internal moderation

If more than one teacher in your centre is marking internal assessments, you must make arrangements to moderate or standardise your teachers' marking so that all candidates are assessed to a common standard. You can find further information on the process of internal moderation on the samples database at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)**

You should record the internally moderated marks for all candidates on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form, indicating which mark or marks have changed, and submit these marks to Cambridge International according to the instructions set out in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

## External moderation

Cambridge International will externally moderate all internally assessed components.

- You must submit the marks of all candidates to Cambridge International.
- You must also submit the marked work of candidates to Cambridge International.

Visit the samples database at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples) for details of how to submit the marks and work.

All work by candidates should be presented online.

The blogs containing all candidate portfolios must be accessible online for the duration of the moderation period. During this period no changes may be made to the portfolios. Centres should make each candidate's blog accessible via a hub or gateway which links to the work of each individual candidate, properly signalled with the candidate numbers. Cambridge International must receive notification of the URL of the centre's hub when the internally assessed marks are submitted.

Centres should keep all records and supporting candidate work until after publication of results.

External moderators will produce a short report for each centre with feedback on your marking and administration of the assessment.

## Supervising coursework

Coursework must be a candidate's own, unaided work. The teacher must be able to authenticate the work is the candidate's own.

A general discussion on the progress of coursework is a natural part of the teacher–candidate relationship, as it is for other parts of the course. Candidates can revise their work following feedback, but you should only give brief summative comments on progress.

Teachers can support candidates by reviewing their work before it is handed in for final assessment. Teachers can do this orally or through written feedback. Teachers should not correct or edit draft coursework. Advice should be kept at a general level so that the candidate leads the discussion and makes the suggestions for any amendments. Teachers must not give detailed advice to individual candidates or groups of candidates on how their work can be improved to meet the assessment criteria.

For further information about supervising coursework, see the Cambridge Handbook for the relevant year of assessment at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

## Authenticity and academic honesty/avoidance of plagiarism

It is the centre's responsibility to make sure all assessed work is the candidate's original work. Candidates must **not** submit someone else's work as their own, or use material produced by someone else without citing and referencing it properly. You should make candidates aware of the academic conventions governing quotation and reference to the work of others, and teach candidates how to use them. Where candidates have worked in groups, each person should clearly identify their role in the production of the final piece. Candidates must not work in groups on their Creative Critical Reflection (Component 1) or Critical Reflection (Component 3).

A candidate taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as their own is an example of plagiarism. It is your responsibility as a teacher to prevent plagiarism from happening and to detect it if it does

happen. For more information, search for 'Preventing plagiarism – guidance for teachers' on our website at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachingandassessment](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachingandassessment). Cambridge International has robust systems in place to detect, investigate and address plagiarism once work has been submitted.

Cambridge International has a policy on the use of generative AI by candidates in coursework. The inappropriate use of AI should be treated as a form of plagiarism. The policy includes guidance on how to detect use of AI in coursework and what action teachers should take. It can be found at: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/generative-ai-in-coursework](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/generative-ai-in-coursework)

You will be requested to declare the authenticity of the work at the point of submitting the work. The candidate must sign a statement confirming that they are submitting their own work. You countersign it to confirm that you believe the work is theirs. Centres should use the cover sheet on the samples database for this purpose.

## Assistance with projects

It is expected that teachers will train candidates in the use of technology for their coursework and that schools and colleges will provide the necessary equipment for candidates to produce their media texts. As acting is not a skill that is assessed in media studies, but the quality of finished work is quite clearly affected by the quality of acting, groups may use personnel external to the group to appear in their productions in photos, video or audio. The ability of candidates to direct actors is part of the assessment.

## Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the 'best fit'. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a 'best-fit' level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, you should award the highest mark.
- Where the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, you should award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range.
- Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, you should award the lowest mark.

## Assessment criteria for Component 1

<b>AO3: Practical Application</b>				<b>AO2: Evaluation</b>	
				<b>40 marks</b>	
<b>Production skills</b>		<b>Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production</b>		<b>Analyse and evaluate own work</b>	
<b>Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience</b>		<b>Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding</b>		<b>Use technical and creative skills to express and communicate ideas</b>	
<b>10 marks</b>		<b>10 marks</b>		<b>10 marks</b>	
Sophisticated use of media language shows insightful engagement with audience Production targets intended audience with sophistication, and is entirely convincing as a film opening/magazine		Production is sophisticated, highly appropriate, and accurately follows or knowingly subverts the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are sophisticatedly handled and the production is finished to a high standard		Sophisticated research into appropriate professional products Varied and detailed planning fully meeting the requirements of the brief Sophisticated implementation of research shows insightful understanding of the key concepts	
9–10 marks		9–10 marks		9–10 marks	
Effective use of media language shows appropriate engagement with audience Production targets intended audience effectively, and is effective in convincing as a film opening/magazine		Production is effective, and effectively follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are effectively handled and the production is mostly finished to a high standard		Thorough research into appropriate professional products Effective planning appropriate to the requirements of the brief Thorough implementation of research shows effective understanding of the key concepts	
7–8 marks		7–8 marks		7–8 marks	

*Continued*

<b>AO3: Practical Application</b>				<b>AO2: Evaluation</b>	
				<b>40 marks</b>	
<b>Production skills</b>		<b>Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production</b>	<b>Creative Critical Reflection skills</b>	<b>Analyse and evaluate own work</b>	
<b>Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience</b>	<b>Use technical skills effectively to express and communicate ideas</b>	<b>Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding</b>	<b>Use technical and creative skills to express and communicate ideas</b>	<b>Explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence</b>	
<b>10 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	
Clear use of media language shows some engagement with audience Production targets intended audience appropriately, and is mostly convincing as a film opening/magazine	Production is appropriate, and mostly follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are effectively handled and the production is sometimes finished to a high standard	Clear research into appropriate professional products Appropriate planning meets the requirements of the brief Implementation of research shows clear understanding of the key concepts	Creative Critical Reflections show clear technical skills throughout, with more than one creative approach used to create reflections which mostly engage the audience	Clear understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, appropriately supported with examples Clear engagement with all four questions A clear understanding of the key concepts	
5–6 marks	5–6 marks	5–6 marks	5–6 marks	5–6 marks	
Limited use of media language shows general engagement with audience Production simply targets intended audience, and is generally appropriate as a film opening/magazine	Production is limited, and generally follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre, with limited success Technical elements are generally handled appropriately, and the production is complete	Limited research into appropriate professional products Generally appropriate planning meeting some of the requirements of the brief Implementation of research shows limited understanding of the key concepts	Creative Critical Reflections show limited technical skills throughout, often only one creative approach is used to create reflections which sometimes engage the audience	Limited understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, generally supported with limited examples Limited engagement with the questions, with some uneven coverage A limited understanding of the key concepts	
3–4 marks	3–4 marks	3–4 marks	3–4 marks	3–4 marks	

*Continued*



AO3: Practical Application				AO2: Evaluation	
				40 marks	10 marks
Production skills		Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production	Creative Critical Reflection skills	Analyse and evaluate own work	
Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience	Use technical skills effectively to express and communicate ideas	Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding	Use technical and creative skills to express and communicate ideas	Explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence	
10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	10 marks	
Basic use of media language shows minimal engagement with audience Production shows only basic understanding of intended audience, and may lack relevance as an appropriate film opening/ magazine	Production is basic, and shows minimal understanding of the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are limited in their success, and the production may not be complete	Basic research into appropriate professional products Limited planning meets few of the requirements of the brief Implementation of research shows minimal understanding of the key concepts	Creative Critical Reflections show basic technical skills throughout, with only one creative approach used to create reflections with limited appeal to the audience	Minimal understanding of how meaning is created, offering basic or obvious critical comments on the successes of their own products, with a minimal selection of examples Basic engagement with the four questions, uneven coverage is likely A basic understanding of the key concepts	
1–2 marks	1–2 marks	1–2 marks	1–2 marks	1–2 marks	
No creditable content	No creditable content	No creditable content	No creditable content	No creditable content	
0 marks	0 marks	0 marks	0 marks	0 marks	

## Assessment criteria for Component 3

AO3: Practical Application		AO2: Evaluation	
		40 marks	10 marks
Production skills		Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production	Analyse and evaluate own work
Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience	Use technical skills effectively to express and communicate ideas	Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding	Explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence
15 marks	15 marks	10 marks	10 marks
Sophisticated use of media language shows insightful engagement with audience Production targets intended audience with sophistication, and the major and minor tasks are sophisticated and convincing	Production is sophisticated, highly appropriate, and accurately follows or knowingly subverts the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are sophisticatedly handled and the production is finished to a high standard across all tasks	Sophisticated research into appropriate professional products Varied and detailed planning fully meeting the requirements of the brief Sophisticated implementation of research shows insightful understanding of the key concepts	Sophisticated understanding of how meaning is created, offering insightful critical comments on the successes of their own product, fully supported with a wide range of examples Sophisticated engagement with all four questions A sophisticated understanding of the key concepts
13–15 marks	13–15 marks	9–10 marks	9–10 marks
Effective use of media language shows appropriate engagement with audience Production targets intended audience effectively, and is effective in convincing	Production is effective, and effectively follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre Technical elements are effectively handled and the production is mostly finished to a high standard across all tasks	Thorough research into appropriate professional products Effective planning appropriate to the requirements of the brief Thorough implementation of research shows effective understanding of the key concepts	Thorough understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, effectively supported with a range of examples Thorough engagement with all four questions An effective understanding of the key concepts
10–12 marks	10–12 marks	7–8 marks	7–8 marks

*Continued*

<b>AO3: Practical Application</b>		<b>AO2: Evaluation</b>	
		<b>40 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>
<b>Production skills</b>		<b>Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production</b>	<b>Analyse and evaluate own work</b>
<b>Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience</b>	<b>Use technical skills effectively to express and communicate ideas</b>	<b>Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding</b>	<b>Explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence</b>
<b>15 marks</b>	<b>15 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	<b>10 marks</b>
<p>Clear use of media language shows some engagement with audience</p> <p>Production targets intended audience appropriately, and is mostly convincing</p> <p style="text-align: right;">7–9 marks</p>	<p>Production is appropriate, and mostly follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre</p> <p>Technical elements are effectively handled and the production is sometimes finished to a high standard. The finish may be inconsistent across all tasks, and content may be repetitive</p> <p style="text-align: right;">7–9 marks</p>	<p>Clear research into appropriate professional products</p> <p>Appropriate planning meets the requirements of the brief</p> <p>Implementation of research shows clear understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5–6 marks</p>	<p>Clear understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, appropriately supported with examples</p> <p>Clear engagement with all four questions</p> <p>A clear understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5–6 marks</p>
<p>Limited use of media language shows general engagement with audience</p> <p>Production simply targets intended audience, and is generally appropriate</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4–6 marks</p>	<p>Production is limited, and generally follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre, with limited success</p> <p>Technical elements are generally handled appropriately, and the major and minor tasks are complete. The minor tasks may rely heavily on repetition of content from the major task, or each other</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4–6 marks</p>	<p>Limited research into appropriate professional products</p> <p>Generally appropriate planning meeting some of the requirements of the brief</p> <p>Implementation of research shows limited understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3–4 marks</p>	<p>Limited understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, generally supported with limited examples</p> <p>Limited engagement with the questions, with some uneven coverage</p> <p>A limited understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3–4 marks</p>
<p>Basic use of media language shows minimal engagement with audience</p> <p>Production shows only basic understanding of intended audience, and may lack relevance to the major and minor tasks</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1–3 marks</p>	<p>Production is basic, and shows minimal understanding of the codes and conventions of the genre</p> <p>Technical elements are limited in their success, and the major and/or minor tasks may not be complete</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1–3 marks</p>	<p>Basic research into appropriate professional products</p> <p>Limited planning meets few of the requirements of the brief</p> <p>Implementation of research shows minimal understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1–2 marks</p>	<p>Minimal understanding of how meaning is created, offering basic or obvious critical comments on the successes of their own products, with a minimal selection of examples</p> <p>Basic engagement with the four questions, uneven coverage is likely</p> <p>A basic understanding of the key concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1–2 marks</p>
<p>No creditable content</p> <p style="text-align: right;">0 marks</p>	<p>No creditable content</p> <p style="text-align: right;">0 marks</p>	<p>No creditable content</p> <p style="text-align: right;">0 marks</p>	<p>No creditable content</p> <p style="text-align: right;">0 marks</p>

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## 5 What else you need to know

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This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

### Before you start

#### Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have completed a course in English equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level First Language English.

We do not expect learners starting this course to have previously studied Media Studies.

#### Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

#### Technology requirements

Any centre teaching this course must ensure they have suitable technical equipment and up-to-date resources, software and staff training. The minimum resourcing requirements for the delivery of the coursework components are:

- digital technology suitable for the construction of media texts within the briefs set
- internet access suitable for research and presentation of student work.

#### Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone)

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables)

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates cannot enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

#### Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

## Group awards: Cambridge AICE Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE Diploma at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice)

## Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

## Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

## Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

## Retakes and carrying forward marks

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes)

Candidates can carry forward their Cambridge International AS Level marks from one series to complete their Cambridge International A Level in a following series. The rules, time limits and regulations for carry-forward entries can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

Candidates cannot resubmit, in whole or in part, coursework from a previous series for re-marking. For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

Marks achieved in 9607 Component 01 Foundation Portfolio and Component 3: Advanced Portfolio can be carried forward on their own to future series, subject to the requirements set out in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

Marks achieved in 9607 Component 1: Foundation Portfolio and Component 3: Advanced Portfolio can be carried forward to complete an AS Level or an A Level. This is only allowed if:

- all other components of the AS Level Component 2: Media Texts are taken in the series that the candidate completes their AS Level

or

- all other components of the A Level Component 2: Media Texts and Component 4: Critical Perspectives are taken in the series that the candidate completes their A Level.

It is not possible to carry forward only 9607 Component 3: Advanced Portfolio. If both 9607 Component 1: Foundation Portfolio and 9607 Component 3: Advanced Portfolio are carried forward, they do not need to have been submitted in the same series.

An AS Level which consists of component 9607 Component 2: Media Texts and Contexts which was taken in one series, e.g. November 2025, and coursework 9607 Component 1: Foundation Portfolio which was submitted in an earlier series, e.g. June 2025, cannot be carried forward to complete an A Level in a future series.

For information, refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment and the *Carry-forward regulations supplement* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series.

## Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

## Accessibility and equality

### Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

## Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

### Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

- For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment.
- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. All applications should be made by the deadlines published in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

## After the exam

### Grading and reporting

Grades a, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS Level. 'a' is the highest and 'e' is the lowest grade.

Grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A\* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (E or e). 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

On the statement of results, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificates of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level) and GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

On the certificates, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificate of Education.

**School feedback:** 'Cambridge International A Levels are the 'gold standard' qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.'

**Feedback from:** Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand



## How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

### Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement  
The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.
- 2 to show likely future success  
The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.  
The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

### Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement  
The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.
- 2 to show likely future success  
The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.  
The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career  
The outcomes help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue  
The outcomes guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

## Changes to this syllabus for 2027

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2024.

**You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.** We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.



Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

With a Customer Services team available 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, and dedicated regional teams supporting schools in 160 countries, we understand your local context and are here to guide you so you can provide your learners with everything they need to prepare for Cambridge International AS & A Level.

### Quality management

We are committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international education programmes and qualifications for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/)



**School feedback:** ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

**Feedback from:** Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

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