
GCSE MEDIA STUDIES 8572/1

Paper 1 Media One

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
01		Which of the following features demonstrates anchorage in Figure 1? Shade one circle only. Assessment objective – AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies. (1 mark) D – The cover line ‘007’s GADGETS’.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks												
02		Analyse the front cover of <i>How It Works</i> magazine (Figure 1) to show how codes and conventions communicate meaning. Assessment objective – AO2 1a Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts. (12 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>10–12</td><td> - Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is thorough and effective throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Good analysis of the product that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is mostly effective although lacks clarity in places. - Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Some satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with obvious or more straightforward aspects of how codes and conventions are used to communicate meaning. </td></tr></table>	Level	Mark range	Description	4	10–12	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is thorough and effective throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	7–9	- Good analysis of the product that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is mostly effective although lacks clarity in places. - Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	2	4–6	Some satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with obvious or more straightforward aspects of how codes and conventions are used to communicate meaning.	12
Level	Mark range	Description													
4	10–12	- Excellent analysis of the product that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is thorough and effective throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.													
3	7–9	- Good analysis of the product that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how codes and conventions are using to communicate meaning. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is mostly effective although lacks clarity in places. - Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.													
2	4–6	Some satisfactory analysis of the product that engages with obvious or more straightforward aspects of how codes and conventions are used to communicate meaning.													

		- Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions that is inconsistent. - Occasionally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	
1	1–3	- Basic analysis of the product only focusing on the more straightforward aspects of how codes and conventions are used to communicate meaning. Likely to be more descriptive than analytical. - Focus on a range of meanings communicated by the use of codes and conventions is largely absent. - Very little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	

Deciding on a level

Answers which respond in depth should be rewarded in the same way as answers which respond with breadth of detail. Answers which do not refer to several components of codes and conventions are not likely to receive marks above mid-Level 3. Answers which do not refer to codes and conventions should not normally receive marks above low-Level 2. However, examiners may use their discretion to reward such answers at a higher level if the understanding of codes and conventions in relation to the product is particularly good.

Note to examiners: candidates who copy phrases (such as the distractors) from Question 1 should only be credited if they go on to show how these aspects communicate meaning.

Indicative content

Responses may demonstrate ability to analyse a media product using the theoretical framework (media language, media representations) by referring to:

- design and layout
- typography
- non-verbal and verbal codes
- colour palette
- photographic codes.

Design and Layout:

- Dense layout communicates ‘action packed’ content and suggests science and tech genre.
- Cultural icon James Bond/007 positioned right of centre staring at the audience, anchored to gadgets/technology (rather than, say, women) as per genre.
- Photos of 007’s gadgets placed in a circular pattern around the subheading.

	• Futuristic gadgets (submarine supercars, exploding watches, jet packs, DB5 spy defences, stealth boats, robot dogs) but which are variations on familiar objects. • Prominence of FREE/WIN emphasises free extras/competitions inside magazine. • Futuristic theme in second and third panel at bottom but grounded in 'being possible' (science). • Single word 'Future' (white on black) in rectangle above issue number denotes themes of this issue; inverse caption. • Topical/real environmental themes communicated in the three corners 'from space to the volcanoes to bottom of the sea'. • 'Tap to play' trailer denotes digital edition. Typography: • Various typefaces repeated in different fonts/sizes/angles that link themes and concepts of issue and magazine genre. • Magazine title/subheading in different typefaces (but same colours used) suggests chaos/excitement. • Climate change/volcanic eruptions implicitly linked by using the same typeface. • Various captions such as FREE/WIN/'How James Bond's Incredible Toys...'/magazine content use the same typeface in different font sizes to provide supplementary information. Non-verbal and verbal codes: • Constructed nature of reality, blend of familiar/futuristic, topical/discussion of the future. • Absence of any female representation/lack of wider social representation on the cover. • Indirect address, no use of second person ('you') so while the theme is futuristic, the language implies factual discussions/explanations (not 'you could be like' fantasy). • Language implies magazine has the answers to the questions/content that will resolve the enigmas of the front page. • Mostly declarative statements give the audience confidence that the magazine knows 'how it works'. • One interrogative 'Could we build total recall?' that edges into science fiction rather than science fact. • One exclamative 'New look!' implies magazine keeping pace with technology. • Short/impactful, maximum 9-word phrases, most around half that length, placed for maximum impact. • Use of adjectives, eg 'incredible', 'deadliest', 'exploding', 'amazing', to convey wonder and awe. Colour palette: • Main headings/some subheadings white on black, captions inverse black on white. • James Bond 'dressed to kill' in white and black. • Red laser symbolises futuristic themes. • Red used for FREE/WIN font. • Orange colour used to imply 'Earth is overheating' even 'volcanic'.	
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		• Blue colour used to link oceans in top left/bottom right. • Video-game style blue colour on captions for all the gadgets. • Use of inverse colours, eg 'New look!'/ 'How James Bond's....' and 'Climate change'. Photographic codes: • James Bond/gadgets in the shadows. • Bright white headings convey there will be solutions to 'how everything works'. • Backlit 'bottom of the ocean'/baby/total recall panels suggest 'brighter future'. This is not an exhaustive list of all elements or potential meanings. Other readings and interpretations might still be valid. Any valid references should be credited. Marks in the higher bands might demonstrate qualities in either the breadth or the depth of the response.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks									
03		Analyse the front cover (Figure 2) to show how female celebrities are represented to the readers of <i>Heat</i> magazine. Assessment Objective – AO2 1a Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts. (8 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>7–8</td><td> • Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Excellent use of the theoretical framework demonstrating detailed and accurate understanding of how audiences interpret media products. • Consistently appropriate and effective subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> • Good analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Good use of the theoretical framework demonstrating clear understanding of how audiences interpret media products. </td></tr></table>	Level	Mark range	Description	4	7–8	• Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Excellent use of the theoretical framework demonstrating detailed and accurate understanding of how audiences interpret media products. • Consistently appropriate and effective subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	5–6	• Good analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Good use of the theoretical framework demonstrating clear understanding of how audiences interpret media products.	8
Level	Mark range	Description										
4	7–8	• Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is detailed and critically engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Excellent use of the theoretical framework demonstrating detailed and accurate understanding of how audiences interpret media products. • Consistently appropriate and effective subject-specific terminology throughout.										
3	5–6	• Good analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that is clear and generally engages with the nuanced aspects of how female celebrities are represented. • Good use of the theoretical framework demonstrating clear understanding of how audiences interpret media products.										

		Mostly appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	
2	3–4	- Satisfactory analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover that engages with obvious or straightforward aspects of how female celebrities are represented. - Satisfactory use of the theoretical framework demonstrating some understanding of how audiences interpret media products. - Occasionally appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	
1	1–2	- Basic analysis of the <i>Heat</i> magazine front cover with only limited, if any, attention given to aspects of how female celebrities are represented. - Limited use of the theoretical framework demonstrating understanding of how audiences interpret media products. - Very little, if any, use of subject-specific terminology.	
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	

	Indicative content Responses should demonstrate the ability to analyse a media product using the theoretical framework (media language and media representation) by referring to: - The factors affecting audience interpretations of representations including their own experiences and beliefs. - Audience positioning. - Decoding - the influence of social variables such as age, class, gender, ethnicity on the interpretation of media representations. - Sense of letting the audience into shared secrets which the magazine is exposing. - Use of first names only (Cheryl, Posh) positions the audience on first name terms with celebrities. - Judgemental tone ('biggest mistake yet') and sensationalised language ('SHOCK NEW PICS') invites the audience to be critical and (in use of first names) personal. - Only the two women across the bottom of the page are looking at the camera. The others look evasive, off-guard, lost in their own world – portrayed as selfish, self-absorbed, duplicitous, shameful. - Even Giovanna is presented as concealing a secret; the 'celeb inspo' women's 'guilty purchases'. The connotations are that 'all women have something to hide'. - Although it's Liam's 'double life', Cheryl is made to look responsible for it and with a look of indifference to the (implied) infidelity. - Posh is portrayed as a liar, both in terms of language and the photos, intended to shame her.	
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		• Dani is shown as lacking control and agency, further contributing to the negative representations of women. • Use of single quotes suggests information is not reliable/verifiable, eg 'terrified', 'double life'. • Conflicting use of language – Captions 'CELEB INSPO' which suggest the celebrities should be an inspiration to the audience, versus language which suggests they are 'letting the audience down' with their double life/secrets/accumulation of 'mistakes'. • Anchorage of guilt: 'CAUGHT OUT!' as a caption in the centre of the page. • Varied use of typefaces and fonts, with repeated use of magenta/white, yellow typeface; yellow/black. • Word choice, eg: • Use of exclamatives – CAUGHT OUT!, Queen of the castle!, CHRISTMAS IS OFFICIALLY OPEN! • Interrogative (and use of adjective/adverb) – Is this Harry and Meghan's <i>biggest</i> mistake <i>yet</i>? • Declaratives – DANI 'TERRIFIED'..., Liam's 'double life'..., SECRETIVE STAR..., GIOVANNA'S SECRET HEARTACHE, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, SHOCK NEW PICS, I'M A CELEB EXCLUSIVE ○ Adjectives – secret, secretive, biggest ○ Use of proper nouns (their names) rather than pronouns – third person narrative structure 'telling a story'. Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks															
04		Analyse how the cover of <i>Heat</i> (Figure 2) uses the genre principles of repetition and variation. Assessment Objective – AO2 1a Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts. (6 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> - Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with nuanced aspects of repetition and variation. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>3–4</td><td> - Satisfactory analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with aspects of repetition and variation. - Some appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1–2</td><td> - Basic analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that engages only with the straightforward or simple aspects of repetition and variation. - Limited appropriate use of the theoretical framework. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr></table> Answers that make no reference to the cover of <i>Heat</i> (Figure 2) should not normally be awarded a mark above Level 2. However, examiners may use their discretion to award a mark in the highest level if knowledge and understanding of repetition and variation are particularly consistent and excellent. Indicative content Responses may demonstrate ability to analyse a media product using the theoretical framework (media language, media representations) by discussing aspects such as those shown below.	Level	Mark range	Description	3	5–6	- Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with nuanced aspects of repetition and variation. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	3–4	- Satisfactory analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with aspects of repetition and variation. - Some appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	1	1–2	- Basic analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that engages only with the straightforward or simple aspects of repetition and variation. - Limited appropriate use of the theoretical framework. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	6
Level	Mark range	Description																
3	5–6	- Excellent analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with nuanced aspects of repetition and variation. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework throughout. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
2	3–4	- Satisfactory analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that is detailed and engages with aspects of repetition and variation. - Some appropriate and effective use of the theoretical framework. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.																
1	1–2	- Basic analysis of the <i>Heat</i> front cover that engages only with the straightforward or simple aspects of repetition and variation. - Limited appropriate use of the theoretical framework. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.																
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.																

		Repetition • similar collage style cover design each edition – readers understand how to ‘read’ the cover and they can quickly see what stories appeal to them. • three colour house style usually including white, a bold colour and feminine colour which in this edition is pink. This makes the magazine appealing to a predominantly female audience. • the masthead is white in lower case and is often partially covered by the main image. This appeals to readers as it makes the magazine seem like it is always so full of stories that the masthead is secondary to the busy sell lines and images. • the fonts used are a mixture of capitalised phrases and sentence case, again making the audience feel there is a lot to look at. The magazine also uses punctuation to indicate to the reader that a story might be shocking or that the magazine is close to the source. • the front cover uses stock phrases such as ‘shock’, ‘behind closed doors’, ‘exclusive’ connoting to the reader that they have insider knowledge of dramatic stories. • the magazine focuses predominantly on the lives of female celebrities from the world of reality TV, music and the royal family. This appeals to the audience as they are able to follow the lives of these women through the magazine as they often report on the same set of people. Variation • whilst the magazine does revisit the lives of the same women and type of women it does vary this week to week so that the audience don’t feel they are just getting the same tired news. • further to this <i>Heat</i> sometimes offers themed covers around issues they perceive the audience will be interested in such as parenthood, relationships (often break ups) and women’s bodies. • a peculiarity of this type of magazine is that in one edition the cover may make the opposite observation about the same person, this keeps the audience intrigued to find out what is ‘true’. • the puff in this edition is a TV guide which always features in the magazine but is not always advertised on the front cover. Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
05	1	Define the term 'superimposition'. Assessment objective – AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies. (1 mark) Award one mark for answers such as: • The placement of one thing over another. • Putting text or images on top of each other. • Layering of text and/or images. Also reward acceptable examples, such as: - When an image is placed over a masthead. - When part of a model covers part of a text 0 marks for answers that are vague or imprecise such as: • Something transparent. • Where one image is bigger than another. • Using images to reinforce a point. Accept any other valid response.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
05	2	Give an example of superimposition from the <i>Daily Mirror</i> double-page spread (Close Study Product). Assessment objective – AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies. (1 mark) Award one mark for any of these answers: • 'Summit to Save the World:' headline in a box over the main image • 'GREEN WASH Hygiene kits at summit' image placed over the main image • 'PROTESTS Demonstrators in Edinburgh' image placed over the main image • 'GETTING MESSY PM holds his head' image placed over the main image • 'TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADERS...' text placed over the main image • 'MASKED CRUSADE' caption placed over image of Greta Thunberg. • 'Extreme is the new norm' – headline placed over main image.	1

		0 marks for answers that are vague or imprecise such as: • The photos. • The headline. • ‘-25C’ (text wrap not superimposition). Accept any other valid response.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks															
05	3	Explain how newspapers use Propp’s character types. Answer with reference to the <i>Daily Mirror</i> double-page spread (Close Study Product) (Figure 3). Assessment Objective – AO1 1a and AO1 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media. (3 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media. (3 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark Range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> - Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Consistently appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with detailed and accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>3–4</td><td> - Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Some appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1–2</td><td> - Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by occasionally appropriate explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Limited appropriate focus in relation to narrative theory with reference to the CSP/Figure 3. - Little, if any, appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr></table> Answers which do not refer to the CSP should not normally receive more than above low level 2. However, examiners may use their discretion to reward such answers at a higher level if the knowledge and understanding	Level	Mark Range	Description	3	5–6	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Consistently appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with detailed and accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	3–4	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Some appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	1	1–2	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by occasionally appropriate explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Limited appropriate focus in relation to narrative theory with reference to the CSP/Figure 3. - Little, if any, appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	6
Level	Mark Range	Description																
3	5–6	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistently effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Consistently appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with detailed and accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
2	3–4	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Some appropriate and effective focus in relation to narrative theory with accurate references to the CSP/Figure 3. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
1	1–2	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by occasionally appropriate explanation of how newspapers use Propp’s character types. - Limited appropriate focus in relation to narrative theory with reference to the CSP/Figure 3. - Little, if any, appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.																

	of Propp’s character types relating to the <i>Daily Mirror</i> double-page spread are particularly good. Indicative content There is no requirement for responses to cover all of Propp’s character types. There may also be different readings of the article and as such examiners should be prepared for different examples from the article for the same character type. Responses should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework (media language) by referring to: Propp’s Character Types in the <i>Daily Mirror</i> double-page spread • hero/protagonist ○ Boris Johnson – ‘Boris Johnson will on Monday issue a doomsday warning that the world is at “one minute to midnight” on efforts to tackle climate change’ ○ Greta Thunberg – ‘Greta Thunberg warned the UK: “When you see a pattern of these policies, that all the time are avoiding taking real action, then I think you can draw conclusions... that climate change is not really our main priority right now”’/Described in caption as ‘Masked Crusade’ connotations of superheroes • princess/prize ○ Stopping climate change/the aims of the G20 summit • villain/antagonist ○ Greta Thunberg – Described in caption as ‘Masked Crusade’ connotations of vigilantism and law-breaking ○ The three biggest polluters – ‘But chances of a breakthrough fell after Xi Jinping of China, Vladimir Putin of Russia and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil - three of the world’s biggest polluters - announced they were staying away.’ • dispatcher ○ Boris Johnson – ‘if we don’t get serious about climate change today’ ○ Prince Charles – ‘We need a vast military-style campaign’ • helper ○ The Protestors – ‘25,000 people are descending on Glasgow this fortnight with protests from environmental campaigners expected.’ ○ The leaders at the G20 summit – ‘Take me to your leaders’ • donor ○ Prince Charles – ‘will today call for trillions of dollars[...] • false hero ○ Boris Johnson ‘A gloomy Mr Johnson [...] event was heading for failure’ Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks												
05	4	Explain how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. Answer with reference to the <i>Daily Mirror</i> in Figure 3. Assessment Objectives – AO1 2a and AO1 2b Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. (4 marks) Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. (8 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark Range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>10–12</td><td> - Excellent knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by consistently effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3. - Specialist terminology is used appropriately and effectively throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Good knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by frequent effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Generally appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3, even though there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. - Specialist terminology is mostly used appropriately and effectively. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by some appropriate explanation of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Some appropriate reference to the CSP and Figure 3 is present but it is of limited effectiveness. - Specialist terminology is sometimes used inappropriately and with limited effectiveness. </td></tr></table>	Level	Mark Range	Description	4	10–12	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by consistently effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3. - Specialist terminology is used appropriately and effectively throughout.	3	7–9	- Good knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by frequent effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Generally appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3, even though there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. - Specialist terminology is mostly used appropriately and effectively.	2	4–6	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by some appropriate explanation of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Some appropriate reference to the CSP and Figure 3 is present but it is of limited effectiveness. - Specialist terminology is sometimes used inappropriately and with limited effectiveness.	12
Level	Mark Range	Description													
4	10–12	- Excellent knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by consistently effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3. - Specialist terminology is used appropriately and effectively throughout.													
3	7–9	- Good knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by frequent effective explanations of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Generally appropriate and effective reference to the CSP and Figure 3, even though there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. - Specialist terminology is mostly used appropriately and effectively.													
2	4–6	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by some appropriate explanation of how a newspaper’s political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. - Some appropriate reference to the CSP and Figure 3 is present but it is of limited effectiveness. - Specialist terminology is sometimes used inappropriately and with limited effectiveness.													

1	1–3	• Basic knowledge and understanding of contexts and their influence on media products and processes, demonstrated by little if any appropriate explanation of how a newspaper's political view influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society. • Little, if any, appropriate reference to the CSP and Figure 3. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Answers which do not refer to the CSP should not normally receive marks above low Level 2. However, examiners may use their discretion to reward such answers at a higher level if the knowledge and understanding of political contexts relating to the *Daily Mirror* double-page spread are particularly good.

Indicative content

Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of how a newspaper's political context influences the way it represents and misrepresents different groups in society by referring to examples such as:
The story of the G20 and the impending COP26 climate summit and the extreme weather is covered in a double-page spread. At the time of publication, the Labour Party broadly praised the outcomes of the summit but did suggest that Boris Johnson should have pushed Alok Sharma (COP26 president) harder on some of the claims.

Responses may explore the representation and misrepresentation of social groups in relation to the political context by making points such as the following:

The *Daily Mirror*

- Traditionally, the political leanings of the *Daily Mirror* are to the Labour Party. The newspaper is owned by Reach PLC (formerly Mirror Group Newspapers) which has confirmed that Mirror newspapers will continue with their centre-left position. The newspaper's position on the environment and climate change is that it is a real and imminent threat that needs addressing.
- The representation of Boris Johnson is quite mixed and is not typical of the newspaper's political stance. Quotes used represent Johnson as statesman-like 'doomsday warning' and in control but they do also connote that he is not very confident of success as he is described as 'gloomy'.
- This is reinforced in the image and caption of Boris Johnson which is much more typical of the newspaper's representation of the PM as he is shown with worried body language running his hand through messy hair anchored with the caption - 'GETTING MESSY PM holds his head'.

	• The article also casts doubt on his commitment highlighting criticism due to his own domestic policies, this is much more typical of the representations of right-wing politicians in the newspaper. • The quotes taken from Thunberg make her position clear 'When you see a pattern [...] climate change is not really our priority right now'. She is linked firmly with the protestors as that is the next sentence on from her. She is however described as an 'activist' which has more positive connotations. • The image and caption could be interpreted in different ways. She is not given very much space in the verbal and non-verbal codes with her image much smaller than that of the world leaders suggesting her limited power or impact. The caption 'MASKED CRUSADE' might represent Thunberg as either superhero or as a criminal trying to hide her face. • The bottom story in the double-page spread has some focus on Prince Charles. The political leanings of the newspaper would suggest a republican stance but in this article the image and quotes from the Prince are focused solely on his role as a big name in this area. • The size and dominance of the image of the G20 leaders in comparison to the image of protestors even though there are going to be '25 000 descending' on the city demonstrates the newspaper's political position that supports the capitalist status quo top-down politics to tackle global issues. • The use of the word 'descending' suggests the protestors are a negative part of the summit. • Lots of factual and statistical information from the MET office and WMO • lack of any response from the Labour Party. This might be because the two parties are quite aligned on a global issue. Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
06	1	Define the term 'merger'. Assessment objective – AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media. (1 mark) Award one mark for the definition: merger – when two or more companies agree to unite and become one company. Accept any other valid response. 0 marks for answers that are too vague, imprecise, or simply repeats the term merger, such as: • get bigger. • joins together. • when two companies work/do a project/make a film together, etc. • collab/collaboration.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks
06	2	Define the term 'takeover'. Assessment objective – AO1 1a Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media. (1 mark) Award one mark for the definition: • takeover – when one company makes a successful bid to assume control of another • takeover – when one company makes a successful bid to acquire another sometimes by buying a majority share in the target firm. Accept any other valid response. 0 marks for answers that are too vague, imprecise, or simply repeats the term 'takeover' such as: • takes on more business.	1

Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks															
07		Explain how an audience's response to a video game might change over time. Answer with reference to <i>Lara Croft Go</i> (Close Study Product). Assessment objectives – AO1 1a and AO1 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media. (3 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media. (3 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> - Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Consistently appropriate reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>3–4</td><td> - Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1–2</td><td> - Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr></table> Indicative content Responses should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework (media audiences) by referring to: - When <i>Lara Croft Go</i> was first released, mobile games were still developing an audience, making it quite novel and popular. Given that the game is now over 10 years old, a lot of its novelty will have been lost and it is clearly not as popular.	Level	Marks	Descriptor	3	5–6	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Consistently appropriate reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	3–4	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	1	1–2	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	6
Level	Marks	Descriptor																
3	5–6	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Consistently appropriate reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
2	3–4	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.																
1	1–2	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how an audience's response to a game changes over time. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.																
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.																

	• When the game was first released, the Tomb Raider franchise was still very much in the public eye and Lara Croft had cultural significance. However, given that last main series Tomb Raider game was released over five years ago (at time of writing), Lara Croft's cultural currency is a great deal lower. • Given that the game is over 10 years old it may have lost its playability over a long period of time. It has not been updated since shortly after release and therefore an audience may find the game stale; when it was first released, The Shard of Life expansion and exclusive PS4/PS Vita levels helped maintain interest in the game. • The game has a limited storyline and short play time and as such might have little replay value for long term user satisfaction; other Tomb Raider games have maintained their audience interest (the original games are being re-released in remastered format in 2024, demonstrating their longevity, whereas LCG is now something of a franchise footnote). • When it was first released, LCG was commended for, and indeed was award-nominated for, its design. There have been a number of developments in mobile gaming since 2014 which mean that, despite its design merits, LCG now looks very old-fashioned and thus is less likely to generate the same response. • There has been a shift in attitudes towards female and social representation since 2014 (partly as a result of #MeToo) and as such the game may feel outdated and irrelevant in its representations of Lara and other cultures to an audience. Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks															
08		How are blockbuster films marketed and distributed globally? Answer with reference to <i>Black Widow</i> (Close Study Product). Assessment objectives – AO1 1a and AO1 1b Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media. (3 marks) Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media. (6 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Marks</th><th>Descriptor</th></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>7–9</td><td> - Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>4–6</td><td> - Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1–3</td><td> - Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Nothing worthy of credit.</td></tr></table> Deciding on a level Answers which respond in depth should be rewarded in the same way as answers which respond with breadth of detail. Answers which do not refer to the CSP should not normally receive marks above mid-Level 2. However, examiners may use their discretion to reward such answers at a higher level if the knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework relating to global film distribution is particularly good.	Level	Marks	Descriptor	3	7–9	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	2	4–6	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	1	1–3	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	9
Level	Marks	Descriptor																
3	7–9	- Excellent and accurate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by consistent and effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Consistently appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.																
2	4–6	- Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by generally effective explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Some appropriate and effective reference to the CSP. - Some appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.																
1	1–3	- Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework, demonstrated by limited appropriate explanation of how blockbuster films are marketed and distributed globally. - Limited appropriate reference to the CSP. - Little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.																
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.																

	Indicative content Responses should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework (media industries) by referring to the following: • Blockbuster films are increasingly a product of globalisation across all stages – film production, distribution and exhibition. • Film producers are aware of the need for films to play well to global audiences and therefore consider this in their choice of stars, locations, genres and narratives. • This plays out in the marketing of films which is tweaked to the demographic of each territory. This might mean emphasising the love story in one country whilst focusing on the crime conventions in another. Netflix is a good example of how audiences are targeted through different trailers or previews. • It can also mean a global marketing campaign where the same trailers, website, junkets, posters are used across all territories. This has led to discussion around U.S. cultural imperialism in terms of the dominance of Hollywood blockbusters that reflect privileged representations. • Increasingly films have global releases via cinema, streaming services or DVD (sometimes simultaneously). This has become increasingly popular because of fears around film piracy. It also enables distributors to capitalise on global 'buzz' from social media. • The global pandemic impacted on film distribution as cinemas were closed across the globe. This led to some films being held back which became part of the marketing as it increased audience anticipation. It also meant some studios used their cross media distribution networks to stream direct to audience TVs on a pay per view basis. <i>Black Widow</i> • <i>Black Widow</i> premiered at events around the world on June 29, 2021 and then was distributed on multiple platforms in the United States on the 9th July, simultaneously in theatres and through Disney+ with Premier Access. It premiered in 46 territories over the course of its first weekend. • The film was officially announced at the 2019 San Diego Comic-Con which has global press coverage. The film release was delayed three times from the original May 2020 release date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. • This allowed the distributors to develop the marketing campaign and show off different aspects of the film such as, character looks and story points. A significant amount of the 'lockdown' marketing played out across a number of social media platforms such as YouTube and TikTok which have almost global reach. These mainly featured trailers and character teasers that in lockdown were crucial for maintaining interest and which closely targeted that demographic. • The campaign featured 30 brands and additional custom partnerships such as streaming services including Amazon, Roku and Fandango. • <i>Black Widow</i> was different to previous MCU movies reflecting the desire for big studios to be seen as more diverse on the global stage. This can be seen in the marketing which emphasizes Scarlett	
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		Johansson's role as the lone female protagonist. This demonstrates how <i>Black Widow</i>'s marketing strategy was aimed at attracting an international diverse audience in order to recoup the \$200 million budget. • Star power is an important aspect of the marketing of the film with Johansson already part of the successful MCU <i>Iron Man</i> franchise thus having legitimacy with fans of the series. The poster and trailer feature the main cast including well-known actors such as Ray Winstone and David Harbour (known for the lead role in <i>Hellboy</i>, another comic book series). The cast also includes black British and French Ukrainian actors which again widens the global audience for the film. • The usual schedule spacing between each distribution model was condensed - cinema/streaming/physical release in less than 3 months. Other valid points must be credited.	
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Qu	Part	Marking guidance	Total marks												
09		‘The video games industry is only concerned with profit.’ How far do you agree with this statement? Answer with reference to: • how the media operate as commercial industries on a global scale • historical and cultural contexts of the media • <i>Lara Croft Go</i> (Close Study Product). Assessment objective – AO1 1b, AO1 2b and AO2 1b Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media. (5 marks) Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes. (5 marks) Make judgements and draw conclusions. (10 marks) <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Mark Range</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>16–20</td><td> • Excellent understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by consistently effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by reference to the CSP. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout. </td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>11–15</td><td> • Good understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by frequent effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Good judgements and conclusions that are frequently supported by relevant reference to the CSP. • Frequent appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology. </td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>6–10</td><td> • Satisfactory understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by some appropriate but not always convincing discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by reference to the CSP. </td></tr></table>	Level	Mark Range	Description	4	16–20	• Excellent understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by consistently effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by reference to the CSP. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.	3	11–15	• Good understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by frequent effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Good judgements and conclusions that are frequently supported by relevant reference to the CSP. • Frequent appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	2	6–10	• Satisfactory understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by some appropriate but not always convincing discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by reference to the CSP.	20
Level	Mark Range	Description													
4	16–20	• Excellent understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by consistently effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Excellent, astute judgements and conclusions that are consistently well supported by reference to the CSP. • Consistently appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology throughout.													
3	11–15	• Good understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by frequent effective discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Good judgements and conclusions that are frequently supported by relevant reference to the CSP. • Frequent appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.													
2	6–10	• Satisfactory understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by some appropriate but not always convincing discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. • Satisfactory judgements and conclusions that are sometimes supported by reference to the CSP.													

		Occasional appropriate and effective use of subject-specific terminology.	
1	1–5	- Basic understanding of both the theoretical framework and the influence of contexts, demonstrated by very little, if any appropriate discussion of the extent to which the video games industry is only concerned with profit. - Basic judgements and conclusions that are generally unsupported by reference to the CSP. - Very little, if any, appropriate use of subject-specific terminology.	
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.	

Answers which respond in depth should be rewarded in the same way as answers which respond with breadth of detail. Answers with understanding of the theoretical framework and context of the media but no reference to the CSP should not normally receive marks above Level 2.

Answers in the higher bands must show extended responses that demonstrate the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning that is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured in order to reach judgements and make conclusions.

There is no expectation that the responses will be entirely balanced. If a student constructs a clear argument on either side of this debate, then this should not prevent them from reaching the higher mark bands. Similarly, there is no requirement to deal with the contexts of the CSP in a balanced way, but answers which make no reference to either of the CSP's contexts are unlikely to reach Level 4.

Responses may conclude that the video game industry is one of the most profitable media forms in the world and that making money is the only thing producers are concerned with. Alternatively, answers may judge that there is some evidence to support a counter-argument (particularly given the low amounts of revenue generated by *Lara Croft Go*) so that it is impossible to arrive at a definitive conclusion.

Any judgements and conclusions are valid and all allow access to the top level if they are supported by evidence from the course of study.

Indicative content

It should be noted that candidates might refer to *Kim Kardashian Hollywood* within their answers. Although no indicative content has been included relating to this game, any relevant points should be accepted. However, if candidates do not refer to *Lara Croft Go*, it is unlikely that they will be marked beyond Level 2.

		Answers should demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media with references to media industries and the CSP such as the following. The ‘wider’ video games industry • Candidates may explore this question from a number of perspectives, considering the scale of the video games industry; the examples given below should be regarded as illustrations only and it is not to be expected that students will refer to specific games beyond <i>Lara Croft Go</i>. • As with all media industries, the gaming industry is driven by the need to make money. Profitable video games can make more money than Hollywood blockbusters (and can cost more to develop – <i>Cyberpunk 2077</i> reputedly cost nearly \$500 million dollars, more than <i>Avengers: Endgame</i>). The entire gaming industry is worth at least \$350 billion – more than the entire global film and TV industries combined. • The reliance of the gaming industry on franchises suggests that the industry puts profit ahead of creativity or originality. Many developers, particularly those with a multi-national presence (eg Nintendo, Ubisoft, Sony etc.) depend upon established properties to generate income. The most successful gaming series in the world (<i>Pokémon</i>, <i>Mario</i>, <i>Call of Duty</i> etc.) rely on repetition rather than innovation. • The inclusion of in-app purchases has increased substantially in recent years, with a significant number of games being designed to encourage players to use real-world currency to buy in-game items. This has been particularly noticeable with the targeting of younger audiences of games such as the <i>FIFA</i> series, <i>Roblox</i> and <i>Fortnite</i>, with incidents reported where gamers might spend hundreds of pounds on skins or other in-game content, making huge profits for the industry for very little outlay. Some developers have been criticised for ‘hiding’ popular features of games behind paywalls; for example, the 2017 game <i>Star Wars Battlefront II</i> required players to pay for more desirable characters (such as Darth Vader) if they wanted to play them straight away. Given that the in-game payment model has become ubiquitous, it is likely to be a significant argument in favour of the statement. • In a similar vein, sales of loot boxes could be seen to be an example of the industry being solely interested in profit. The EU has expressed concern that loot boxes are effectively a form of gambling. There are reports of some players spending hundreds if not thousands of pounds on loot boxes to acquire a particular feature which developers could have put into a game as standard. Although some developers have adjusted their games to allow players methods of accessing features without recourse to loot boxes, they are still a fundamental means of driving profit and many games are specifically designed to encourage players to spend money in this way, a choice the developers have clearly made to make as much money as possible. • The gaming industry is notorious for releasing products which are either incomplete or of a lower standard than expected which, given the high prices charged for some products, can demonstrate an interest in profit over audience satisfaction or creative pride. As far back as the release of <i>E.T.</i> on the Atari 2600 in 1982, gaming companies have released games which are incomplete, unplayable, or even broken in order to	
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		maximise potential profit. Recent examples include Hello Games' <i>No Man's Sky</i> (2016) which was released without many gameplay features promised by the developers, CD Projekt's <i>Cyberpunk 2077</i> (2020) which when released had bugs and technical issues so bad that Sony removed it from the PlayStation store, and <i>Redfall</i> (2023), a highly anticipated game from Arkane which, when released, appeared to be unfinished. Although some developers do try to support their players by improving their games (all three examples above have been heavily patched to make them better, often at significant cost to the companies), there are examples of gaming companies who have, effectively, abandoned their audiences (a recent example being <i>The Day Before</i>, an online 2023 game which, when released, was discovered to have few of the gameplay features the developers had promised and which was abandoned by its makers shortly afterwards, meaning that players who had paid for the game were left with an unplayable product). Examples such as those above suggest that the gaming industry will put making money in the short term ahead of customer satisfaction. • It could be argued that some developers are not solely concerned with profit. Some gaming platforms (such as <i>Roblox</i> or <i>Minecraft</i>) are designed to allow users to create and share their own content, functioning as a creative enterprise rather than being solely geared towards making money (although there are clearly significant counter-arguments about how <i>Roblox</i> does generate money from its users which could be used to support the argument). These types of platforms have also been used in an educational context, which might suggest a slightly more altruistic approach from developers beyond simply trying to make money. <i>Fortnite</i>, one of the most popular games in the world, is free to download and play (although as noted above makes huge amounts of money from in-app purchases). • It could be suggested that the gaming industry has created the opportunity for creators of GVC on YouTube and Twitch to produce their own content which does not directly profit the gaming industry itself (although it could be argued that some GVC creators make a lot of profit from their videos and that the gaming companies benefit indirectly from the promotion their products receive). • Many gaming stores such as Epic Games, Prime Gaming and Steam regularly offer free games. Although this is clearly a marketing technique designed to drive traffic to their platforms, it does give gamers something for nothing, suggesting at least some aspects of the gaming industry are not solely about profit. • Some games provide users with the facility to 'mod' or alter the game. In some cases, users have created entirely new games within existing games (for example, the original version of <i>DayZ</i>, a zombie game which started life as a free mod for another game called <i>Arma 2</i>). In other cases, users have made free DLC (Downloadable Content) which adds hundreds of hours of gameplay or new functions to existing games (the <i>Elder Scrolls</i> and <i>Fallout</i> series are particularly popular). These are often not monetised, with developers allowing or sometimes supporting the modding communities, suggesting that profit is not the only thing the industry cares about (although of course players need to buy the games before they can be modded).	
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		- It could also be argued that many games developers put a lot of thought into the creation and support of their games after release. Many games include hundreds of hours of gameplay, with some being regularly updated to add new content. Given that the cost of buying a game can go down quite dramatically a few months after release, it could be suggested that many video games provide excellent value for money when compared with other forms of media. The 2023 game <i>Baldur's Gate 3</i> costs £50 but provides up to 150 hours of gameplay whilst CD Projekt RED not only released free DLC for their 2015 game <i>The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt</i> (which added over 60 hours of gameplay to a game which already lasted about 50 hours), they also subsequently released a free remastered version of the game in 2023 which added even more content and brought the game up to date for newer gaming systems. Lara Croft Go <i>Lara Croft Go</i> (LCG) could be used as an example of a game which demonstrates how the gaming industry might be less concerned with profit. It has a comparatively low up-front cost (between £4–£8 pounds depending upon platform) and demonstrates a fair attention to detail in terms of design, playability, and quality (it is an award-winning game with high ratings); it could be argued that Square Enix Montreal demonstrate that they are less interested in making money than in producing a game at a level of quality not always seen from mobile developers. - The game follows the 'paidmium' model to a certain extent; although there are in-app purchases, these are limited to buying additional costumes (which can also be 'won' within the game by finding secrets) or paying for solutions to puzzles via a one-off purchase; it could be argued, therefore, that Square Enix are not particularly interested in using the game to generate profit, again perhaps unusual for a mobile developer (or any video games company). - It could be argued that the lack of updates for the game since shortly after its release suggests that the developers have abandoned it, and its players, being less concerned with paying to update the game than with profiting from it. Similarly, the comparatively short gameplay time (between 3.5 and 7 hours) might suggest that the game does not offer great value for money. However, since the game is nearly 10 years old, the cost is comparatively cheap and the gameplay well-reviewed, these might be seen to be unfair criticisms. - It might be considered that the game itself is a 'cash in' on the historically successful <i>Tomb Raider</i> franchise, one of the most well-established gaming properties, given that LCG itself has little in common with the parent series in terms of gameplay, suggesting that the developers are only interested in making money from fans by using the brand as a hook. However, there are many precedents for similar 'spin-off' games (<i>Tomb Raider</i> itself had several before LCG) and Square Enix Montreal used many elements from the original <i>Tomb Raider</i> games (Lara's costumes, the 'secrets' sound effect, imagery such as Lara's swan dive) which have nostalgia value for main-series fans, suggesting that care and attention has been paid to making the game relevant to fans rather than simply a re-skinned version of <i>Hitman Go</i> (one of the character skins refers to a particularly obscure easter egg from the original game which	
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		demonstrates the level of detail the developers went into to appeal to franchise fans). • Candidates might refer to the character of Lara Croft. On the one hand, she demonstrates an attempt by the gaming industry to create a positive role model for female gamers at a time when the industry was dominated by male characters; Lara is presented as a strong, independent, powerful figure and set a new benchmark for female representation in video games. It could be argued that this was a financial risk at a time when games were seen to be very much a masculine preserve, with the majority of playable characters being male. However, Lara was created by an all-male development team which (notoriously) designed her to satisfy the male gaze; there is some argument that the financial success of the <i>Tomb Raider</i> franchise was at least in part due to Lara's looks and that this was capitalized on by subsequent publishers and developers. This could be regarded as the gaming industry historically caring more about its profits than any kind of ideological mission. It might be discussed that developers of later <i>Tomb Raider</i> games toned down this element of Lara's character (although this in itself could be seen as being a means of maintaining profit as ideas of acceptable female representation changed or as the gaming audience became more female-dominated), whilst in <i>LCG</i> she is little more than a playing piece and (on a mobile screen) is so small that the physical character design has little significance. Other valid points must be credited.	
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8572/1 assessment objective grid**Assessment objective 1**

- 1a** Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical framework of media.
1b Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical framework of media.
2a Demonstrate knowledge of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes.
2b Demonstrate understanding of contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes.

Assessment objective 2

- 1a** Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts.
1b Make judgements and draw conclusions.

Question	AO1				AO2		Total
	1a	1b	2a	2b	1a	1b	
01	1						1
02					12		12
03					8		8
04					6		6
05.1	1						1
05.2	1						1
05.3	3	3					6
05.4			4	8			12
06.1	1						1
06.2	1						1
07	3	3					6
08	3	6					9
09		5		5		10	20
Total	14	17	4	13	26	10	84