

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Media Studies 2017

Standard 93303

Part A: Commentary

Overall, the examination paper allowed for a broad range of answers regardless of the medium and / or content the student studied. Candidates demonstrated very good subject knowledge of their topics and were generally able to provide good historical background within their argument. However, responses from candidates lacked an understanding of probable future trends, the ramifications of present conditions and the implications outside of their chosen topic / medium.

The inclusion of a third compulsory question generally led to shorter answers for each question. Many candidates provided more direct responses and more succinct and purposeful arguments. However, for some candidates this change resulted in less analysis and a greater reliance on description and explanation.

Responses to question one tended to lack a focus on close reading of texts. Many candidates wrote about genre rather than a specific text / style of filmmaking / production techniques / etc. It would be desirable to receive more responses that analyse and critique close readings, especially from providers who study print and other forms of media.

Part B: Report on performance standard

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with **Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- developed a clear, convincing argument that addressed the quote or statement
- included well considered, thoughtful analysis with considerable insight and/or originality
- had a strong understanding of historical context and could make connections between the past and current trends/events
- “unpacked” the quote / statement and argued from a range of positions
- demonstrated considerable understanding of ambiguity and subtlety in their argument
- applied their considerable subject knowledge in a convincing argument
- used media theory in a knowledgeable and appropriate way
- appropriately stated personal opinions and questioned both historical and contemporary decisions and trends
- analysed in depth their production experience with convincing reference to other texts.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- included well considered analysis with some insight

- responded effectively to the quote/statement and develop an argument using their subject knowledge
- used evidence from a range of sources in support of their argument
- demonstrated some understanding of ambiguity and subtlety in their argument
- demonstrated an understanding of historical context in relation to the quote/statement and how it fitted within the context of the question
- showed broad and/or deep subject knowledge through their argument
- used media theory where appropriate
- analysed their production experience with some reference to other texts.

Other candidates

Candidates who were **not** awarded Scholarship commonly:

- failed to address the quote/statement in a convincing way
- developed simplistic arguments
- applied pre-learnt answers to questions that were not reflective of the question raised
- made sweeping claims without clear supporting evidence
- used inappropriate or insufficient evidence
- did not attempt or complete all three essays
- spoke from one narrow point of view
- described their production experience with limited analysis or reflection.

Standard specific comments

A large number of candidates are using the same source and content material and are submitting similar responses, examples and analysis. This lack of diversity has hindered many candidates from gaining Scholarship and Outstanding Scholarship as their responses are often lacking insight, independence, originality of thought, and flexibility in favour of a pre-worked constructed argument. Candidates need to exhibit critical thinking within their responses and demonstrate personal insight.

Question 1(c) and 1(d) were by far the most popular statements within question 1. Many candidates used these statements to answer the question responses that might have been prepared for assessment against 91493 responses. In many cases, this meant that many candidates did not respond to the question effectively.

Film Noir appeared to be a popular genre in this examination. The genre overall provided a good vehicle for argument and candidates demonstrated a strong attachment to the genre and the way the codes and conventions were formed, applied and subverted. Likewise, candidates who studied The Western also provided strong responses. However, texts that were the base for answers in The Western genre were largely landmark films that subverted the genre rather than upheld the genre.

Question 2(a) allowed for a number of approaches. However, most candidates only referred to the first half of the question, using this to address prepared essays on the rise of Netflix and other streaming VOD. There were several well-constructed arguments regarding the decline of Sky and the rise of VOD. Many candidates argued against the question.

Question 2(b) provided a diverse set of answers. Whilst this provided for some good responses, most took the opportunity to discuss clickbait, Donald Trump's 2016 election, changing media industries and developments. However, very few candidates were able to look at historical practices and pull analysis from the events or outcomes. No candidate took the natural progression of historical and current events to predict future events and trends.

Question 2(c) was another popular question, allowing for arguments both for and against the question. Candidates who opposed the statement generally lacked a strong argument and fell into long-winded descriptions. A surprising number of candidates talked about changes in music technology, arguing that the technologies actually allowed for better music to be made. Whilst this argument has some credit, candidates failed to provide relevance to how this affected the music industry overall, nor did they relate this to the current industry and the interaction between the artists and the audience and how the music

labels have managed this change. Some candidates used the question effectively to discuss the decline of the print industry.

Question 2(d) provided candidates with the opportunity to discuss many aspects of the media. There were good responses surrounding fake news, click bait and TV news that came out of this question. However, a number of responses fell into the trap of focusing too much on Donald Trump and lost impartiality and a constructive argument.

In Question 3 many candidates wrote an account of their production experience journey including: preconceptions prior to their production; their struggles turning their planned production into reality; a success story; and a lesson learned followed by what they would do differently. This formula, when done well, offered the candidate the ability to gain a scholarship response. However, this formula did not allow for an outstanding scholarship response.

Candidate responses that stood out provided an in-depth discussion about an influencing media product and how the candidate's product interacted with it. For example, candidates wrote at large about an existing director's / writer's work, how it shaped their understanding of quality film or print and how it influenced their product, followed by how they took that influence and used it to shape a story or scene or film. However, candidates, in general, failed to provide analysis of their media product and were intrinsically inward looking. Very few candidates used peer or audience feedback, industry or provider based demands. Another opportunity taken by a few candidates was to discuss audience theory within planning stages of the product, how it shaped their product and / or dictated the direction of production. Some successful candidates used genre as a directing influence on the product and its creation, but often lacked the ability to define how these codes and conventions empowered or restricted their product.

[Subject page](#)

Previous years' reports

[2016 \(PDF, 192KB\)](#)

Copyright © New Zealand Qualifications Authority