

Assessment Report

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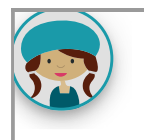
Part A: Commentary

Successful candidates had a very good understanding of their studied media product/audience relationship and/or aspect of a media genre. They developed well-structured, well-supported arguments in responding to their chosen statement.

Some candidates tried to apply rote-learned material to their chosen statement. This limited their success.

Part B: Report on standards

91248: Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between a media product and its audience



Examinations

The examination included four statements from which candidates were required to select one to use in their response.

The statements required candidates to apply their understanding of the studied relationship between a media product and its audience by responding to a chosen stimulus statement.

Candidates were required to think critically about the relationship by responding to their statement, providing a logical discussion supported by relevant evidence.

Observations

Overall, the exam functioned well, with all four statements used. However, statements 1 and 4 were less popular than statements 2 and 3. Statement 4 was the least popular option, but there was nothing in this or any other option that made candidates misinterpret the focus of the statements.

Candidates who were able to interrogate their chosen statement were more likely to gain Merit or Excellence. This meant that candidates had to tailor their approach and adapt their discussion and evidence to meet the specificities of each statement.

Candidates do need to be wary of simply rote learning material and regurgitating it without attending to the specificities of the chosen statement, regardless of the statement they have chosen. This tended to be an issue with statement 3, where some candidates would write half of the essay with material that responded to the statement and then simply write everything else they had studied about the media product and its relationship with an audience. These candidates were penalised, as even though all their material may have been relevant to the standard, they had not fully responded to the aspect indicated in the statement.

Candidates who wrote about up-to-date media products with sound supporting evidence tended to be more likely to display understanding at Merit and Excellence level.

A range of good media products was chosen that featured interesting relationships with their target audiences. These stood up under scrutiny and provided a wealth of primary and secondary material for the candidates to build a thorough, critical response.

Stranger Things was probably the most popular media product and tended to work well, although using the argument and evidence provided in previous

exemplars often meant candidates lacked the critical understanding needed to gain a higher grade.

It is important that products such as *Stranger Things*, *Al Jazeera*, and *Aroha Bridge* are augmented and freshened up each year with new material. Candidates must undertake a thorough, in-depth study of the media product and its relationship with an audience.

The Mandalorian was a new media product this year that worked well for this standard.

Candidates demonstrated an awareness of the requirements for Excellence in this standard with many attempting to discuss the consequences of the relationship. The use of verifiable, specific evidence and an understanding of the subtleties of the relationship separated the Excellence candidates from those at Achievement and Merit who used insufficient supporting examples.

Theory such as *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* and the *Uses and Gratifications* theory were commonly used. These tended to be more useful in establishing why the relationship existed between media product and audience (a requirement for Merit), as opposed to how this relationship led to a wider social, cultural, political, industry, or economic consequence.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- maintained an adequate focus on the chosen statement
- used key words from the statement to frame their response
- matched material they had learned to their chosen statement, although at times included detail that was irrelevant to the chosen statement, or interpreted the statement in a broad fashion
- demonstrated a clear understanding of the nature of the relationship between the media product and a specific, defined target audience
- provided specific evidence from the media product that helped to demonstrate a relationship between the product and the audience that was relevant to the chosen statement.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote much less than 600 words, therefore not providing enough detailed evidence from media texts or material about a relationship with the audience
- focused mainly on either the media product or the audience, but not on the relationship between the two
- provided some rote-learned material without demonstrating an ability to adapt this to the specific focus of the chosen statement.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- explained lucidly how and/or why a relationship between a media product and its audience operated
- provided thorough, accurate evidence such as demographic/psychographic information or newspaper articles and/or media audience theory to establish the nature of the relationship between audience and media product
- maintained focus on the chosen statement throughout the essay, responding in a thoughtful way
- attempted to discuss the consequences of the relationship, at times implicitly, but lacked convincing critical thinking and evidence needed for Excellence, and/or the consequences were not related to the rest of the essay or to the chosen statement.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- discussed the consequences of the relationship between a media product and its audience, such as economic, cultural, or political consequences that arose organically out of the discussion of the media product and the audience
- provided thorough, convincing evidence (including theory, statistics, academic, and other articles, as well as judiciously chosen evidence from the media product and the creators of the product) to support the discussion of wider consequences that was paired with well-argued analysis to establish the link between the relationship of media product, audience, and consequence
- provided a perspective on the consequence, often demonstrating perceptive, original critical thinking
- used the chosen statement to develop an argument that clearly responded to the statement

- showed a more nuanced awareness of the complexity of the relationship between media product and audience, as opposed to using generalised or more simplistic cause and effect statements when discussing the wider consequences
 - distinguished themselves by presenting their own original, well-reasoned take on the consequences of the relationship between media product and audience.
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91251: Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

Examinations

The examination included four statements from which candidates were required to select one to use in their response.

The statements provided candidates with ways to demonstrate understanding of the way a media genre functions and required candidates to apply their understanding of the studied aspect of a media genre by responding to a chosen stimulus statement.

Candidates were required to think critically about the aspect of a media genre by responding to the statement, providing a logical discussion supported by relevant evidence.

Observations

The candidates were more likely to answer statements 1 and 3. Candidates were invited to discuss how a media genre functions through engaging with one of the four statements.

As stated in the 2020 Assessment Report, “many candidates seemed to be using repetitive, prescriptive frameworks to structure their writing. When candidates use such scaffolds, particularly if they seem to have been developed from previous years’ exemplars, they are likely to be disadvantaged. The enjoyment of reading an Excellence script comes from the independent insight evident in a candidate’s response to a ‘new’ statement. It is difficult to develop that independent insight with material that has been pre learned and rigidly scaffolded”.

Many candidates managed only a short reference to their chosen statement at the beginning or end of each (seemingly rote-learned) paragraph. Some examples of this included:

- the Slasher Genre: *Psycho* and then *Halloween* and then *Scream* and then ...
- the Horror Genre: *Nosferatu* and then *Them!* and then *Psycho* and then *Halloween* and then ...
- the Teen Genre: *Rebel Without a Cause* and then *The Breakfast Club* and then *Love Simon* ...
- the Dystopia Genre: *Metropolis* and then *Blade Runner* and then *The Hunger Games* and then

Some examples of media theory candidates used included:

- stating that waves of feminism had affected/changed genres (unsupported by explanation or examples of feminist voice, criticisms, movements, politics, advocacy, discussions, etc), with no evidence given to build a discussion about feminism or its impact on the genre, e.g. the changing representation of women in Science Fiction films tended to be generic and the same for films generally, with candidates providing a low-level, close technical reading description of a chronology of films rather than demonstrating understanding of their chosen genre
- citing Schatz/Metz/audience/genre theory (such as hypodermic syringe, Bechdel Test, quotes from Steve Neale) with no understanding and/or reason, failing to discuss how and/or why the quote was relevant to their discussion; Schatz and Giannetti stages were presented by a great number of candidates as the reason genres changed rather than focusing on how their chosen genre functions through cycles, etc
- using Laura Mulvey's male gaze and Bechdel Test as a reason a director has changed
- using audience theory often in a way that did not support demonstrating understanding of how genre functions.

Many candidates provided irrelevant and erroneous contexts for a media genre and did not explain why it was relevant or link it to the discussion, e.g. in discussing the True Crime genre, making claims that it started in the 1500s when

crimes were first recorded; that crime fiction and mysteries became popular in the 1930s; and that the True Crime genre started in the 1990s.

In relation to genre specific understanding, candidates who discussed their genre in relation to their chosen statement and who then provided one or two examples from media genre texts to support their discussion were more likely to gain Achievement or Merit.

Candidates who provided long descriptions of a genre's 'phases' or 'cycles', by describing a media text for each phase or cycle, often wrote over 1000 words, leaving little or no room for independent thought.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- demonstrated a simplistic understanding of a genre cycle by describing one text in a cycle and presenting it as the cycle
- described or provided a chronology of the genre, producing a surface level description of media texts over time
- covered everything they had learned in class rather than choosing a portion to reflect their understanding of how the genre they studied operates
- referred a lot to society but not 'audience', providing a link to the statement only at a surface level, and using key words from the chosen statement without really responding in any depth
- referred to media texts within a genre as relatable without explaining how/why the chosen statement impacts the genre
- provided a simplistic reading of genre texts using a twenty-first century lens without understanding how the genre operated in each cycle
- covered too many ideas when trying to describe how the aspect operates in the genre
- described how/why the genre has changed rather than explaining the impact of the change because they did not provide detail (or supporting evidence) as they attempted to address the how/why
- provided vague generalisations about media texts/genre and society.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not address the chosen statement
- focused on media texts rather than the genre
- focused on close reading a series of texts rather than a media genre, e.g. the representation of women in a series of Science Fiction films
- provided more inaccuracies and generalisations than accuracies and evidenced points
- attempted to discuss connections across a series of texts, e.g. theme or director's purpose (often these texts were not of the genre identified)
- wrote a close viewing essay, providing a close technical reading of two or three films
- did not identify a genre, e.g. misidentifying German Expressionism as a media genre.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- clearly explained the impact of their genre aspect by addressing and responding to the chosen statement
- moved beyond the texts and examples studied in class to demonstrate their own in-depth understanding
- showed some nuance in their thinking, presenting more than simple binary discussions, e.g. moving beyond "women were weak and now they aren't because of feminism"
- concentrated more on 'society' in their explanations rather than coming back to the audience of the genre and using audience data and/or theorist's/critic's quotes that held no relevance to the discussion
- were hampered by chronologies or genre theories, which often stopped them from interrogating the chosen statement, as they focused on an explanation of 'why' and not 'now what'.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- argued a position or stance on the chosen statement throughout the essay, and supported their thoughts with evidence, rather than at the end
- moved beyond the theory, ideas, and evidence studied to demonstrate their own critical understanding, supported by evidence found beyond genre texts,

e.g. critical articles, reviews, interviews, etc

- provided a nuanced discussion of their chosen statement beyond binary thinking and considering, e.g. 'to what extent'
- showed a more nuanced awareness of the complexity of the aspect of the media genre, as opposed to using generalised or more simplistic cause and effect statements when discussing the wider consequences.

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Previous years' reports

[2020 \(PDF, 182KB\)](#)

[2019 \(PDF, 302KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 118KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 46KB\)](#)

[2016 \(PDF, 216KB\)](#)