

2024 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject:	Media Studies
Level:	2
Achievement standard(s):	91248, 91251

General commentary

Candidates who were able to use the content studied to interrogate or engage with their chosen statement were often the most successful across both of the standards. This would often manifest in carefully chosen statements that not only played to the strengths of their understanding, but also led to a nuanced approach to the statement.

Both standards lend themselves to the use of relevant media theories, terms, and secondary criticism, or other forms of evidence, in addition to the media texts themselves. Candidates who could demonstrate discerning understanding of the above and then use them to make a relevant point were most successful, whereas a lack of any relevant media terms, theory, or secondary evidence, or a misunderstood use of theory, tended to be an index of limited understanding.

Additionally, both standards rewarded specific and in-depth knowledge of their chosen genre or relationship between a media product and its audience. Sweeping generalisations about society or a lack of insight into the specific nature of the target audience were typical of less successful candidates, whereas those who were successful had in-depth content knowledge, as well as an understanding on how to use it in service of the essay.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91248: Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media industry

Assessment

The examination required candidates to select one of five statements and write an essay discussing the extent to which they agreed or disagreed, in relation to a chosen media product and its audience.

Commentary

There were a range of media products used, ranging from those that have been taught for some years, such as *Stranger Things*, *Aroha Bridge*, and NZTA ads through to newer products, such as Taylor Swift's *Eras Tour* concert film, *The Casketeers* TV show, and the *Barbie* movie).

Some candidates wrote on media products that stretched the limits of what could be considered a media product. The standard calls for a discussion of a media product and its audience, not a collection of different but generically related products. Teachers and candidates need to be mindful of staying within the spirit of what the standard is assessing and not be too broad in their selection of a media product. Choosing a media product with several different seasons or episodes can be a way of delving into various different aspects of how the relationship with the audience is developed or

maintained; equally though, a one-off media product, such as a film that engages with its audience in a unique, successful, or multi-faceted way can also provide a rich source of learning and thinking for candidates.

This standard lends itself to applying an understanding of media theory and other media related terminology, such as psychographic audience profiling, to the explain how and why the relationship operates the way it does. Candidates who used this to augment the discussion of details about the media product itself demonstrated their understanding more powerfully and persuasively than those who just discussed details from the media product.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- described how a relationship operated between a media product and an audience, but may have been vague on the specific make up or characteristics of this audience
- provided detailed evidence from the media product concerning the make up of the audience to support their description of how the relationship operated
- referred to media theory and/or secondary sources but not in a way that showed sound understanding of the theory, or how this evidence helped to shed light on how/why the relationship operated the way it did
- included some material that was irrelevant to the statement they had chosen or not sufficiently linked back to the key words of the statement to be considered relevant.

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

- explored why the relationship between a media product and its audience exists and how it is built on
- used evidence such as statistics, quotes, and media theory in an accurate and confident manner to demonstrate how and why the relationship operated
- knew their material well and were able to select appropriate points relevant to the statement they had chosen, with the key words or ideas from the chosen statement consistently referred to throughout the response
- attempted to discuss a wider consequence, but not with sufficient depth, evidence, logic, or relevance to the rest of the essay to make it convincing enough to attain Excellence.

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

- wrote lucidly, adopting a stance in relation to the chosen statement, as opposed to simply referring to it blandly
- demonstrated both a thorough knowledge of the relationship between their chosen media product and its audience, as well as a capacity to think through the nuances and complexities of this relationship in a way that demonstrated informed, but independent thought
- included relevant information on the changing nature of the media-sphere, such as developments with technology, AI and algorithms, and the implications of these developments
- referenced secondary evidence extensively, such as quotes and/or media theory, which were used to unpack a relevant point.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote much less than the suggested word count
 - demonstrated a superficial knowledge or understanding of the relationship between a media product, and its audience, often manifesting in a lack of specific evidence, which appeared as a self-selected media product, as opposed to a product that was studied thoroughly in class
 - selected a media product and/or audience that was too vague or broad
 - did not address the chosen statement sufficiently.
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Achievement standard 91251: Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

Assessment

The examination required candidates to select one of five statements and write an essay discussing the extent to which they agreed or disagreed, in relation to an aspect of a chosen media genre.

Commentary

Candidates who could construct a coherent, concise, and relevant response to their chosen statement proved to be the most successful. They understood that evidence from relevant and attributed sources is important to demonstrate understanding. These candidates could select which points to make rather than providing an overly long account of everything they learned about a genre.

Successful candidates constructed an argument in response to their chosen statement that did not simply comprise a list of texts within the genre over time. Rather, successful candidates created a thesis statement in response to their chosen statement, and argued it through thoughtfully selected points supported by relevant evidence. If candidates used box office figures, these were used to support a point, rather than making them the point.

Candidates who provided rote-learned essays were rarely able to show more than superficial understanding of the genre, in relation to their chosen statement. Highly-scaffolded essays recycled from year to year, tended to devolve into bland understanding. Some statements, such as candidates writing about the representation of women in a series of science fiction films included superficial phrases from previous years, such as “women are largely ornamental and unintelligent in this film” from *A Trip to the Moon*, which are more suited to the representation internal than this standard. Candidates are still writing about texts, such as *Psycho* as foundational texts, rather than demonstrating understanding of each text’s context within a cycle.

Often, candidates are producing long responses that essentially move from text to text within a genre over time. These candidates describe, and sometimes explain, how the texts relate to the genre and/or chosen statement in a series of paragraphs, tacking a short implications paragraph on the end, which generally lacks detail or evidence from secondary sources to support the claims they are making.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- showed understanding of the genre and its aspect but did not go much further than descriptive statements, with evidence
- addressed the statement at the beginning and/or end of each paragraph but spent most of the paragraphs describing a media text and/or its plot
- identified media texts, their year of publication, and producer when using genre texts to support their points
- made generalised and descriptive statements about a single text per time period
- referred occasionally to media theories such as Gianetti's or Metz's genre cycles but did not explain how/why these were relevant to the chosen statement
- included some information not relevant to the argument
- lacked precise understanding of who the audience of the genre was and/or how media texts within the genre were consumed
- provided a predictable and scaffolded response using the same points in the same order with the same evidence.

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

- showed they understood the statement and included a range of texts to back up their arguments (evidence typically included statistics, quotes from reviewers, or box office figures)
- explained how media texts influenced the genre and vice versa, using details from a variety of sources
- responded to the statement in a logical and targeted way, which was often engaging to read because the student was demonstrating their own in-depth understanding
- produced clear and succinct writing, including relevant information that helped with their explanation and was supported by self-selected evidence from the candidate's own research or thinking
- looked more in depth at the influence the aspect had on the audience, as well as who the audience was, and how and/or why they engaged with/consumed the genre.

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

- produced ideas that linked with each other and created a coherent whole in their writing
- understood the statement clearly and responded to it fully
- included a variety of judiciously chosen and correctly attributed sources that benefited the argument
- produced an essay that focused on the genre and not on a series of media texts
- adopted a sophisticated writing style, showing insight, presenting their own argument rather than a rote-learned and/or scaffolded response, appropriately making their own points to construct their argument and select evidence which supported their argument
- demonstrated nuance in their critical understanding of the chosen statement.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not adequately address the chosen statement
- described or close read a series of media texts and did not link them back to genre
- misused and/or misquoted media theory, lacking understanding of how it applied to the chosen genre and statement
- identified a text within a cycle and mischaracterised its influence on the genre
- made generalisations
- tried to use disparate texts that did not form a genre.
- described the representation of a group, such as women in a series of, e.g. science fiction films, without establishing relevance to the genre itself.