Cambridge Assessment International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International AS & A Level
Media Studies 9607

Use this syllabus for exams in 2024, 2025 and 2026.
Exams are available in the June and November series.

Cambridge Pathway

Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge International prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

We review all our syllabuses regularly, so they reflect the latest research evidence and professional teaching practice – and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught.

We consult with teachers to help us design each syllabus around the needs of their learners. Consulting with leading universities has helped us make sure our syllabuses encourage students to master the key concepts in the subject and develop the skills necessary for success in higher education.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

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

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

Quality management

Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001**

Contents

Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2024, 2025 and 2026, go to page 40.

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2021. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.
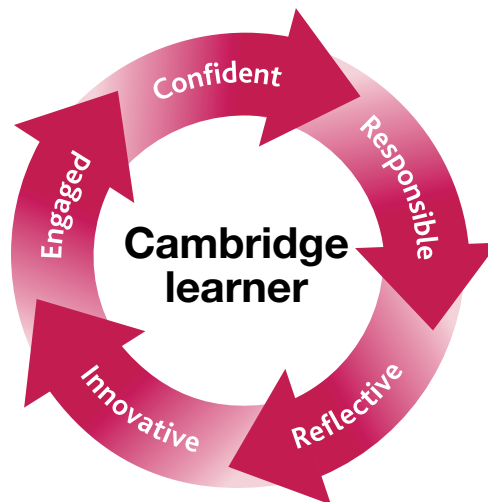
1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they're learning. By offering students a variety of Cambridge International AS & A Levels, you can give them the greatest chance of finding the path of education they most want to follow. With over 50 subjects to choose from, students can select the ones they love and that they're best at, which helps motivate them throughout their studies.

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

- a deep understanding of their subjects
- higher order thinking skills – analysis, critical thinking, problem solving
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.

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

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies encourages learners to be:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

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

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

*   a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge

*   confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations

*   the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together

*   a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

The key concepts identified below, carefully introduced and developed, will help to underpin the course you will teach. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

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

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

The key concepts are expanded on in the subject content.

International recognition and acceptance

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world. Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Our programmes and qualifications are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

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

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

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

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

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognition database and university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

Learn more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition**

School feedback: 'The depth of knowledge displayed by the best A Level students makes them prime targets for America's Ivy League universities.'

Feedback from: Yale University, USA

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of resources, detailed guidance and innovative training and professional development so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Level. To find out which resources are available for each syllabus go to **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support**

The School Support Hub is our secure online site for Cambridge teachers where you can find the resources you need to deliver our programmes. You can also keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community through our online discussion forums.

Find out more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support**

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level			
Planning and preparation	**Teaching and assessment**	**Learning and revision**	**Results**
• Next steps guides. • Schemes of work. • Specimen papers. • Syllabuses. • Teacher guides.	• Endorsed resources. • Online forums. • Support for coursework and speaking tests.	• Example candidate responses. • Past papers and mark schemes. • Specimen paper answers.	• Candidate Results Service. • Principal examiner reports for teachers. • Results Analysis.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates**

Professional development

We support teachers through:

• Introductory Training – face-to-face or online

• Extension Training – face-to-face or online

• Enrichment Professional Development – face-to-face or online

Find out more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/events**

• Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications

Find out more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/profdev**

Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.
Find out more at: **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

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

The aims are to enable students to:

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

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

Content overview

Skills and understanding common to all areas of study

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

AS Level subject content

Candidates **must** study:

- Media texts
- Technical elements
- Media contexts

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

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

A Level subject content

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

- Media regulation
- Postmodern media
- Power and the media

Candidates **must** also study:

- Media ecology

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies

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

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

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

Component 1

Foundation Portfolio

50 marks

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

Internally assessed and externally moderated

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

Component 2

Media texts and contexts   2 hours

50 marks

Section A: Media texts (25 marks)

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

Section B: Media contexts (25 marks)

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

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

Component 3

Advanced Portfolio

50 marks

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

Internally assessed and externally moderated

25% of the A Level

Component 4

Critical Perspectives   2 hours

60 marks

Section A: Media debates (30 marks)

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

Section B: Media ecology (30 marks)

Candidates answer one question.

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

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

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

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

* Candidates carry forward their AS Level result subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*. See **Making entries** for more information on carry forward of results [and marks].

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

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

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

or

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

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

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1

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

AO2

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

AO3

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

Weighting for assessment objectives

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

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each qualification

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

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

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

3 Subject content

Skills and understanding common to all areas of study

Media forms and media platforms

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

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

Examples of this include:

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

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

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

Case studies

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

Skills

Throughout the course candidates are expected to demonstrate the following:

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

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

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

Knowledge and understanding

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

Language

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

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

Representation

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

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

Industry

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

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

Audience

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

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

AS Level subject content

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

Media texts

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

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

Technical elements

Camera shots, angle, movement and composition:

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

Sound:

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

Mise-en-scène:

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

Editing:

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

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

Media contexts

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

In addition, candidates should be familiar with:

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

Media areas

Candidates should study at least one media area specified below:

Film

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

Music

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

Print

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

Radio and podcasts

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

Video games

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

A Level subject content

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

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

Media regulation

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

Candidates should study:

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

Postmodern media

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

Candidates should study:

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

Power and the media

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

Candidates should study:

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

Candidates must also study:

Media ecology

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

Possible areas of focus for candidates are:

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

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

4 Details of the assessment

Component 1: Foundation Portfolio

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

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

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

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

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

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

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

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

Set briefs

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

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

The set brief options are as follows:

Option 1: Film opening task (video)

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

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

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

Option 2: Magazine task (print)

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

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

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

Process

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

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

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

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

Creative critical reflection

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

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

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

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

Component 2: Media Texts and Contexts

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

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

• Section A: Media texts
• Section B: Media contexts

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

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

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

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media concepts, contexts and critical debates, using terminology appropriately.
AO2: Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches, supported with relevant textual evidence.

Section A: Media texts (25 marks)

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

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

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

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

Section B: Media contexts (25 marks)

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

Component 3: Advanced Portfolio

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

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

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

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

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

This component assesses the following Assessment Objectives:

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

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

Set briefs

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

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

The set brief options are as follows:

Option 1: music promotion package

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

Option 2: film promotion package

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

Option 3: documentary package

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

Option 4: short film package

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

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

Process

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

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

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

Critical reflection

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

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

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

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

Component 4: Critical Perspectives

Written paper, 2 hours, 60 marks

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

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

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

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

This component assesses the following Assessment objectives (AOs):

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

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

Section A: Media debates (30 marks)

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

*   Media regulation
*   Postmodern media
*   Power and the media

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

Section B: Media ecology (30 marks)

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

Command words

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

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

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

Administration of the coursework

Recording and submitting candidates' marks and work

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

You should record candidates' marks for Component 1 and Component 3 on the Individual Candidate Record Card and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form which you should download each year from the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples**. The database will ask you for the syllabus code (i.e. 9607) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct forms. Follow the instructions on the form itself to complete it. You must include a brief description in each Assessment Objective box on the Individual Candidate Record card explaining where the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives, justifying the mark awarded.

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

Internal moderation

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

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

External moderation

Cambridge International will externally moderate all internally assessed components.

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

Visit the samples database at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples** for details of how to submit the marks and work.

All work by candidates should be presented online.

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

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

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

Authenticity

It is the centre's responsibility to make sure all assessed work is the candidate's original work. Candidates should provide references to any source materials used, listing these at the end of the coursework.

A general discussion on the progress of coursework is a natural part of the teacher–candidate relationship, as it is for other parts of the course. If plans and first drafts are completed under teacher supervision, you can be sure of the authenticity of the final coursework.

You should not correct or edit draft coursework; candidates can draft and redraft work, but you should only give brief summative comments on progress during this drafting phase.

Assistance with projects

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

Academic honesty/Avoidance of plagiarism

You should make candidates aware of the academic conventions governing quotation and reference to the work of others, and teach candidates how to use them. Reference information should include full details of source publications, including publication date, author and page number. If referencing a website, the website address and the date the website was accessed should be included.

Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

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

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

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

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

Assessment criteria for Component 1

	AO3: Practical Application (40 marks)			AO2: Evaluation (10 marks)
	Production skills		**Creative Critical Reflection skills**	**Analyse and evaluate own work**
	Use appropriate media language to communicate meaning to an intended audience (10 marks)	**Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a production** — Research, plan and apply knowledge and understanding (10 marks)	Use technical and creative skills to express and communicate ideas (10 marks)	**Explain how meaning is created, supported with relevant textual evidence** (10 marks)
	Use technical skills effectively to express and communicate ideas (10 marks)			
9–10 marks	Sophisticated use of media language shows insightful engagement with audience. Production targets intended audience with sophistication, and is entirely convincing as a film opening/magazine	Sophisticated research into appropriate professional products. Varied and detailed planning fully meeting the requirements of the brief. Sophisticated implementation of research shows insightful understanding of the key concepts	Creative Critical Reflections show sophisticated technical skills throughout, with a wide range of creative approaches to create reflections which sophisticatedly engage the audience	Sophisticated understanding of how meaning is created, offering insightful critical comments on the successes of their own product, fully supported with a wide range of examples. Sophisticated engagement with all four questions. A sophisticated understanding of the key concepts
	Production is sophisticated, highly appropriate, and accurately follows or knowingly subverts the codes and conventions of the genre. Technical elements are sophisticatedly handled and the production is finished to a high standard			
7–8 marks	Effective use of media language shows appropriate engagement with audience. Production targets intended audience effectively, and is effective in convincing as a film opening/magazine	Thorough research into appropriate professional products. Effective planning appropriate to the requirements of the brief. Thorough implementation of research shows effective understanding of the key concepts	Creative Critical Reflections show effective technical skills throughout, with a range of creative approaches to create reflections which effectively engage the audience	Thorough understanding of how meaning is created, offering appropriate critical comments on the successes of their own products, effectively supported with a range of examples. Thorough engagement with all four questions. An effective understanding of the key concepts
	Production is effective, and effectively follows or subverts the codes and conventions of the genre. Technical elements are effectively handled and the production is mostly fiished to a high standard			

Continued

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

Continued

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

Assessment criteria for Component 3

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

Continued

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

5 What else you need to know

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

Before you start

Previous study

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

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

Guided learning hours

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

Technology requirements

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

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

Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables**

Private candidates cannot enter for this syllabus.

Combining with other syllabuses

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

* syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE

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

Learn more about Cambridge AICE at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice**

Making entries

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

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

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

Retakes and carry forward

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Cambridge International AS & A Levels are linear qualifications so candidates cannot re-sit individual components. Information on retake entries is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers**

Where the components of the Cambridge International AS Level assessment have all been taken in one series, candidates can carry forward the result of their Cambridge International AS Level assessment from one series to complete the Cambridge International A Level in a following series, subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

To confirm if an option is available to carry forward marks for this syllabus, see the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series. Regulations for carrying forward internally assessed marks, and information about resubmitting coursework, can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers**

Language

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

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

Cambridge International works to avoid direct or indirect discrimination in our syllabuses and assessment materials. We aim to maximise inclusivity for candidates of all national, cultural or social backgrounds and with other protected characteristics. In addition, the language and layout used are designed to make our materials as accessible as possible. This gives all learners the opportunity, as fairly as possible, to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding and helps to minimise the requirement to make reasonable adjustments during the assessment process.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements (including modified papers) are the principal way in which Cambridge International complies with our duty, as guided by the UK Equality Act (2010), to make 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates with special educational needs (SEN), disability, illness or injury. Where a candidate would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate with no SEN, disability, illness or injury, we may be able to agree pre-examination access arrangements. These arrangements help a candidate by minimising accessibility barriers and maximising their opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in an assessment.

Important:

- Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working at school; this is in line with *The Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

- For Cambridge International to approve an access arrangement, we will need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment, involves reasonable cost and timeframe and does not affect the security and integrity of the assessment.

- Availability of access arrangements should be checked by centres at the start of the course. Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in *The Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

- Please contact us at the start of the course to find out if we are able to approve an arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.

- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

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

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

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

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

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

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

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

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

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

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

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

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

Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

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

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge International A Level Media Studies will be published after the first assessment of the A Level in 2021. Find more information at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel**

Changes to this syllabus for 2024, 2025 and 2026

The latest syllabus is version 2, published May 2022. The syllabus has been reviewed and revised for first examination in 2024.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Changes to version 2 of the syllabus, published May 2022

Changes to availability	• The front cover of the syllabus has been updated to clarify the availability of the syllabus.

Changes to version 1 of the syllabus, published September 2021

Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)	• The word count for the Critical Reflection in Component 3 has been updated.

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

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

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