

Coursework Handbook

Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies

(For examination from 2021)



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Introduction

This handbook is a guide to the delivery of the coursework components of AS and A level Media Studies (9607) syllabus. This handbook provides guidance and advice covering:

- the requirements of the coursework tasks
- the role of the teacher
- how the syllabus covers the coursework
- carrying out the project or activity
- the administration of the coursework.

How to use this handbook

- **Section 1** makes sure you have a good understanding of the requirements of the coursework component.
- **Section 2** provides advice on delivering the coursework. This is particularly useful for those teaching this qualification for the first time. It includes advice on the different tasks and how to choose a project or activity.
- **Section 3** provides guidance specifically on the A level production coursework.
- **Section 4** offers advice on good practice regarding internal standardisation and moderation. It also explains the mark scheme and how to apply it.
- **Section 5** explains the administrative procedures relating to coursework.

Resources available from Cambridge

Teacher support

School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support is our secure online support platform for Cambridge teachers.

You can obtain a password and username to access it from your Examinations Officer who will have received these at the point your school became a registered Cambridge Centre. There are many resources on this site including the latest syllabuses and suggested textbooks.

Training

Cambridge regularly offers training for A level specifications both in the UK and in other parts of the world. Details of future training can be found via the Cambridge public website:
www.cambridgeinternational.org/events

Moderators' reports

For each examination series, moderators produce two types of report:

- (1) an individual report to each Centre about their learners' coursework and the Centre's marking
- (2) a general report to all Centres. This describes good practice and offers general advice to Centres.

Scheme of work

A scheme of work for parts of the syllabus content is available on the School Support Hub
www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Further help

We hope that this Coursework Handbook will provide a thorough introduction to the requirements and criteria for the delivery and assessment of coursework in AS & A level Media Studies (9607). However, if you have any further questions or difficulties on the handbook, please do not hesitate to contact Cambridge.

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1. Requirements of the syllabus

You should always check the syllabus for the year in which your learners are going to sit the examination for the most up-to-date and authoritative information on coursework requirements. The syllabus will contain a summary of any changes that have taken place regarding the requirements of the subject content and the assessment. Cambridge International A Levels are designed to be delivered over a two year period. Therefore, if your learners are going to be sitting the AS Level in 2021 you are likely to begin teaching in 2020 and should use this guide.

1.1 The portfolio components of the course

Component 1: Foundation Portfolio (AS level)

Component 3: Advanced Portfolio (A level)

For both components, learners may work individually or in small groups, up to a maximum of four learners per group. Those working as part of a group should have clearly defined roles. All learners are required to maintain separate blogs outlining the creative processes. These should include details of their individual role within the group task.

Learners should provide evidence of their work through the following tasks:

Task 1 – maintaining a blog based on the creative processes (Foundation and Advanced level)

Learners should set up and maintain a blog outlining the creative processes that are adopted during the production of the final products. The blog should be set up at the outset of the research stage and should be maintained regularly, outlining the research, planning and production stages, including refinement, reflection and editing choices.

Task 2 – researching and planning a media production

At **Foundation level** learners should choose between two options for their media production:

Film opening task (video)

or

Magazine task (print).

Research should be based on the media form they plan to create and should consider the full range of codes and conventions of their chosen form of media. Research should cover the range of professional products upon which the learner could base their work.

At **Advanced level** learners should choose between four options for their media production:

- (1) a music promotion package
- (2) a film promotion package
- (3) a documentary package or
- (4) a short film package.

While the images and video for this production must be original, the use of music taken from an acknowledged source is permissible. Research should be detailed and encompass all of the media forms within the chosen option. Learners should evidence all of their research and use this material within their blogs and when producing their **Critical Reflection**. They should ensure that they engage with the key areas: forms and conventions, production contexts, the role of technologies, audiences and representations.

Task 3 – implementing the plan and creating a media production

At **Foundation level** learners should produce a two minute video or a front page, contents and double page spread for a new magazine. Creative choices should be based on research and evidenced and justified in the blog. Media productions should demonstrate a clear understanding of the codes and conventions and, in the case of the magazine option, present a clear house style.

At **Advanced level** learners should produce a media package of three products that are interlinked comprising one major task and two minor tasks. The media products should demonstrate a confident engagement with the key concepts and engage with the links and relationships between media products.

Task 4 – evaluating the project

At both **Foundation and Advanced level** this is a compulsory part of the coursework and embedded within the blog.

At the **Foundation level** learners are required to produce a **Creative Critical Reflection** on the production process presented in a digital format. Acceptable digital formats may be used such as director commentaries, slideshows with voiceover, podcasts, Prezis, screencasts etc. As this is a **creative** critical reflection, creative flair should be strongly encouraged in order to clearly demonstrate the learner's knowledge and understanding. The **Creative Critical Reflection** should be shaped and guided by the following **compulsory questions**:

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

At the **Advanced level** learners are required to produce a **Critical Reflection** consisting of an evaluative essay of around 1000 words. This must be completed individually, even if learners had collaborated in the creation of their products. Once completed the essay should be uploaded to the learner's blog and clearly labelled. At this level the **Critical Reflection** should be shaped and guided by the following **compulsory questions**:

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

1.2 Teacher involvement

As with all coursework, you will need to be able to verify that the work submitted for assessment is the learner's own work. Sufficient work must be carried out under direct supervision to enable you to authenticate the coursework marks with confidence. This is particularly important if the production work is carried out as a group.

You will be expected to guide and support your learners as they plan and undertake their coursework production: training learners how to use the technology you have in your Centre and providing them with the necessary equipment to produce their media texts. You should prepare learners to fulfil the designated production briefs through delivering the fundamental basics of Media Studies outlined in the scheme of work that accompanies this handbook. Some guidance may be required in terms of the choice of production brief, depending on available technology and teaching expertise. You should raise your learners' awareness of the grading requirements for the production work, and promote critical engagement with the strengths and weaknesses of the production to help them access all available marks. However, while teachers should not offer suggestions for production, they might consider recommending viewing of relevant materials to facilitate this critical engagement. You should bear in mind that you will need to comment on the individual's own contribution as part of the justification for marks submitted, on the **Individual Candidate Record Card (ICRC)**.

1.3 Links within the syllabus

The skills and knowledge required in the coursework correspond to the taught content of the course. The table below is a helpful guide to where the two components overlap. This should help you integrate the teaching and learning needed to support your learners in the relatively independent nature of their production work.

On our secure online support for Cambridge teachers, the School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support, you will find a comprehensive scheme of work with many suggestions of activities that could be used to deliver the skills and knowledge of the AS & A level Media Studies syllabus, alongside suggested resources.

Component	Links to Scheme of Work
Foundation portfolio production	Unit 1, 2 and 3
Advanced portfolio production	Unit 1, 2, 4 and 6

2. Planning and developing the coursework

It is of key importance that learners have completed Unit 1 and Unit 2 of the scheme of work prior to moving on to their production work. It is also helpful to work through some research activities as a whole class before encouraging learners to adopt a more independent approach in terms of refining their research in light of their production choice.

2.1 Stages in planning and developing the coursework

This suggested step-by-step process is useful for learners to follow.

Set up and maintain a blog to map the research processes



Determine groupings/individual status and select the brief



Complete activities to research the codes and conventions of the chosen media form, generic conventions, use of technical, symbolic and written codes and, where applicable, use of sound and links to other media platforms



Carry out storyboarding, casting, scripting, recce reports, risk assessments for the production



Carry out production



Reflect on the production and edit where necessary



Evaluate the product in light of the contemporary media landscape

2.2 Setting up and maintaining a blog

If your Centre is running the Cambridge course, we would like you to set up a blog hub from which all of the learners' blogs can be easily accessed. This is good practice for your teaching as it means you have a central record of where all the blogs are and can easily access them to check on progress and when it comes to assessment. For the moderator, it makes life so much easier, as they can access all learners' work by typing in one URL. Handwritten blog addresses often cause problems, as they can be hard to read and sometimes contain small errors which make the blogs hard to find.

Examples of blog entries can be found on the link below:

<https://mariastreang.wordpress.com/>

<http://proudfilmopening.blogspot.co.uk/>

Learners should aim to update their blog regularly in order to ensure a continuous narrative of the production process.

2.3 Determining group/individual status and deciding on a brief

Learners may work in groups of up to four people. When determining groups it is worth considering the skill set of the learners over friendship groups. Each learner should adopt an area of expertise. This does not necessarily mean that they are the only person to work on this element, but that they lead on that part of the production. Possible roles might include: director, technical, creative and editor.

As the **Creative Critical Reflection** and the **Critical Reflection** are produced individually, learners should review the contribution they make within their allocated role as well as part of the group as a whole at this stage.

When deciding on which brief to follow, we recommend that Centres choose the brief based on their available resources and fields of expertise.

Once groupings and briefs are decided, learners should complete an **Outline Proposal Form (OPF)**, found on the Cambridge website at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. Simply enter your Centre number and the course code (9607) to access the document.

2.4 Carrying out research to inform the planning stage

Learners should evidence detailed research into relevant media forms and be able to demonstrate a confident engagement with the conventions of the form before deciding which brief they are going to follow (if a choice is going to be offered).

Research activities, modelled as a whole class initially then explored further in group/individual tasks, might include for the **AS level**:

(Film Option)

Watching the opening sequence to a range of films in the appropriate genre, making notes on:

- how many titles are displayed during the opening sequences to the film?
- what images are prioritised in the opening sequence?
- what connotations do the images carry?
- how is genre reinforced through symbolic and technical codes from the outset?
- how does the film establish an enigma from the outset?
- what strategies are used to ensure the film appeals to its target audience?
- how has technology been used effectively? You might want to consider camera angles, transitions and editing techniques.

Arrange learners in pairs to carry out research of a specific genre that particularly interests them. Learners could complete this activity individually if preferred. This research should be included on the learner's blog including images of sequence stills that are annotated with: technical terminology, camera angles, genre specific conventions and notes about the speed of transition that may not otherwise be apparent from the still images.

(Magazine Option)

Using a range of magazine front covers, issue learners with a list of the technical terms for the conventions used on magazine covers, such as:

Buzz Word, Puff, Coverline, Masthead, Barcode, Anchorage Text, Superimposition, Slogan, Unique Selling Point

Ask learners to match the terms to the section of the cover it relates to.

Discuss the terms, asking learners to justify their decisions.

Ensure that all are correct, prior to securing the terms against the images.

Set an individual/paired task to research a genre of magazines such as: Home, Music, Car, Teen, Gossip, or Gaming and establish answers to the following questions:

- looking at the magazine website, who is this magazine's primary audience?
- what techniques have been used to appeal to the target audience?
- in what way is the design of each page the same/similar? This is called 'house style' and will need to be replicated in magazine productions
- how have images been used to ensure they also appeal to the target audience?
- what are the connotations of the images used?
- what different types of articles are included in the magazines?
- how does the layout of the different entries vary? (Drawing up pages that include boxes located where the text falls is a useful activity)
- make a note of where and how often online and social media links are situated. (Mark these in the text boxes from the previous activity).

Learners should clearly show which genre they researched and what their findings were, with evidence to demonstrate their claims, in their blogs.

2.5 Implementing the plan

The production plan should draw on the research stage and should evidence decision-making based on media techniques, codes and conventions that have been identified. Some of your more able learners may attempt to challenge the conventions. However, if they do attempt this, they must justify and document it in both their blog and their **Creative Critical Reflection** work.

Learners working on the **film option** should be encouraged to draw up a range of planning materials to demonstrate the development of the production. The grid exemplar below is a useful way to encourage learners to depart from a narrative approach and instead engage with the media strategies required at this level.

	Narrative to sequence 1: The opening sequence suggests someone is running from a murder scene	Narrative to sequence 2: We see a flashback to the murder victim eating with her family
Symbolic Codes: Technical Codes: Genre: Mise en Scene: Transition:	Dark lighting, man is dressed in dark clothes. Close up shot of the girl's face (eyes shut), non-diegetic sound of running footsteps fades in over deep music that ends on a single note. Camera pans back to drone height to show the girl laying in a pool of blood, still, whilst the lights darken to black.	An external view of a gently lit room containing a family eating around a table. The camera pans in 'through' the window as voices fade up to normal family discussions and pans around the table as though observing the conversation. This is a short sequence only.

It may help learners to construct their storyboard one dimensionally to begin with: they might plan the narrative first, then the *mise en scene*/generic conventions, then the camera shots, sound, movement and finally the transitions.

When the storyboard is complete, learners can start to film their production. Where the time scheduling matters (night time/daytime), it is advisable that learners film all narrative segments consecutively to maximise continuity of the *mise en scene* contained in the sequences.

When implementing a plan for the **magazine option**, learners should determine the specific pages they are going to recreate and draw up blank versions of the productions that are labelled with the learners' intentions. They should also include recce reports for locations for photo shoots, contact prints of original images, risk assessments etc. As with the film option it is important at this stage to use correct and specific terminology, for example, close up shot of a teenage girl wearing sunglasses/medium shot of someone on a stage playing guitar with other appropriate *mise en scene* in shot such as a drum kit, keyboards and mixed lighting etc..

Before they create their mock-up, learners should decide on:

- an appropriate house style for their chosen genre of magazine,
- the content of any articles
- a range of images

Creating a mood board that explores the options for the house style, use of colours, formatting of page numbers, fonts and images can be a useful stepping stone to making some of these decisions.

When this planning stage is complete, learners can start to construct their productions.

2.6 Reviewing and editing the coursework

It is likely that some teacher guidance will be given during the production process in terms of facilitating discussions that encourage a higher level of application and engagement with creative processes. However, as part of the learning process, it is also valuable to facilitate whole class feedback on productions as this nurtures increasingly independent learning.

Accordingly, creating a media marketplace in which learners can watch the film productions and browse the magazine productions, initiates a good opportunity for critical reflection, peer assessment and feedback prior to the final edits on the coursework productions. Using a standardised feedback proforma like the one on the next page is useful in ensuring that the feedback is suitably critical whilst also being constructive.

In order to ensure a fair learning environment for learners of all abilities it is advisable to ring fence time for editing purposes, two or three hours should suffice to enable learners to re-film a sequence after feedback and complete a reasonable level of editing prior to submission of the final media coursework production.

Market Place Feedback Proforma

	Observations/Likes/Dislikes	Recommendations
What symbolic codes can be identified as supporting the genre of the production?		
Does the end product have a clear house style? (magazines)		
What might stop this product being viewed as a professional product ready for publication/distribution?		
What aspect of this media production do you feel works particularly well?		
If you were to re-edit this product yourself what would your top three priorities be?	1) 2) 3)	1) 2) 3)
Other recommendations for re-editing: (camera angles, transitions, spellings, grammar, layout, links to producers/social media/other media forms, use of colours/lighting)		

2.7 Creative Critical Reflections (AS level)

Learners should reflect on the creative processes and assess the success of the decisions made during the production of the media product.

All learners should produce an individual **Creative Critical Reflection** which should also include the role they adopted if working as part of a group. The **Creative Critical Reflection** should draw on evidence from the research, production and editing stages and be presented using a range of digital applications as appropriate, to best demonstrate the learner's knowledge and understanding such as: a director commentary, slideshows with a voiceover, a podcast, Prezi or screencast presentation. The completed **Creative Critical Reflection** should be the penultimate post in the learner's blog, the production being the final entry.

3. Advanced Level Production Guidance

While the fundamental stages of grouping, research and implementation of a proposed plan remains the same as for the AS Coursework Production, the key difference is that at the Advanced Level learners are expected to produce a range of products that demonstrate a higher level of engagement with the ways in which producers utilise the broader media landscape to produce, create and distribute interlinked media products across a range of media forms. They must also produce a **Critical Reflection** which consists of an evaluative essay of around 1000 words.

It is advisable to base research for this part of the course on a contemporary film/music/documentary/short film and to ensure that research incorporates the conventions of the texts alongside the convergence of the media platforms.

Setting research for the Advanced level production, for completion during a term break, between completion of the AS and the beginning of the Advanced level production would ensure that the commencement of the production processes are not hindered during the final year of the course.

3.1 Advanced Level Brief Option 1: Music Promotion Package

Guidance on teaching the various elements contained in this package are outlined in the Scheme of Work for this syllabus, which can be found on the School Support Hub at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Using the list of bands from Unit 6 of the scheme of work, arrange learners into pairs to investigate the links between the different platforms. Completing the table below, they could then share their findings as a whole group and then in turn, use this to inform their planning on their music promotion package.

	Music Video	Band Website	Digipack
Where on this media form can you find a link/video promoting the other media forms?			
Are the links interactive in any way? (Do they have a QR code? Are they linked to music apps?)			
What evidence is there of branding across all three products?			
How is each media form effective in promoting the other products beyond containing a link to them? Interviews? Teasers? Competitions to win one of them?			
What methods do you think are most effective in promoting and marketing a new album?			

3.2 Advanced Level Brief Option 2: Film Promotion package

Film Trailers

At Advanced level the key to an effective film promotion package is the level of attention to detail. Research is paramount in establishing 'how the professionals do this' and would recommend the following as initial exemplars of effective film trailers:

www.imdb.com/title/tt1454468/ (Gravity 2013)

www.imdb.com/title/tt1060277/videoplayer/vi78774553?ref=tt_ov_vi (Cloverfield 2008)

<http://collider.com/best-trailers-of-2016/#nocturnal-animals> (Nocturnal Animals 2016)

www.imdb.com/title/tt4196450/ (Birth of a Nation 2016)

www.inc.com/lindsay-blakely/wild-card-hollywoods-independent-movie-trailer-power-house.html (American Sniper 2014)

In order to achieve success at this higher level, learners should consider the following questions when creating their film trailers for this promotion package:

- how can you utilise the **depth of focus** to improve the impact of your trailer?
- is the lighting correct for the atmosphere you want to create
- how can you use *mise en scene* or movement in the foreground or background to make your trailer multi-dimensional?
- do you create, but not resolve, an enigma in your trailer?
- how does your trailer fit the conventions of its genre?
- is it clear who your target audience is?
- do your trailers demonstrate continuity in terms of sound, settings and *mise en scene*?
- how many sequences are usually included in a trailer and how many seconds long is the ideal?
- do your trailers demonstrate a high level of technical competence and a secure awareness of the conventions of film trailers?
- how does the trailer link to the website and/or print promotion material?

Using the recommended range of trailers above to answer these questions will offer an insight into the potential for exemplifying a higher level of technical competence in the learners production work.

Website

Using the films mentioned in the previous section, learners should carry out research on the websites for these films and construct A3 design sheets for at least 3 webpages for their website prior to the technical construction of it. Being able to visualise the website design prior to construction is often key to its effectiveness. Technical competency at this advanced level should begin to embrace the functional aspect of websites, interactivity and hyperlinks to other relevant material. (Films/Books/Reviews/Cinema Screenings etc.). Convergence of media forms also needs to be considered as part of these linked productions, as such website design and links to the other products in this package should be apparent.

Film Posters

Creating a film poster primarily draws on the **Key Media Concepts** taught at the beginning of the AS year on the Scheme of Work that accompanies this programme of study.

In preparation for producing a film poster, an activity that can work well is issuing each learner a laminated A4 copy of a film poster, each poster should display a different film. Ask learners to organise themselves in groups according to their posters (avoid offering any additional direction at this point). Learners are likely to sort themselves into genres. In their genre group, learners should:

- 1) identify how *mise en scene* has been used effectively in their posters
- 2) using rulers or thin strips of paper they should then create a 3 x 3 grid on top of the image and decide how the poster has prioritised the images. What is central to the poster image? How do background images reinforce the narrative or genre or marginalise certain other characters?
- 3) how has colour been used to create effect?
- 4) how have graphics and font been used to promote the production company and link the products from the package? Where are these positioned? How has colour on the fonts been used to distinguish between different elements of the written aspects of the poster?

Asking learners to present their findings is useful for learners who might focus on a different genre to the one focused on for this activity and enables lower ability learners to feel supported in the early stages of this task.

An interesting challenge activity might be for learners to create a film poster that defies all of the conventions for its genre, which in turn could be used in a revision/introductory activity: 'What is wrong with this film poster'?

Using the findings from these activities learners should construct their posters ensuring that the following media concepts are considered:

- the narrative contained in the film poster (and links to the trailer content)
- the colour palette used; the generic conventions
- the written codes
- *mise en scene* and the layout (considering the priority given to key images).

3.3 Advanced Level Brief Option 3: Documentary Package

TV Documentary Extract

Vertov suggests that documentaries show 'life as it is' and that the TV documentary should adhere to this. Sequences should not be too fragmented, music should be used for dramatic effect and the voiceover should be informative and engaging. It's one point of view and is a good discussion point to make learners consider the form of their own production and the effects of different approaches.

It is helpful for learners to watch extracts from a range of documentaries making notes on the:

- length of sequences
- use of sound
- how a sense of verisimilitude (realism) is achieved
- role of the voiceover
- most frequently used camera angles and movements in this media form.

Some good documentaries to watch extracts from as a start point might include:

www.imdb.com/title/tt0361596/ (Fahrenheit 911)

www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b09jbn5f/blue-planet-ii-series-1-7-our-blue-planet (Blue Planet 2)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgcc_ZZnAgM (Super Size Me)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBPn5oQNutI (One of Us)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxLByThNvWU (I Called him Morgan)

At an Advanced level learners should aim to experiment with a range of documentary media conventions for best effect. A particularly good website to use for reference and research is:

www.desktop-documentaries.com/storytelling-techniques.html.

As a means of engaging learners with the full range of conventions that can be drawn on in this media form, challenge pairs of learners to construct a storyboard outlining the media methods used to construct a documentary about the dangers of the internet in the 21st century. Learners should create a storyboard that outlines the strategies used in their documentary, rather than the narrative contained in it. Learners should share their suggestions and justify their decisions with the rest of the group before opening up discussions about which one, or which parts of which ones, might work best based on their research.

Lower ability learners might find the more straightforward point of view methods more workable. However, in order to challenge higher ability learners, they should be encouraged to consider their own innovative methods that build or extend on those covered by the website link as these methods are not definitive.

Website Production

Using the documentaries mentioned in the previous section and the website link, learners should carry out research on the websites for these documentaries and construct A3 design sheets for at least 3 webpages for their website prior to the technical construction of it. Being able to visualise the website design prior to construction is often key to its effectiveness. Technical competency at this advanced level should begin to embrace the functional aspect of websites, interactivity and hyperlinks to other relevant material. (Similar documentaries/charity support groups for documentary focus/books etc.). Convergence of media forms also needs to be considered as part of these linked productions.

Documentary Posters

Researching and constructing a documentary poster follows a similar remit to the film posters, as such see the earlier section for guidance.

A useful link to a wide range of documentary poster exemplars is:

www.pinterest.co.uk/tripindrqn/documentary-posters/?lp=true

3.4 Advanced Level Brief Option 4: Short Film Package

Short films should narrate a complete narrative, some examples of successful short films can be found on these links:

www.filmsshort.com/short-film-pages/gnome-sacha-goedegebure.html#.Wi52wkpl_IU (Gnome)

www.filmsshort.com/short-film-pages/the-jigsaw-basil-al-safar-rashad-al-safar.html#.Wi6D7UpI_IU (The Jigsaw)

www.filmsshort.com/short-film-pages/thunder-road-jim-cummings.html#.Wi6GP0pl_IU (Thunder Road)

www.filmsshort.com/short-film-pages/for-the-birds-ralph-eggleston.html#.Wi6Gokpl_IU (For The Birds)

Whilst this media form follows a similar format to the film brief, a short film tends to narrate one simple idea, contain minimal characters, and can be animated or live action.

Ask learners to come up with a single narrative strand for the following titles:

- The Secret
- The Graveyard

- The Cat with Ten Lives
- The Zoo

What might the camera need to focus on to convey meaning to narrate the story? Learners should list the visual images in the order they are seen (without any additional explanation). What sound effects will be audible whilst each visual image is displayed? Creating a marketplace of ideas, learners should display their suggestions for a short film narrative. Using peer assessment the class should offer feedback on the plans, pose questions about the scenario and suggest recommendations for improvement. All pairs should then edit their efforts before repeating this cycle of feedback. Watching additional short films is useful during this process as it will help learners visualise the impact of the conventions used in this media form. Additional high quality short films can be found here to use with your classes:

www.shortoftheweek.com/news/oscar-nominated-short-2016/

This brief challenges learners beyond the remit at AS Level as a successful production relies on the subtle use of symbolic codes and sound to create atmosphere whilst also offering opportunities to demonstrate a higher level of technical competence.

Website Production

Using the short films mentioned in the previous section and the short film website link, learners should carry out research on how short films are promoted online using a website design programme such as Weebly that can be found on this link: www.weebly.com/uk. Technical competency at this advanced level should begin to embrace the functional aspect of websites, interactivity and hyperlinks to other relevant material. (other film shorts, competitions, awards for short films etc.). Convergence of media forms also needs to be considered as part of these linked productions.

Postcard Advertisement

This element of the production package should include the following:

- **Film logo/title** – challenge learners to consider the use of font type and colour to reflect the genre of the media product.
- **Tagline** – this should ideally be a question that will engage their audience or a short ‘teaser’ or ‘quote’ from the film that hints at the narrative.
- **Image** – this should be striking and therefore memorable. Encourage learners to experiment with camera angles and tilts for best effect.
- **Credentials: festival/awards** – take the opportunity to share the successes the film has had at previous festivals/awards.
- **Credits** – name the producer, director, actors etc.
- **Links** – give the URL to the short film website
- **Reviews** – include brief quotes from reviews. Ask learners to think about who would be a relevant review for their genre of film. Creating a matching activity to engage learners with potential outlets for different genres of films might help clarify this for some learners.

On the reverse of the postcard there should be: contact details, social media links, this is important in building a loyal following and potential future work; a QR code and the film festival screening times/venues.

Advanced Level Critical Reflection

At Advanced level the learners should reflect critically on their production, guided by the following **compulsory** questions:

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

As well as the compulsory questions, the **Critical Reflection** should also include a broad outline of the production work undertaken, details of the roles within the production groups including specific responsibilities for the learner whose reflection it is, evidence from the research stages, peer assessment/teacher feedback and resultant editing decisions and an overarching reflection on the effectiveness of strategies used within the creative processes adopted. It is worth advising learners to avoid being critical of the hardware and technical resources available to them during their production work as this tends to add little in terms of analysis or evaluation of the end product itself.

4. Assessing the coursework

The assessment of coursework remains the responsibility of Centre staff, as such it is important that those staff responsible for delivering these components fully understand the entire process of assessment.

The teacher marks the coursework using the marking criteria provided in the syllabus for this qualification. Marks are recorded against each Assessment Objective on the **Individual Candidate Record Cards (ICRC)**. (See Section 5 of this handbook.) Details on how to use the marking criteria can be found in section 4.1 below. (Please note that the URL of the learner's blog or that of the blog hub (if one is used) should be included on the **ICRC**.)

The submission of marks and the submission of the sample for external moderation occur separately and require different forms.

The form for **submitting coursework marks to Cambridge (MS1)** which is a computer-printed document containing all the names and numbers of the candidates in the cohort, is sent to Centres in hard copy by Cambridge. All marks are recorded on it once they have been completed, by transferring them from the **Coursework Assessment Summary Form**. The **MS1** is sent to Cambridge by Centres in a specially provided envelope. It is a separate task from that of sending the moderation sample to Cambridge.

All the forms required for **submission of the external moderation sample**, along with their instructions, can be found on the **Samples Database** at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. On the database simply enter your Centre number and the syllabus code (9607) to access all forms and information.

More detail about the administrative process can be found in Section 5 of this handbook.

Where more than one teacher is marking the coursework productions, Centres should ensure that the marks are internally moderated.

Internal moderation

Where more than one teacher is involved in assessment, marking must be standardised across teachers and teaching groups. This will ensure that all candidates have been judged against the same standards for a particular syllabus. It will also ensure that a rank order can be produced for all candidates. Standardisation is achieved by all teachers involved in assessing samples of work, coming to an agreement on the marks to be awarded. Marks for some teaching groups may be moved up or down (moderated) to make sure they are consistent for the whole Centre. Round up any part marks to reach the final total marks. One teacher per Centre must be responsible for standardising the marking of members of staff for each syllabus. This teacher must make sure that a valid set of marks is produced for candidates for that Centre, for that syllabus. Moderated marks should be noted on the **Individual Candidate Record Cards** and transferred to the **Coursework Assessment Summary Form** in the appropriate column. When transferring marks to the computer printed **Mark Sheet (MS1)** for submission to Cambridge, the moderated mark rather than the original mark should be recorded.

External moderation

External moderation of internal assessment is carried out by Cambridge. Centres must submit candidates' internally assessed marks to Cambridge. The deadlines and methods for submitting internally assessed marks are in the *Cambridge Handbook* available on our website.

For Cambridge International A Level Media Studies (9607) all work by learners should be presented online via a blog (or blog hub address) indicated on the **Individual Candidate Record Cards**.

Blogs 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 learner's blog accessible via a hub or gateway which links to the work of each individual learner, properly signalled with the learner's name and number.

Cambridge must receive notification of the URL of the Centre’s hub when the externally moderated samples are submitted.

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

4.1 Assessing Components 1 and 3

The marking grids shown are generic. Teachers are advised to adopt a ‘best-fit’ approach. For each of the 5 (AS level)/4 (A level) assessment criteria the teacher must select the set of descriptors that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked. As the teacher works upwards through the levels, s/he will eventually arrive at a set of descriptors that fits the learner’s performance. When s/he reaches this point, the teacher should always then check the descriptors at the level above to confirm whether or not there is just enough evidence to award a mark at the higher level.

To select the most appropriate mark within each set of descriptors, teachers should use the following guidance:

- If most of the descriptors fit the piece, then the teacher will award at or near the middle of the level.
- If the descriptors fully fit the piece (and the teacher had perhaps been considering the level above), then the teacher will award at or near the top of the level.
- If there is just enough evidence (and the teacher had perhaps been considering the level below), then the teacher will award at or near the bottom of the level.

Assessment Objectives

Assessment Objective	Description	Sources of Evidence
AO2	Analyse media products, and evaluate their own work, by applying knowledge and understanding of theoretical and creative approaches.	The candidate’s Creative Critical Reflection/Critical Reflection on their own finished media product.
AO3	Research, plan and construct critical informed media products using appropriate technical and creative skills.	An online blog which details the process of the candidate’s work (research, planning and production). A finished media product designed by the candidate. For AS level only: The candidate’s Creative Critical Reflection on their own finished media product.

Assessment guidelines for Component 1

AO	Assessment Guidelines for Component 1	Level/Marks	Additional Guidance
AO2	Analysis and evaluation of own work is sophisticated.	Level 5 9-10	A sophisticated application of knowledge will be apparent in the blog, the finished product and the Creative Critical Reflection and these are likely to show some originality/flair. The final production will be close to a professional standard with a complex use of the conventions of the genre being applied. The production is clearly readable and meaning is also clear. A strong sense of branding is apparent as is the use of digital creative tools which are also used to excellent effect in the Creative Critical Reflection. Evidence of research will be extensive and increasingly relevant to the production, this will be evidenced in the blog, drawn on to inform the production and explored in the Creative Critical Reflection.
AO3	Sophisticated use of media language.	9-10	
	Sophisticated use of technical skills.	9-10	
	Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding of key concepts is sophisticated.	9-10	
	Creative Critical Reflection skills are sophisticated.	9-10	
AO2	Thorough analysis and evaluation of own work.	Level 4 7-8	An effective application of knowledge across the blog, finished product and the Creative Critical Reflection may begin to show some/emerging originality/flair. The finished product shows consistent evidence of using appropriate codes and conventions for the media form. Meaning is apparent, branding and use of digital creative tools in the Creative Critical Reflection is effective. Evidence of research is likely to be thorough and relevant. This will be apparent in the blog, in terms of having informed the production processes and drawn on in the Creative Critical Reflection.
AO3	Effective use of media language.	7-8	
	Effective use of technical skills.	7-8	
	Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding of key concepts is thorough.	7-8	
	Creative Critical Reflection skills are effective.	7-8	
AO2	Clear analysis and evaluation of own work.	Level 3 5-6	There is a clear application of knowledge across the blog, finished product and the Creative Critical Reflection although it is unlikely to demonstrate any challenges of conventions/flair. The finished product shows some evidence of following the expected codes and conventions.
AO3	Clear use of media language.	5-6	
	Appropriate use of technical skills.	5-6	

AO	Assessment Guidelines for Component 1	Level/Marks	Additional Guidance
	<p>Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding of key concepts is clear.</p> <p>Creative Critical Reflection skills are clear.</p>	<p>5-6</p> <p>5-6</p>	<p>Some meaning is apparent to the reader/viewer and use of digital creative tools in the Creative Critical Reflection is appropriate. There will be some appropriate evidence of research that has been used to inform the full range of production processes.</p>
<p>AO2</p> <p>AO3</p>	<p>Limited analysis and evaluation of own work.</p> <p>Limited use of media language.</p> <p>Limited use of technical skills.</p> <p>Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding of key concepts is limited.</p> <p>Creative Critical Reflection skills are limited.</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>3-4</p> <p>3-4</p> <p>3-4</p> <p>3-4</p> <p>3-4</p>	<p>The media blog, production and Creative Critical Reflection are likely to be limited in terms of both content and design. The finished product shows limited evidence of engagement with the codes and conventions. Meaning may not be obvious and use of digital creative tools in the Creative Critical Reflection is limited, as is branding. Research will be apparent, although it is unlikely that the breadth of research will traverse both the media form and the generic conventions specifically. The blog is likely to make reference to the research but may not fully engage with it, as such there is likely to be limited evidence of the research informing the production and the Creative Critical Reflection.</p>
<p>AO2</p> <p>AO3</p>	<p>Minimal analysis and evaluation of own work.</p> <p>Basic use of media language.</p> <p>Basic use of technical skills.</p> <p>Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding of key concepts is basic.</p> <p>Creative Critical Reflection skills are basic.</p>	<p>Level 1</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>1-2</p>	<p>There may be occasional glimpses of media techniques, although they are likely to be used at a basic level. Minimal evidence of the application of the codes and conventions is apparent. Meaning is very unlikely to be overtly transparent. Use of digital creative tools throughout is basic. There is evidence of a little research although the link between this and the production processes is likely to be basic.</p>

Assessment criteria for Component 3

AO	Assessment Guidelines for Component 3	Level/Marks	Additional Guidance
AO2 AO3	<p>Analysis and evaluation of own work is sophisticated.</p> <p>Sophisticated use of media language.</p> <p>Sophisticated use of technical skills.</p> <p>Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding is sophisticated.</p>	<p>Level 5</p> <p>9-10</p> <p>13-15</p> <p>13-15</p> <p>9-10</p>	<p>A sophisticated application of knowledge will be apparent in the blog, the finished products and the Creative Reflection and these are likely to show some originality/flair. The final productions will be close to a professional standard with a complex use of the codes and conventions being applied across all three media platforms. The productions are clearly readable and meaning is also clear. A strong sense of branding is apparent and is used effectively to link the products. The use of technology is highly creative and imaginative and handled with expertise across all production tasks. Evidence of research will be extensive, traversing media codes and conventions, how to engage audiences on different platforms and institutional and legislative guidance, the Creative Reflection will critically link the research to the production package as a means of exploring its strengths and weaknesses.</p>
AO2 AO3	<p>Analysis and evaluation of own work is thorough.</p> <p>Effective use of media language.</p> <p>Effective use of technical skills.</p> <p>Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding is thorough and effective.</p>	<p>Level 4</p> <p>7-8</p> <p>10-12</p> <p>10-12</p> <p>7-8</p>	<p>A thorough and effective application of knowledge across the blog, finished product and the Creative Reflection may begin to show some/emerging originality/flair. The finished product shows consistent evidence of using appropriate codes and conventions in the full range of media forms, which are also interlinked using media strategies. Meaning is apparent, branding and use of digital creative tools in the creative critical reflection is effective. Evidence of research is likely to be thorough and relevant. This will be apparent in the blog through the reference to other media texts, evidence of research into conventions, audience and institutional factors. There will be secure links between the research carried out and the Critical Reflection.</p>
AO2 AO3	<p>Analysis and evaluation of own work is clear.</p> <p>Clear use of media language.</p>	<p>Level 3</p> <p>5-6</p>	<p>There is a clear application of knowledge across the blog, finished products and the Creative Reflection although it is unlikely to demonstrate any challenges of conventions/flair.</p>

AO	Assessment Guidelines for Component 3	Level/Marks	Additional Guidance
	Appropriate use of technical skills.	7-9	The finished product shows some evidence of following the expected codes and conventions. Some meaning is apparent to the reader/viewer. The Critical Reflection clearly addresses the four required questions. The finished products will demonstrate some engagement with the media conventions, audience and institutional factors.
	Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding is clear.	7-9	
		5-6	
AO2	Analysis and evaluation of own work is limited.	Level 2 3-4	The media blog, productions and Creative Reflection is likely to be limited in terms of both content and design. The finished products show limited evidence of engagement with the codes and conventions. Meaning may not be obvious. Research will be limited and is unlikely to cover all aspects of media conventions, audience and institutional factors and may not relate, where completed, to productions. The blog is likely to make reference to the research but may not entirely engage with it, as such there is likely to be limited evidence of the research informing the production and the Creative Reflection.
AO3	Limited use of media language.	4-6	
	Limited use of technical skills.	4-6	
	Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding is limited.	3-4	
AO2	Analysis and evaluation of own work is minimal.	Level 1 1-2	There may be occasional glimpses of media techniques used across the range of productions. Minimal/barely any evidence of the application of the codes and conventions is apparent. Meaning is very unlikely to be overtly transparent. There is evidence of a little research although the link between this and the production processes is likely to be basic.
AO3	Basic use of media language.	1-3	
	Basic use of technical skills.	1-3	
	Research, planning and application of knowledge and understanding is basic.	1-2	

5. Coursework Administration

There are three parts to the administration of coursework

1. Submitting an **Outline Proposal Form**
2. Submitting your external moderation sample to Cambridge
3. Submitting your coursework (internally assessed) marks to Cambridge

For the live examination series, interactive electronic forms for the Outline Proposal and for submitting your moderation sample to Cambridge can be found on the Cambridge Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. Simply enter your Centre number and the syllabus code (9607) to access all forms and information.

Submitting an Outline Proposal Form

Before embarking on the course Centres should complete the **Outline Proposal Form** found on the Cambridge Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples. Simply enter your Centre number and the syllabus code (9607) on the front page of the database to access all documents and information. Instructions on how to fill in the **Outline Proposal Form** and details of where to send it can be found on the back of the form. These forms are sent to Cambridge where they are checked to ensure that the proposed work will enable learners to access the full range of marks available.

Submitting the External Moderation Sample to Cambridge

For each learner you must complete an **Individual Candidate Record Card (ICRC)** including the URL address of the blog (either individual blogs or the blog hub if one is used). The ICRC must contain a breakdown of the marks and brief explanatory comments. Instructions for completing the form can be found on the back of the document. These forms are available from the Samples Database.

Once you have completed the ICRC forms for **all** your learners, you should transfer *all learners'* marks to the Coursework Assessment Summary Form (CASF). Get someone to check the transferred marks are correct. If changes are made at internal moderation these should be indicated in the appropriate column and the ICRC should be amended to reflect the new marks.

Check the Samples Database for how to select the sample if you are an international Centre. (Cambridge selects the sample work in the case of UK Centres and informs them.)

To submit your External Moderation sample, print out:

- (a) A completed **Individual Candidate Record Card** for each learner in the sample
- (b) A completed Coursework Assessment Summary Form **for the whole group**
- (c) The second copy of the Mark Sheet (MS1) that your Centre sent to Cambridge

These should all be sent to Cambridge in the envelope provided. Please keep soft copies of all documents.

Submitting internally assessed (coursework) marks to Cambridge

In a pre-exam administrative despatch to your Centre, Cambridge will send you a hard-copy, computer-printed Mark Sheet (MS1) which has three layers. It contains all the names and numbers of all learners in your Centre who have taken the coursework component. You will need to fill in the top copy of the MS1 with the total marks and overall totals (using the internally moderated marks where these have been amended) for *all* your coursework learners. You can transfer these marks to the MS1 from your completed Coursework Assessment Summary Form. (Get someone to check the transferred marks are correct.) You will then need

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to send this top copy of the MS1 to Cambridge in the specially provided envelope before or by the deadline indicated in the *Cambridge Handbook* or on the Samples Database.

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