

Media Studies Options Blog

Thamesview students study the AQA Media Studies GCSE course. The course has three different elements.

1. Core knowledge units where students learn about the Media Technical Framework – this covers four areas - Language, Representation, Audience and Industry and is assessed by examination.
2. Close study units where students learn how to apply the framework to analyse media products. This is also assessed by examination.
3. Non-exam assessment units where students learn how to create examples of media products applying their knowledge of the framework. This is assessed by coursework. Students select one product from a choice of five briefs set by the exam board.

Assessment.

Exam – Paper One and Paper Two. Each are one hour 30 minutes long and have two sections with short and long answer questions testing students` ability to apply the four elements of the Technical Framework ie. Language, Representation, Audience and Industry to different Media products.

Coursework - Non Exam Assessment. Students produce a Media product from a choice of five briefs demonstrating their ability to apply the technical framework to a specific product, targeting a designated audience. Examples might include printed or audio adverts, a music video or an episode from a TV drama.

Content.

During the course students will explore a wide range of media formats including advertising, films, tv programmes, websites, radio programmes, music videos, newspapers, magazines, websites, video games and social media as well as having the opportunity to create some of their own.

The course is quite technical and involves learning new language terminology and fairly complex ideas but it is also very practical and relevant to the society that we live in today and will give students insight into the powerful influences that the Media has on our attitudes and our values.

Outline of the four areas of the Technical Framework covered by the Core, Close Study or NEA Units.

Language - how the media communicate meanings.

This includes:-

- Forms of media language
- Choice of media language
- Theories of narrative
- Language relating to technology and media products
- Codes and conventions

Representation - how the media portray events, issues, individuals, social groups and how products reflect their contexts. This is about messages and values and how these are communicated.

It includes:-

- How the Media represents attitudes, behaviours and beliefs.
- How and why representations change over time according to social and cultural influences.
- How stereotypes or anti-stereotypes of people, places and events are constructed in media products.
- Who or what is included or excluded from media products.
- What is valued and what is critiqued by media products.

Audience - how media forms target, reach and address audiences, how audiences interpret and respond as well as how audiences produce media products themselves.

It includes:-

- Theories about audiences
- Range of audiences
- Targeting
- Categorisation
- Technologies used to reach audiences
- Interpretations
- Media practices
- Social, cultural and political significance of media
- Audience responses

Industry - the concepts and terms used in the Media Industry. Media Institutions are organisations or ideas that make up key parts of our culture and shape how we view the world today.

It includes:-

- The nature of media production
- Production processes
- Ownership
- Convergence
- Funding models
- Commercial industries
- Regulation
- Digital technologies
- How the institutions construct audiences based on demographics and psychographics
- How and why institution models change over time dependent on social attitudes
- How the media institutions shape their products to meet perceived needs of audience
- The `Effects` debate - issues of media influence and control
- What is valued and what is critiqued in media products.
