

GCSE (9–1)

Moderators' report

MEDIA STUDIES

J200

For first teaching in 2017

J200/03/04 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by our moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements; identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation and comments on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. This report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost to other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

Overview

This was the first year of certification for the J200 GCSE Media Studies specification and for this NEA Component 03/04. Centres had clearly worked hard to plan and deliver the new specification. Key changes from the legacy specification were the areas being assessed by the major production and the fact that all candidates had to work individually. The majority of centres rose to the challenge and candidates produced some excellent, creative work which effectively tested AO3: the candidates' ability to apply their knowledge and understanding of media language and representation in order to target an intended audience.

AO3: Assessment Objective for the NEA

Learners are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

'Create media products for an intended audience, by applying knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to communicate meaning.' (p.40 of the specification)

A pleasing number of centres were able to assess their candidates accurately. These centres had used the detailed requirements of the briefs (as outlined in the 2019 Creating Media paper) and the assessment criteria (pp.46 and 47 of the specification) for the five levels effectively. In other cases, centres' marking required some adjustment, which is understandable in the first year of assessment.

General Comments

Although there are four briefs available in the Creating Media paper, the majority of candidates attempted Brief 1: the front cover and a double page spread article for an entertainment music magazine. A number of candidates selected Brief 3: the opening two minutes of a rock music video, with a smaller number undertaking Brief 2: the opening scenes for a new TV soap. A few candidates selected the online entertainment website (Brief 4). All the briefs asked candidates to aim their productions at an audience of 14 -18 year olds. It is understandable that centres found the magazine brief the most accessible for individual candidates or perhaps the most familiar (the magazine brief was one of the options for the legacy specification Unit B324), but it is to be hoped that more centres will attempt the moving image or the online briefs in future.

	OCR support	<p>The OCR delivery guide for the NEA provides detailed ideas for preparing candidates for each brief: https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/468962-non-exam-assessment.pdf</p> <p>Student activity worksheets for the NEA can be found here: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/media-studies-j200-from-2017/planning-and-teaching/</p>
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The Statement of Intent

Almost all candidates provided a Statement of Intent together with their productions. These statements were very useful in providing the moderator with the aims of the candidates with regard to their use of media language and representation in order to target their intended audience. Intentions with regard to representations were often implicit rather than explicit in the productions themselves. Moderators appreciated the ways in which the candidates addressed the key theoretical areas in their statements, as these helped to clarify their intentions.

<i>Most successful Statements of Intent</i>	<i>Less successful Statements of Intent</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear intention stated with regard to construction of representation/s, including stereotypes/anti-stereotypes • detailed identification of intended shots/cover lines/layout/editing/locations/models/actors/codes of dress the candidate would use in order to attract their intended audience • approximately 300 words • carefully considered and reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little or no reference to how candidate intended to construct representation/s • vague - no specific reference to shots/layout/use of images/editing/locations to attract intended audience • very brief • apparently written in haste and not reviewed

Assessment

As is to be expected with a new specification, the accuracy of assessment varied, with the majority of centres close to the agreed standard with the appropriate level selected, while others needed some adjustment.

<i>Key reasons for adjustments to centres' marks</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • codes and conventions had not been followed • some of the requirements of the brief had not been met • representation was ignored or not focused on • original images had been repeated in the magazine brief, or only two or three images were used when five are required • the productions did not target the 14-18 audience as specified in the brief • candidates were placed at the higher end of Level 3 or the lower end of Level 4, when the national standard was a lower Level 3.

	OCR support	<p>Centres can view exemplars of work at a range of levels and find out more about accurate assessment through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • webinars • online drop-in sessions • training courses <p>For more information see: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/professional-development/upcoming-courses/</p>
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Administration

The presentation of the production work was generally of a high standard, with the majority of centres ensuring that each candidate's work was clearly separated and well presented. Treasury tags, individual card folders or plastic zip-up folders worked well here. Flimsy three-sided plastic folders were awkward to manage and slowed down the moderation process.

A few centres used paper clips to hold individual candidates' work together. This meant that some productions were separated from their cover sheets in transit, and candidates' work was intermingled with others' work. This held up the moderation process.

Reminder - Authentication Forms

Centres are reminded that they are no longer required to send the Authentication forms to the moderator. These must be completed by centres and retained until the deadline has passed for centres to submit an enquiry about results.

Cover sheets and teacher comments

Most centres were well organised, with cover sheets filled in accurately. In a small number of cases there were errors on the cover sheets, where incorrect marks were entered, or where candidates' names and numbers were not entered.

Many teachers added thorough, detailed summative comments, outlining exactly what each individual candidate had done in line with the brief. Cover sheets were less helpful where centres had ticked a grade descriptor from the specification without examples of where the candidates had met the criteria. Moderators particularly welcomed comments on original and found images, including illustrations and graphics. Teacher comments are very helpful to moderators, as they support the centres' assessment and the moderation of the work.

Teacher summative comments on cover sheets

Centres are strongly advised to continue to add summative comments which explain how marks have been allocated, and include information on original and found images.

Formats

Moderators encountered a number of difficulties in accessing the work during the moderation process. In one example a centre sent a USB with files that were inaccessible. Websites were not always accessible; a print-out of a website is not acceptable, as moderators need to be able to see the link to the audio/video material required by the brief.

Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to make sure that candidates' productions are accessible to the moderator. To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed in Appendix 5d (p.58 of the specification), which is reproduced at the end of this report.

OCR Repository

Centres are reminded that they can now enter candidates for J200/03 and upload work to the OCR Repository, which may help to overcome problems with appropriate formats.

Brief 1: the front cover and a double page spread article for an entertainment music magazine aimed at an audience of 14-18 year olds

This was the most popular brief, with the majority of candidates opting to produce an extract from a music magazine. The brief gave candidates choices in the genre of music; this meant that candidates could select a genre that genuinely engaged them, leading to some impressive productions. Candidates who focused on the conventions of a specific music genre found that this helped them to target their particular audience of 14-18 year olds more effectively.

Moderators enjoyed viewing the wide variety of inventive, creative productions, which featured rap, grime, hip-hop, pop, rock, indie, country and classical music.

Most candidates were able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the required codes and conventions of music magazines. The majority of candidates had thought about their target audience and had made relevant decisions about colour palettes, fonts, images and media language for their chosen genre of music magazine.

Front covers

Front covers tended to be stronger than the double page spreads. There were some excellent examples of creative magazine covers where attention to detail was clear. Successful candidates had clearly studied codes and conventions of their chosen music genre and how cover models are used to construct representations. Audiences were effectively targeted through props, codes of dress, settings, scenes and models' facial expressions. Lighting was carefully considered in the many examples of impressive original photography.

DPS and layout

Double page spreads varied in quality, with some candidates struggling with the layout. The most successful centres were those where candidates had evidently carried out a close study of double page spreads in similar music magazines. They had then used this research to inform their planning.

In some centres little research into double page spreads appeared to have been carried out, resulting in candidates not being able to demonstrate their understanding of codes and conventions. Examples included those where the written article spread across the two pages and would have been illegible in an actual magazine and those which had 'spines' running through the centre of the page. In some cases there was little relationship between the image and the text layout, resulting in a lack of cohesion in the double page spread.

Most candidates managed to fulfil the requirement of approximately 300 words, but in a few cases high marks were allocated to candidates who only produced a fraction of the required words.

Original images

While a number of centres rose to the challenge of including five original images, too many permitted candidates to repeat the front cover image in the double page spread. In one centre a number of candidates used the same images of musical instruments in the double page spread. This is not permitted, as all work for this component must be individual.

Avoiding malpractice

Centres are reminded of the following:

- all work for this component must be carried out by the candidate individually
- unassessed learners may appear in productions or act as crew under the individual candidate's direction
- any assistance from unassessed learners must be recorded on the cover sheet.

Print-outs and presentation

Most centres were able to produce reasonable print-outs of the magazine work, but a number of moderators reported that printing resulted in unintentional 'cropping' of candidates' work.

Print-outs and presentation of magazines

Centres used a variety of methods to make sure the best possible presentation of candidates' work:

- printing the double page spread as an A3 sheet
- sending the candidates' work on a disc
- uploading the work to the OCR Repository.

Representation

Some centres asked candidates to produce anti-stereotypical representations, or to challenge stereotypes. This produced some excellent work, as candidates were able to demonstrate their understanding of media language and representation through this approach.

The most effective productions were those which subverted or challenged stereotypes, demonstrating the candidates' understanding of this theoretical area. Examples included challenges to the 'angry rock star' stereotype and female rock artists.

In many productions intentions with regard to representation were implicit rather than explicit. Rap, grime and hip-hop magazine productions tended to replicate stereotypes. Moderators commented that it would have been good to see more examples of representation being challenged rather than reinforced.

Almost all candidates based their front covers and double page spread articles on a fictional music artist and this gave them scope for exploring representation. A small number of candidates asked models to pose as well-known existing music stars, such as Eminem. This limited their options, particularly with regard to representation.

Candidates who made little effort with mise-en-scène found it more difficult to demonstrate their understanding of representation. School uniforms were often in evidence; centres are advised to encourage candidates to spend time planning their use of appropriate models, costumes and locations in order to construct particular representations.

Research and planning

Even though evidence of research and planning is no longer required, it was clear to moderators when little of this had actually taken place. Thorough research and careful planning were reflected in the candidates' successful finished productions.

<i>Most successful responses to Brief 1</i>	<i>Less successful responses to Brief 1</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> careful research into the candidate's selected genre of music magazines (evidenced in the productions themselves) planning had been carried out (evidenced in the productions themselves) challenge to stereotype/s strong sense of cohesion between front cover and DPS strong house style fictional artist used in feature article careful consideration of lighting, codes of dress and locations in original images equal time and care given to front cover and to DPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> little apparent research into music magazines little evidence of planning (errors in layout and in the DPS article) no clear focus on representation or replication of stereotypes lack of cohesion between front cover and DPS little sense of house style existing music artist used on front cover and/or in feature article original images apparently hurried; too dark; students in school uniform most time spent on front cover, while DPS appeared 'hurried'

Brief 2: the opening scenes for a TV soap opera aimed at an audience of 14-18 year olds

The most successful soap openings included a title sequence with appropriate title music and an introduction to a range of characters to appeal to the target audience. Storylines were generally well geared to the target audience, with themes such as teenage relationships, family conflicts, anxieties about schoolwork and abuse. These successful productions included well considered mise-en-scène, recognisable characters, effective dialogue and good sound quality. Moderators enjoyed some excellent examples, which replicated the conventions of TV soaps with humour and conviction. Other examples were less convincing, displaying a lack of research and planning.

<i>Most successful responses to Brief 2</i>	<i>Less successful responses to Brief 2</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong use of codes and conventions of soaps the use of a title sequence with appropriate title music establishing shot/s close-ups of the key characters tightly controlled editing, including shot-reverse shot and cross-cutting good control of sound levels careful attention to mise-en-scène two strong storylines established with focus on representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> little use of the codes and conventions of soaps no establishing shot/s lack of close-ups - difficult to distinguish between the key characters panning shots slow-paced editing and long takes inaudible dialogue haphazard locations (mostly in school) with school uniform in evidence even when inappropriate

<i>Most successful responses to Brief 2</i>	<i>Less successful responses to Brief 2</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> typical themes explored, including family conflict, secrets and lies and betrayal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> storylines vague or unclear, with little focus on representation woodland chases and fights

Brief 3: the opening two minutes of a rock music video aimed at an audience of 14-18 year olds

Music videos submitted were generally of a good standard with clear representations of young people for the intended audience. Some excellent editing techniques were used to create vitality and creativity, making the task of moderating these productions enjoyable. Most of the candidates had thought carefully about their target audience and had made relevant decisions about mise-en-scène, singers, and a mix of performance and narrative.

Candidates enjoyed the relative freedom that this option offered to explore representation. There were some mature responses to the brief, with one centre tackling serious themes such as domestic abuse and misogyny explicitly and very effectively. Other areas of representation which were explored included sexuality, ethnicity, masculinity and teenage mental health. Candidates and centres are to be congratulated for their thoughtful, engaged productions which dealt with these issues.

As with all the briefs, it was evident where candidates had undertaken close detailed analysis of existing rock music videos before planning their own productions.

<i>Most successful responses to Brief 3</i>	<i>Less successful responses to Brief 3</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a strong narrative which focused on a serious issue relevant to the intended audience a mixture of performance/narrative, where one of the performers also featured in the narrative a clear interpretation of the selected music track excellent use of a range of locations, including exteriors well planned and executed lighting tight editing which cut to the beat attention to codes of dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a vague narrative or one which was difficult to decode performers who were not committed to the production a mismatch between the selected music track and the music video one location only (often the school) problems with lighting long takes which did not correspond to the music little obvious motivation for the selected codes of dress

Brief 4: the homepage and one linked page for a website for a fictional charity campaign website aimed at an audience of 14-18 year olds

This was the least popular option. The majority of candidates who did select this brief chose their campaigns carefully to ensure the appeal to their target audience. There were some creative ideas for campaigns featuring mental health, anorexia, children in need and endangered animals. In the most successful websites, candidates used a range of lively, engaging original images and included sincere pieces direct to camera or effective audio promotional advertisements for the charity. There were some creative, well-designed logos for the charities.

<i>Most successful responses to Brief</i>	<i>Less successful responses to Brief 4</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a strong message focusing on the chosen campaign • a campaign relevant for the intended audience, focusing on representation of serious issues • a clear layout • a website where it was easy to navigate between the homepage and the other page • working links • strong original photography • a well planned and produced audio or video advertisement appealing for donations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a vague campaign or one which tried to cover too many areas • a campaign which did not 'speak' to the intended audience • a website where the two webpages that the candidate had produced had to be found within a folder of twenty of thirty files • links did not function • overuse of found images • problems with lighting • long takes of activities in the video clip

Moderators experienced some difficulties in accessing the charity websites. Screen shots of the websites provided the only evidence of the production sent to moderators in some cases, meaning that moderators were unable to see or listen to the audio/visual links.

<i>Submitting websites to moderators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please word process the URLs before sending them to the moderator rather than ask candidates to handwrite the address on the cover sheets. • Consider uploading website links to the OCR Repository, so that the websites can be accessed with ease by the moderator. • Please make sure that candidates remove all files apart from an index file - the URL that loads automatically when a web browser starts and when the browser's home button is pressed - which allows navigation to the second webpage required by the brief. • Please avoid sending a print-out of the website instead of the URL.

Conclusion

Moderators enjoyed moderating the wide range of work with the increased focus on the production itself.

Although evidence of research and planning no longer has to be sent to the moderator, careful research into similar media products and detailed planning were obvious features of the most successful work.

While there were some sophisticated examples of candidates tackling representation, there is still room for improvement in this area. This year it tended to be the higher level candidates who were most successful in demonstrating an effective understanding of representation, but in some centres there was good evidence that candidates at all levels had considered representation carefully. Candidates could be encouraged to consider the whole range of possible areas of representation, including ability/disability, ethnicity and sexuality. The relatively small number of candidates who did explore these areas did so very successfully.

It was evident that the majority of candidates had enjoyed well-taught courses which enabled them to demonstrate their understanding of the theoretical framework through production work. Centres are to be congratulated for the way in which they have risen to the challenge of planning, delivering and assessing this Creating Media component.

Submission of NEA

- Creating Media submissions which are uploaded to the Repository should be entered for J200/03
- Creating Media submissions which are postal should be entered for J200/04

Accepted file formats (page 58 of specification)**Audio/visual formats for digital video evidence:**

MPEG (*.mpg)
QuickTime movie (*.mov)
Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)
Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)
Flash (*.swf)
Windows Media File (*.wmf)
MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats:

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including:

JPEG (*.jpg)
Graphics file (*.pcx)
MS bitmap (*.bmp)
GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats:

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

Text formats:

Comma Separated Values (.csv)
PDF (.pdf)
Rich text format (.rtf)
Text document (.txt)

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