Media Studies A Level

Course Description:

This WJEC Eduqas Media Studies specification is designed to provide a coherent and integrated approach to studying the media, enabling you to develop and apply your understanding of the media through both analysing and producing media products in relation to a comprehensive underpinning theoretical framework and key theoretical approaches and theories. You are encouraged to make connections: between different media forms and products, between media products and their contexts, and between theory and practical work. In addition, you will develop the ability to reflect critically on both media products and theories used to analyse media products.
Through this study, you will gain a developed understanding of the key theoretical approaches, theories, issues and debates within the subject, enabling them to question and critically explore aspects of the media that may seem familiar and straightforward from their existing experience. Building on this, you will also extend your engagement with the media to the less familiar, including products from different historical periods and global settings, those produced outside the commercial mainstream and those aimed at or produced by minority groups, providing rich and stimulating opportunities for interpretation and analysis. The study of relevant social, cultural, political, economic and historical contexts further enhances and deepens your understanding of the media, as they explore key influences on the products studied. Please note that Media Studies is now a fully linear course.

Qualifications Required:

Minimum entry requirements apply. Standard entry criteria with Grade 4 in English.

Aims of the Course:

- To enhance students' enjoyment and appreciation of the media and its role in their daily lives.
- To develop critical understanding of the media through engagement with media products and concepts and through the creative application of production skills.
- To explore production processes, technologies and other relevant contexts.
- To become independent in research skills and their application in their production work and in developing their own views and interpretations.

Future Prospects:

You can progress on to:
Media and communications degree courses.
A wide range of careers including television/film production, broadcast/newspaper/magazine journalism, multimedia specialist, editorial assistant, public relations, market researcher etc.

Student Feedback:

"I didn't take Media Studies at GCSE, and wasn't really sure what to expect. However, I've been surprised at how interesting and engaging the subject is - I'm now even considering taking my interest further at university level. I am particularly enjoying exploring the theories and issues surrounding the representation of gender, and how stereotypes are embedded in our culture."

"I took GCSE Media Studies and wanted to further my knowledge at A level. Media Studies has encouraged me to be a critical consumer of media products. I am no longer a passive observer, and actively engage with the messages and values that media texts are conveying to the audience. It gives me a greater understanding of the media-saturated world in which I live, which is constantly growing and adapting to cultural shifts."

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Features of the Course:

This course will allow learners to:

- demonstrate skills of enquiry, critical thinking, decision-making and analysis.
- demonstrate a critical approach to media issues.
- demonstrate appreciation and critical understanding of the media and their role both historically and currently in society, culture, politics and the economy.
- develop an understanding of the dynamic and changing relationships between media forms, products, industries and audiences.
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the global nature of the media.
- apply theoretical knowledge and specialist subject-specific terminology to analyse and compare media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed.
- make informed arguments, reach substantiated judgements and draw conclusions about media issues.
- engage in critical debate about academic theories used in media studies.
- demonstrate sophisticated practical skills by providing opportunities for creative media production.

Summary of Assessment:

Component 1: Media Products, Industries and Audiences

Written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes – 35% of qualification

The examination assesses media language, representation, media industries, audiences and media contexts. It consists of two sections:

Section A: Analysing Media Language and Representation

This section assesses media language and representation in relation to two of the following media forms: advertising, marketing, music video or newspapers. There are two questions in this section:

- one question assessing media language in relation to an unseen audio-visual or print resource
- one extended response comparison question assessing representation in one set product and an unseen audio-visual or print resource in relation to media contexts

Section B: Understanding Media Industries and Audiences

This section assesses **two** of the following media forms – advertising, marketing, film, newspapers, radio, video games – and media contexts.

It includes:

- one stepped question on media industries
- one stepped question on audiences

Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes – 35% of qualification

The examination assesses media language, representation, media industries, audiences and media contexts. It consists of three sections:

Section A – Television in the Global Age: one two-part question **or** one extended response question.

Section B – Magazines: Mainstream and Alternative Media: one two-part question **or** one extended response question

Section C – Media in the Online Age: one two-part question **or** one extended response question.

Component 3: Cross-Media Production

Non exam assessment - 30% of qualification

An individual cross-media production based on two forms in response to a choice of briefs set by WJEC, applying knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework and digital convergence.