



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)  
January 2013**

**Communication and Culture**

**COMM1**

**(Specification 2625)**

**Unit 1: Understanding Communication and  
Culture**

**Pre-Standardisation**

***Mark Scheme***

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of students' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

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## UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE (COMM1)

### MARK SCHEME (January 2013)

#### Aims

When you are marking scripts your aim should be:

1. to identify and reward the achievements of candidates;
2. to ensure compatibility of assessment for all candidates, regardless of question or examiner.

#### Approach

Please be *positive* when marking scripts, looking to reward relevant points that candidates make rather than to penalise what they don't know.

A specification of this type must recognise the variety of experiences and knowledge that candidates bring to the examination. The questions have been designed to provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate what they have learned about different aspects of Communication and Culture.

#### The Principles of 'Best Fit'

This paper requires candidates to make three extended responses in an essay format and to answer some short answer questions which test their understanding of the techniques of critical analysis. These short answer questions have their own marking grid since they are working within a single Assessment Objective (AO2): demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and critical debates relevant to the discipline of communication and culture.

In the case of the longer essay-style response a grid is used which, while recognizing the need to consider different aspects of each response (like its technical accuracy), also attempts to consider the work as a whole.

In this case, marks are notionally divided between two Assessment Objectives (AO1 and AO2) in the ratio 2:3. Individual mark ranges are suggested for each AO, but these are provided **for guidance only**. **Ultimately the response should be placed at a level that 'best fits' its qualities.**

#### The Marking Grid

The marking grid covers the generic qualities of all essays written as responses on this paper in terms of their ability to communicate in a technical register and the knowledge and understanding displayed of Communication and Culture concepts.

A set of question-specific prompts support the application of marks and are included after the grid.

#### Annotating Scripts

It is important that the way you arrive at a mark should be recorded on the script. This will help you with making accurate judgements and it will help any subsequent markers to identify how you are thinking, should adjustment need to be made.

To this end you should:

- identify points of merit
- write a brief summative comment at the end
- put the total in the margin at the end of each answer.

**Generic AS Grid COMM1 (Questions 1, 2 & 4 - Question 3 is 20 marks AO2)**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>AO1: This tests the ability of candidates to communicate in the register of Communication and Culture</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>AO2: This tests the ability of candidates to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification</b>	<b>Marks</b>
		<i>This reflects the degree to which the candidate has extended their grasp of the discourse of the subject and/or produced effective communication in their chosen medium.</i>		<i>This reflects the degree to which the work provides evidence of further knowledge and understanding of the content and concepts of Communication and Culture</i>	
4	16-20	Highly technical in its register and/or creative and/or proficient in its use of the chosen format.	7-8	Knowledge and understanding will be very good in terms of its range of knowledge and/or depth of understanding.	10-12
3	11-15	Sound in terms of its range and control and good in terms of its effectiveness.	5-6	Level of knowledge and understanding will be secure and will evidence sound subject specialist knowledge.	7-9
2	6-10	Limited vocabulary, perhaps only partly understood, rising to a degree of competence evidenced by the effective use of a fairly narrow range of terms/concepts.	3-4	Evidence will range from a limited, largely non-specialist relevance through to a simple but competent grasp of Communication and Culture content.	4-6
1	1-5	Basic, non-technical and unconvincing.	1-2	Evidence will be basic, non-specific and unconvincing.	1-3

1. Communication and Culture takes the study of popular culture seriously but there are those who disagree.

As a student of Communication and Culture argue the case in favour of the serious study of **one** of the following:

- a) Television Soap opera

**OR**

- b) High street fashion

**OR**

- c) Computer games.

(20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>A clear, concise justification of the selected example. Explicit and convincing evidence that the concept of 'value' in relation to cultural products is thoroughly understood. Supporting explanations are apposite, contrasting and clearly linked to the chosen example.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with the keywords, whatever the selection and consider the theory of the issue before the practice. Awareness of key terms and their use.</b></p> <p>Reasonably convincing, if partially flawed, attempt to justify chosen example. Some evidence that the concept of 'value' in relation to cultural products is understood. Explanations are relevant and support the provenance of the chosen example.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to work through practical answers with limited evaluation.</b></p> <p>The chosen item is described rather than justified <b>or</b> justifications offered are less than convincing. Concepts of 'value' in relation to cultural products are only partially understood. For marks of 9 – 10, appropriate examples may compensate for conceptual shortcomings, or vice versa. For marks in the range 6 – 8, examples are limited or unsuitable.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</b></p> <p>At this level, any justifications offered are inappropriate. Descriptions of the chosen explanation are limited. There are likely to be serious misinterpretations of 'value' in relation to cultural products. Examples lack relevance or are, in the range 1 – 3 marks, absent.</p>
0	No relevant response.

2. It has been argued that we learn a great deal about others by listening to them talking.

Using specific examples explore what a person's speech may tell us about:

a) their regional and social identity

**OR**

b) their emotional state

**OR**

c) their status.

*(20 marks)*

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>Clear, confident explanation of how the chosen element offers the indications of our 'identity', including, probably, some reference to why other candidates are less convincing. There is some explicit evidence of conceptual understanding, demonstrating links between identity and the chosen statement.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on keywords and address theory in advance of practice. Attention to detail is key here.</b></p> <p>Reasonably well-informed explanations of how the chosen element operates. Some evidence that key terms in the question, particularly the links between language and selfhood are understood. In the range 11 – 12 marks, descriptive material may predominate over conceptual references.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. There may be a pre-prepared Case Study offered. Likely to come to easy conclusions without arguing through the case. Unfounded assertion through to competent responses.</b></p> <p>Likely to be a descriptive rather than analytical or evaluative account of the chosen element. Limited or partial understanding of key terms in the question, particularly how language reveals us.</p>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p><b>Uncritical explanation of the statement. Little else offered.</b></p> <p>Explanations are inappropriate or inept. Little or no understanding of key terms in the question.</p>
0	No relevant response.

4. What can you, as a student of Communication and Culture, suggest about the communication and cultural practices and products revealed in this image?

(20 marks)



Level	Descriptor
<p>4 (16 – 20 marks)</p>	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</b></p> <p>Confident, well-informed analysis with strong evidence that relevant debates around the MPEL are understood. Alternative explanations are convincingly rooted in conceptual understanding. Polemical responses may feature at this level if ideas are well supported by evidence and argument.</p>
<p>3 (11 – 15 marks)</p>	<p><b>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of ‘cultural values’ as a key focus and to relate this to the ‘practice’ of self-presentation. Evidence will be sound and detailed.</b></p> <p>Competent understanding of the situation is evident with some analytical elements. Alternative explanations demonstrate some familiarity with the terms of debates about the construction of meanings.</p>
<p>2 (6 – 10 marks)</p>	<p><b>Likely to offer a reading of the text and to address the examples in it. Likely to focus on the examples only (largely) or anecdotally.</b></p> <p>Responds to the text at a personal rather than analytical level. In the range 9 – 10 marks, comments indicate some awareness of relevant sections of the unit but in the range 6 – 8 marks are more likely to be based on barely substantiated assertions.</p>
<p>1 (1 – 5 marks)</p>	<p><b>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</b></p> <p>May be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the stimulus material and/or the task. Superficial account or one which is too brief to constitute a serious response to the question.</p>
<p>0</p>	<p>No relevant response.</p>

Separate Marking Grid for Question 3 (AO2 only)

These questions are meant to test knowledge of critical techniques. They thus only address a single Assessment Objective and require a simpler, streamlined marking grid.



Apples.

- a) Choose two of these ‘apples’. (4 marks)  
Suggest a context for each.
- b) To what extent is each one of these three figures an iconic or motivated sign? (6 marks)
- c) To what extent do these three images provide different answers to the question ‘What is an apple?’? (10 marks)

	3 (a)		3 (b)		3 (c)	
<b>Level</b>	<b>Open text</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Denote / connote</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Cultural meaning</b>	<b>Mark</b>
4	A skilful response which demonstrates secure knowledge. Knowledgeable and specialist.	4	Handles the key terms in a mature fashion, teasing out the subtleties. Knowledgeable and specialist.	6	Fluent and detailed analysis of this feature of the text. Knowledgeable and specialist.	9-10
3	Sound understanding of 'context' demonstrated in reference to the text.	3	'Iconicity' and/or 'motivation' are clearly understood and largely applied relevantly. There is an active, if sometimes flawed, reading of the texts.	4-5	Sound understanding of relevant Communication and Culture content and concepts. Strong knowledge or application.	6-8
2	Beginnings of awareness of the key content of the course. Competent understanding of context.	2	Communication and Culture concepts are generally understood even when not skilfully applied.	2-3	Competent, active reading of the cultural product with some technical knowledge or analytical skill.	4-5
1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1	Little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the concepts or content of the course.	1-3
0	No relevant response					