

Post-16 Curriculum- Media Studies

Subject Curriculum Overview

Subject	Media Studies
Qualification / Specification	H409
Awarding Body	OCR
Level	3
Curriculum Lead	Matt Thorne
Teaching Staff	Joe Cody
Guided Learning Hours	360
Year(s) Delivered	12 & 13
Last Review Date	June 2026
Next Review Date	June 2027

1. Curriculum Intent

The purpose of Media Studies is to allow learners to study the media in an academic context and apply the knowledge and understanding gained to the process of creating their own media productions. This allows students to widen their intellectual horizons through the analysis of both global and historical media and to foster the development of critical and reflective thinking to encourage engagement in the critical debates surrounding contemporary media. Finally it allows students to engage confidently with critical and theoretical approaches from the perspectives of both analytical consumers and producers of media products.

Media supports students to continue learning beyond the confines of the classroom as well as developing personal and interpersonal skills that will serve them well both in Higher Education and in the workplace.

Students of Media have benefitted from working with Solent University in Creative Media and Graduate discussion days, students are shown routes of progression. We have a very good record of students progressing to study Media at HE. The skills of Independent product development experience and application of theoretical frameworks and study of contemporary media products are excellent preparation for further study. On top of this the use of industry standard production software across a range of media is excellent preparation for industrial applications - several of our students have developed professional practice both whilst and after their studies.

Success for Media Students will excel in a range of production work, develop confidence in group work, presenting ideas in a public forum and enhancing understanding of the students' roles as both citizens and consumers.

2. Foundational Knowledge

Area	Essential Knowledge / Skills	Why It Matters
Reading Media	students develop an understanding of how meaning is encoded and decoded in Media Products through visual and audio signs.	They build a specialist vocabulary to scaffold analysis of a wide range of media forms.
Media Forms	students study eight distinct media forms: Long Form Television Drama, Newspapers, Magazines, Radio, Video Games, Music Video, Film Marketing & Print Advertising.	They study the conventions, history and development of each of the forms within a range of contexts.
Contexts of production	students explore how political, historical, industrial, social and cultural contexts shape media products.	The knowledge gained allows the dialectic study of the relationship between media products and the real world.
Media Production	students use depth studies of a range of media forms across the course to create independent artefacts, covering print media, audio and audio-visual production.	They develop the skill set necessary to create effective NEA submissions in Y13
Media analysis	students study how to write concisely and precisely about the construction of meaning in media texts, developing fluency in the specialist terminology of the subject.	The develop the skill to respond precisely to exam questions and write concisely to help manage the time constraints of exams

3. Powerful Knowledge

Area	Essential Knowledge / Skills	Why It Matters
Theoretical Frameworks & Analysis	● Semiotic Theory - Roland Barthes: Understanding that media products are composed of signs (camera angles, color, mise-en-scène) that convey deeper cultural meanings, such as denotation, connotation, and myth. ● Narrative Structure - (Todorov/Levi-Strauss): Analyzing how media stories are structured to resolve conflict or create ideological binaries (good vs. evil) to shape audience perception. ● Genre Theory - (Neale): Recognizing that genre is a process of repetition and difference, allowing students to analyze how products conform to or subvert audience expectations. ● Postmodernism - Baudrillard: Recognising that ways that contemporary media products are often simulacra - they borrow, reference, steal and re-present existing media texts in new ways which might be quite separate from the original intended meanings.	Students develop a range of critical perspectives to enhance and deepen their analysis of media texts
Industry & Production Knowledge	● Cultural Industries - (Hesmondhalgh): Understanding that media companies prioritize profit and risk avoidance through diversification, horizontal/vertical integration, and branding (e.g., how the Assassin's Creed franchise maximizes audience engagement through various platforms). ● Online Media Control - (Curran & Seaton): Analyzing how the internet, despite its democratic potential, is often dominated by large, established, or monopolistic players, limiting the diversity of voices. ● Media Ownership & Regulation - (Livingstone & Lunt): Understanding how the need to balance regulation with consumer choice affects the content and availability of media products.	Students are able to evaluate how commercial, industrial and regulatory pressures shape media texts
Representation & Ideology	● Stereotyping and Ideology - (Hall/Butler/hooks/Gilroy): Analyzing how representations are not neutral but rather construct, maintain, or challenge dominant ideologies regarding gender, race, and class (e.g., evaluating how BabyDove campaigns work to resist cultural ideas of 'perfect mums').	Students how social representations in media texts both reflect and shape the real world

	• Identity - (Gauntlett): recognising the ways in which media consumption is as much about construction of identity as it is about consuming the product. Audiences 'pick and mix' from the vast offering of media products in ways which are ideologically and contextually determined.	
Audience Theories	• Cultivation Theory and Media Effects (Gerbner & Bandura): Understanding the immediate and long-term impact of media exposure (e.g.how representations of immigration in Newspapers can shape the public and political discourse). • Fandom and End of Audience - (Jenkins and Shirky): how the global internet presents the possibility of decentered power, the erosion of traditional gatekeepers of knowledge and the ability of fans to reconstruct, redirect and reshape media production in an increasingly collaborative relationship with the traditional producers.	Students can evaluate the changing role of audience interaction in the production of media content

4. Curriculum Implementation

Term / Unit	Key Content	Foundational Knowledge	Powerful Knowledge	Assessment Opportunities
Aut1	Media language	Reading media & media forms	Semiotics, narrative and genre	Structured and unseen print text analysis
Aut2	Magazine and Advertising	Contexts and media production	Genre, representation and audience	Written analysis and production piece
Spr3	Music video and Radio	Reading media, media forms and production	Representation, Industry and identity	Group music video product and analytical essay
Spr4	Film marketing and Video games	Reading media and contexts	Industry	Mini mock and poster production
Sum5	LFTV	Media forms, context of production	Audience theories and representation	Series of discursive essays and research tasks
Sum6	NEA launch & revision	Media production	Industries and representation	Research, workshopping and presentation Y12 Mock
Aut7	Newspapers & online	Reading media & media forms; Contexts and media production	Industry, Representation & Audience	Exam style practice
Aut8	Y13 Mock and NEA first draft	Media production	All	Mock exam and NEA

Spr9	NEA completion - responding to feedback	Media Production		
Spr10 - to exam	Revision			

5. Assessment Strategy

Assessment Type	Purpose	Frequency
Diagnostic	Terminology checklists, hinge questions, white boards, quizzes and digital games (Kahoot) - reveals misconceptions and gaps in knowledge & understanding	Every lesson
Formative	In class essays and production tasks, no time constraints, group planned - builds essay writing, exam skills and production skills	Every topic
Summative	Unseen question and/or text to exam times - tests acquisition, feeds in to progress, informs ongoing planing	Every topic
Synoptic	Mock exams and NEA	Twice in Y12 and again in Y13 (Mock)