

# Grade Descriptions for Cambridge International A Level Media Studies 9607

## What are grade descriptions?

Grade descriptions describe the level of performance typically demonstrated by candidates achieving the different grades awarded for a qualification. For Cambridge International A Levels, they describe performance at three levels – grades ‘E’, ‘C’ and ‘A’.

Grade descriptions sit alongside other key documents that illustrate examination standards, including:

- the syllabus, which presents what students should be taught over a course of study and explains how this is assessed
- the specimen assessment materials, which exemplify the structure of the assessment and the kinds of tasks that candidates complete
- grade thresholds, which show the total mark required to achieve a grade.

Grade descriptions are produced with a wide range of audiences in mind. For teachers, they support lesson planning and curriculum development, while students may gain useful insights into what is required to achieve a high grade and what candidate performance at lower grades typically looks like. For university admissions staff and employers, and those less familiar with Cambridge, they paint a picture of typical performance at different grades.

Cambridge publishes grade descriptions for a qualification once examinations have taken place for the first time, and we review them when a qualification is substantially revised. They are developed by highly experienced examiners who understand performance standards in the subject area and have studied samples of candidate work.

## How do I use this resource?

Grade descriptions are presented as a grid, with content areas at the start of each row and the different grades at the top of each column.

The content areas group together various aspects of the syllabus – they reflect topics, assessment objectives, key concepts, syllabus aims and components. The way they are organised is specific to each subject.

For each content area, there is a descriptor for each grade. Reading across the row from left to right, the descriptors represent increasing levels of performance, with each grade descriptor building on, and including, the last.

Each column represents overall performance at a particular grade. Reading down the column from top to bottom, the descriptors capture the range of knowledge, understanding and skills that a candidate comfortably achieving the grade is likely to demonstrate.

Where content areas for the first and second halves of the A Level are distinct, they are also assessed at different standards. Performance for content areas assessed at AS Level is therefore described separately in this document.

Cambridge produces grade descriptions to support teaching and learning and the interpretation of candidate scores and grades. We do not use them to set grade thresholds. As such, they cannot be used to challenge the grade awarded to any individual candidate.

## Grade descriptions

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
<p><b>Media concepts and terminology</b></p>	<p>Students have limited understanding of the key concepts of media and show minimal reference to them when discussing media topics. They use media terminology basically with frequent errors which sometimes impedes communication of thinking.</p> <p>They demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of media concepts when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. their responses are generalised with few examples from relevant media texts, for example.</p> <p>They use a limited range of media terminology, even though they have followed a syllabus in Media Studies.</p>	<p>Students show clear understanding of, and are generally able to reference, some appropriate key concepts when discussing media topics. They employ some appropriate media terminology to make clear points.</p> <p>They demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding of media concepts when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. they respond to questions referring to specific ideas/concepts and support their thinking with some reference to media texts, for example.</p> <p>They use a clear range of media terminology acquired from their learning.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate sophisticated understanding of, and insightful reference to, appropriate key concepts when discussing media topics. They employ media terminology to precisely and accurately develop a sophisticated argument.</p> <p>They demonstrate sophisticated knowledge and understanding of media concepts when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate sophisticated knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. they offer sophisticated responses to questions discussing ideas/concepts with insight based upon close reference to media texts, for example.</p> <p>They use a sophisticated range of media terminology acquired from their learning.</p>
<p><b>Media contexts and critical debates</b></p>	<p>Students have limited understanding of the wider media contexts and critical debates.</p>	<p>Students show some clear knowledge and understanding of the wider media contexts and critical debates raised by given questions.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate insightful understanding of the wider media contexts and critical debates raised by given questions.</p>

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
	<p>Discussion is often generalised with limited reference to theory or theorists.</p> <p>They demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of media contexts and critical debates when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. Their understanding of media contexts and critical debates is limited given that they have followed a syllabus in Media Studies. Their responses to questions often offer 'lay' opinions rather than discussion based on media debates, for example.</p>	<p>Discussion is generally clear and appropriate with some reference to well-known theory and theorists.</p> <p>They demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding of media contexts and critical debates when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. their responses to questions are clearly based on their learning and they are able to engage with media debates, for example.</p>	<p>Discussion is sophisticated with detailed references to appropriate theory and theorists.</p> <p>They demonstrate sophisticated knowledge and understanding of media contexts and critical debates when responding to questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media.</p> <p>They demonstrate sophisticated knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the course of study when responding to questions about media ecology. they engage sophisticatedly with media debates and offer insightful arguments based upon their learning, for example.</p>
<b>Analysing Media products</b>	<p>Students show limited analysis of media texts which may not always be from an appropriate source. Reference to these media texts may be minimal and lack relevance in parts, and reference to media theory may be fleeting and inappropriate, when responding to given questions.</p> <p>They draw upon limited examples from case studies to support limited responses to given questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and the media. They write,</p>	<p>Students show clear analysis of media texts from one or more sources. Some clear references to the texts are used, alongside occasional reference to relevant theories/theorists, to support their response to given questions.</p> <p>They draw upon examples from case studies from at least one medium to support clear responses to given questions about media regulation, postmodern media, or power and</p>	<p>Students demonstrate sophisticated and insightful analysis of media texts from multiple media sources. Insightful references to the texts, along with relevant theories, are used to develop an argument in response to given questions.</p> <p>They draw sophisticatedly upon examples from case studies from more than one medium to support insightful responses to given questions about media regulation,</p>

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
	<p>'<i>Don't Look Up</i> is an example of a postmodern text' without any further explanation, contextualisation or analysis, for example.</p> <p>They refer to limited contemporary examples from their learning to explore changing media environments.</p>	<p>the media. they use evidence from <i>Don't Look Up</i> to support their response to the question, for example.</p> <p>They refer to contemporary examples across at least two mediums, and based upon their learning, to explore changing media environments.</p>	<p>postmodern media, and power and the media. They engage insightfully with media debates of postmodernism and understand how the context and content of <i>Don't Look Up</i> can be used for exemplification, for example.</p> <p>They refer sophisticatedly to contemporary examples across at least two mediums, and based upon their learning, to explore changing media environments.</p>
<p><b>Evaluating own production work</b></p>	<p>Students offer a limited evaluation of their own productions with occasional reference to the process of production and the skills, knowledge and understanding needed. They tend to describe their work rather than evaluate it.</p> <p>They produce a simple essay or unconnected paragraphs with limited focus on the evaluation of their productions.</p> <p>They write about their own productions with limited clarity about representation, branding, audience and conventions. They write, 'My music video is aimed at boys', for example.</p>	<p>Students are able to clearly evaluate their own productions with some reflection on the process of production and the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to complete the process.</p> <p>They produce an essay with clear focus on the evaluation of their production work.</p> <p>They write about their own productions with clarity about representation, branding, audience and conventions. They write, 'My music video appeals to a 13–21-year-old demographic who would probably be male due to the macho persona of the artiste', for example.</p>	<p>Students evaluate sophisticatedly their own productions by critically reflecting upon the process of production and the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to successfully complete the process.</p> <p>They produce an essay with a sophisticated focus on the evaluation of their production work.</p> <p>They write insightfully about their own productions with a focus on representation, branding, audience and conventions. They write about the representation of the macho persona of the artiste and how this appeals to a particular demographic who may already identify with the brand, for example.</p>

Area of knowledge, understanding and skills	Typical performance at grade E	Typical performance at grade C	Typical performance at grade A
<b>Using media tools</b>	<p>Students use media tools to produce a limited package of media texts: video, print and online; there are some weaknesses across all three products.</p> <p>They use a limited range of media tools to research, plan and produce a package of media texts based upon a given brief.</p> <p>They demonstrate limited skill in the use of a range of media tools (video and still cameras, video and photo editing software, sound recording equipment, desktop publishing software, social media and web applications).</p>	<p>Students clearly use media tools to produce a complete package of media texts: video, print and online; there are some inconsistencies in quality across the three products.</p> <p>They use a range of media tools to research, plan and produce a package of media texts based upon a given brief. Their package of media texts meets the brief but contains inconsistencies in quality.</p> <p>They demonstrate clear skill in the use of a range of media tools (video and still cameras, video and photo editing software, sound recording equipment, desktop publishing software, social media and web applications).</p>	<p>Students demonstrate a sophisticated level of skill in using media tools to produce an effective package of media texts: video, print and online.</p> <p>They use a wide range of media tools to research, plan and produce a sophisticated package of media texts based upon a given brief.</p> <p>They demonstrate high levels of skill in the use of a range of media tools (video and still cameras, video and photo editing software, sound recording equipment, desktop publishing software, social media and web applications).</p>
<b>Applying knowledge and understanding to productions</b>	<p>Students are able to apply limited knowledge and understanding of media concepts to their productions.</p> <p>They use their learning in a limited way to inform their productions.</p> <p>They produce a package of media texts that shows they have applied their knowledge and understanding of media concepts in a limited way. There is often misunderstanding of both how to use equipment and how to appeal to an appropriate audience.</p>	<p>Students apply a clear range of knowledge and understanding of media concepts to their productions.</p> <p>They clearly use their learning to inform their productions.</p> <p>They produce a package of media texts that shows they have clearly applied their knowledge and understanding of media concepts. There is an understanding of both how to use equipment and how to appeal to an appropriate audience.</p>	<p>Students demonstrate a sophisticated level of knowledge and understanding of media concepts to their productions.</p> <p>They use their learning in a sophisticated way to inform their productions.</p> <p>They produce a package of media texts that shows they have applied their knowledge and understanding of media concepts in an insightful way. They demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of both how to use equipment and how to appeal to an appropriate audience.</p>

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