Media Studies

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2024 Subject Outline | Stage 1 and Stage 2

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Introduction

Subject Description

Media Studies is a 10‑credit subject or a 20‑credit subject at Stage 1, and a 20‑credit subject at Stage 2.

Students develop media literacy and production skills by critically observing media practice, critically analysing media texts, and creating media products. By developing sensitivity to trends in media content, students learn about their own culture and that of others, and the effect of media on individual and group identity.

The focus of Media Studies is on exploring the dynamic role of media in Australian and global contexts. Students develop an understanding of the ways in which media provide views of world events, interpretations of the world, and entertainment. Students consider how media can exert a significant influence on the ways in which people receive and interpret information about the world, explore their own culture and that of others, construct their identity, make economic choices, develop political ideas, and spend their leisure time. Media contribute to the formation of cultural identity because they are central to everyday life.

Students are involved in discussing and analysing media issues, interacting with media, and creating media products. Students actively engage and interact with media, while learning to make informed choices. The analytical elements of Media Studies support students to develop critical research and analysis skills that may lead to future study or employment pathways.

Capabilities

The capabilities connect student learning within and across subjects in a range of contexts. They include essential knowledge and skills that enable people to act in effective and successful ways.

The five capabilities that have been identified are:

* communication
* citizenship
* personal development
* work
* learning.

Aspects of the capabilities for communication, citizenship, personal development, work, and learning are reflected in the learning requirements, content, assessment design criteria, and performance standards of Media Studies. However, individual teaching and learning programs may focus on some capabilities more than others. All programs should have a focus on the capabilities for communication, work, and learning.

Communication

The focus of the capability for communication is primarily on developing an understanding of media as a means of technology-based mass communication. Students learn about the technology used by the media, production processes, the conventions used to create media products, and the strategies employed to communicate to different audiences. Students have the opportunity to develop skills in using information and communication technologies to create texts that are appropriate for particular audiences. These texts could be distributed widely within or across cultures.

Students come to understand that media texts are the product of a process of selecting and organising symbols, images, sounds, and words. Students examine and reflect on how non-verbal elements have been used to communicate meaning and how interpretation of symbols, sounds, words, and images contributes to the understanding of a text. Students consider the extent to which a media text has been mediated, changed, or constructed to suit the needs, purpose, or expectations of the audience or creator of the text.

Citizenship

The focus of the capability for citizenship is primarily on developing an understanding that all individuals are part of society, and that decisions are made at individual, local, national, and global levels. Students critically examine the processes and institutions in society that make decisions about media products and messages. Students learn about the decisions that are made to regulate the media, laws related to media ownership, codes of practice, and content classification.

Students consider how media support or challenge cultural and social values, in particular, the ways in which media reflect contemporary cultural diversity.

In creating inclusive media products, students have the opportunity to participate in contemporary debates on social, political, and economic issues. Students also consider how governments make use of media and, in turn, how media owners and organisations may influence decision-making processes. Students also have opportunities to consider the role of public broadcasting in Australia. Through this active participation, students develop the ability to critique, analyse, and evaluate a range of issues.

Personal Development

The focus of the capability for personal development is primarily on developing students’ understanding of the ways in which media and media products exist in local, national, and global contexts. A study of media enables students to explore the effect of globalisation on the construction of personal, social, and cultural identity. Students explore the ways in which media construct perceptions of reality and contribute to the development of attitudes and values. Students have the opportunity to consider the ways in which individuals’ purchasing, nutritional, or leisure decisions are influenced by media.

Students have opportunities to examine and evaluate the purposes and use of social networking programs; they consider the extent to which communities of interest are created and how personal and group identities are formed and maintained using technology.

Through a study of media students learn that the reading of a media text is not the same for all members of its audience; individuals bring their own opinions and interpretations to the reading of a text. Audiences are able to resist messages that they receive; an individual may question a view or portrayal of reality presented in a media text.

Work

The focus of the capability for work is primarily on developing students’ awareness of the paid and unpaid occupations that exist in Australia’s media. The media industry is a major provider of employment opportunities. Students also have the opportunity to explore the wide range of career opportunities available, including on-air presenters, camera operators, digital animators, web designers, scriptwriters, television directors, and journalists.

Students develop skills in the use of various information and communication technologies that are used in the workplace. They create a variety of texts, which may include those used in the workplace. They do this using an appropriate register that suits the purpose and intended audience; in doing so students develop valuable and transferable employability skills, such as working in groups to solve problems. This provides students with access to, and participation in, economic and social spheres.

Learning

The focus of the capability for learning is primarily on developing students’ understanding of the ways in which meaning is created and communicated to others in local and global communities. Students recognise and appreciate the diversity of attitudes, beliefs, practices, and values across a range of societies and communities.

Students have the opportunity to examine, interpret, and create media. They learn to critically analyse and construct media forms, as well as actively engaging and interacting with media. The analytical elements of Media Studies enable students to develop critical research and analysis skills.

Literacy in Media Studies

In Media Studies, students have opportunities to develop and use a range of individual and collaborative literacy skills, including:

* critically researching, analysing, interpreting, evaluating, and reflecting on media texts
* designing, creating, and composing media texts, using appropriate forms and features for a range of audiences and purposes
* correctly using subject-specific and technical terminology
* interpreting and decoding a range of written, visual, oral, and multimedia texts
* developing individual and collaborative skills in negotiating planning processes in media production assessments
* accessing and sequencing relevant information.

Numeracy in Media Studies

In Media Studies, students have opportunities to develop and use a range of numeracy skills, including:

* reading and interpreting, constructing, and manipulating numerical and digital information
* constructing, using, and interpreting graphs, tables, and diagrams relevant to Media Studies
* reviewing and creating multimedia texts, using spatial reasoning skills
* producing texts to prescribed time constraints
* sequencing texts
* budgeting resources when producing texts.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledge, Cultures, and Perspectives

In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and schools and school sectors, the SACE Board of South Australia supports the development of high-quality learning and assessment design that respects the diverse knowledge, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous Australians.

The SACE Board encourages teachers to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives in the design, delivery, and assessment of teaching and learning programs by:

* providing opportunities in SACE subjects for students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary experiences
* recognising and respecting the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australian society
* drawing students’ attention to the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives from the past and the present
* promoting the use of culturally appropriate protocols when engaging with and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Stage 1 Media Studies

Learning Scope and Requirements

Learning Requirements

The learning requirements summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 1 Media Studies.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. demonstrate understanding of the ways in which societies are represented by media

2. research and analyse the form, content, context, and intended audiences of media texts

3. creatively use media technologies in individual and collaborative production activities

4. explore aspects of the dynamics of the media industry

5. analyse their interactions with media.

Content

Media Studies is a 10‑credit subject or a 20‑credit subject at Stage 1. It involves reading, viewing, writing, listening, discussing, debating, and interacting. Stage 1 Media Studies also involves creating media products and analysing media. Students create and examine a range of media texts, thus developing their skills and knowledge, and their understanding of media as symbolic systems.

When studying the suggested topics, students should be given opportunities to undertake research, debate issues, produce a range of texts, and present their views in a variety of ways. Students should reflect on their own experiences of media when studying their chosen topics.

Topics

Learning in Media Studies is achieved through a close study of topics selected from the following list:

* Topic 1: Images of Youth in Media
* Topic 2: Making of the News
* Topic 3: Advertising
* Topic 4: Careers in Media
* Topic 5: Creating Multimedia Texts
* Topic 6: Representations in Media
* Topic 7: Media Audiences
* Topic 8: Media and Leisure
* Topic 9: Media and the Global Community.

A 10‑credit subject consists of a study of a minimum of two topics. A 20‑credit subject consists of a study of a minimum of four topics.

The structure of Stage 1 Media Studies is flexible. In collaboration with students, teachers can develop topics other than those listed. Topics need not be of equal length and may be integrated.

Topic 1: Images of Youth in Media

Students consider the ways in which young people are portrayed in media; they look at how and why images are presented in different ways. Students view, read, and listen to a variety of media texts to discover the ways in which the creators of texts intend their audiences to view young people, and then how audiences interpret these representations.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* What kinds of images of young people are presented in different media?
* To what extent are media audiences influenced by the images of young people presented in media?
* How close to reality are the images of young people presented in media?
* What motivates media portrayals of young people?

Topic 2: Making of the News

The ‘news’ is a media product, which is delivered to audiences after decisions of relevance and priority have been made by particular individuals and organisations. As users of news, students have opinions and attitudes that have been influenced by what they read, see, or hear from the various sources of news, and the different media through which the news is presented. In studying this topic students may consider a selection of news stories, the balance of local, national, and international stories, and the ways in which editing can influence the opinions of the audience. In addition, students may take the opportunity to produce their own news stories.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* How satisfied are they with the range and quality of news available in their local community?
* How are stories selected and shaped to suit the expectations of the audience?
* To what extent are there differences in selection and reporting of news events in the various media?
* To what extent is the use of ‘breaking’ and current news accessed through dynamic mediums (such as websites) contributing to the quality of information?
* How true is the statement ‘all news is local’?
* Has the use of technology changed the ways in which news is gathered, reported, and communicated, and in what ways?

Topic 3: Advertising

Advertising is part of daily life. The purpose of advertising is to influence the choices people make about how they spend money, where they live, how they spend leisure time, and how they form opinions. Commercial media depend on advertising to fund production and broadcasting costs. In their study of this topic, students consider the ways in which the commercial media sell their audiences to the creators of products or services. Students have the opportunity to reflect on the methods used by the advertising industry to target audiences. Students may elect to create an example of advertising.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* What techniques do advertisers use to sell products and services?
* How does the need for advertising revenue influence the media industry?
* In what ways does Australian law affect the advertising industry?
* What career opportunities are there in the advertising industry?
* How do commercial media create audiences for the products they sell?

Topic 4: Careers in Media

The media industry is a major provider of employment opportunities. Career positions include those of on-air presenters, camera operators, sound recordists, digital animators, web designers, scriptwriters, television directors, and journalists. In this topic students can explore the wide range of career opportunities available. Students may have the opportunity to visit a workplace or to interview a person employed in media.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* What skills and aptitudes are required for a career in media?
* What courses are available? How can young people gain access to training or tertiary courses?
* How do ethical considerations influence the decisions made by people working in media?
* What are the career opportunities available in local communities, and what skills and abilities are needed?
* How might the mixture of careers available in media change in the next 10 years?

Topic 5: Creating Multimedia Texts

The convergence of technologies has meant that the nature of media texts has changed and continues to change. Digital technology and high-speed data transfer have had major influences on the ways in which media organisations produce texts and audiences receive them. In this topic students have the opportunity to consider the advantages and disadvantages of established and emerging technologies when creating their own multimedia text.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* What message or information does this text aim to communicate?
* Have the needs of the intended audience been considered when a particular medium has been selected?
* Have the conventions of the medium been used effectively in creating the text?
* What causes different audiences to interpret the same text in different ways?
* Have legal and ethical issues been considered when creating the text?

Topic 6: Representations in Media

Students examine the ways in which media represent different images of people, places, and concepts. Students study how media texts are constructed through the selection and organisation of images and sounds. When students watch a media text, they are experiencing a representation that has been constructed for a specific purpose or purposes. Students also examine how media texts present individual behaviour or attitudes as natural or normal.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* In what ways do perceptions of gender, age, ethnicity, and socio-economic status influence the ways in which individuals and groups are represented in media?
* To what extent do different audiences resist the ways in which individuals and groups are represented?
* To what extent do representations in media reflect the diversity of the community?
* To what extent does the origin of a media text influence the ways in which individuals and groups are represented?
* Do any organisations or individuals benefit from the ways in which media represent groups of people in society, and in what ways?

Topic 7: Media Audiences

Students consider the role of the audience for media texts. Audiences are changing as a result of the use of new technologies; there are now many more choices of media texts, which increases the range of audiences. Students come to realise that media audiences bring with them a wide range of life experience, attitudes, and values. These factors influence the ways in which audiences receive media texts.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* From an examination of the scheduling or positioning of the text, what assumptions may the schedulers have made about the audience?
* How may different types of media position their audiences?
* To what extent are audiences influenced by their age, gender, ethnicity, and socio‑economic status when they interpret media messages?
* In what ways are converging technologies changing media audiences?
* How has the global nature of some audiences influenced the construction of media messages?

Topic 8: Media and Leisure

Media are major providers of entertainment and leisure opportunities in the community. People engage with the media for a variety of activities including playing games and exploring personal interests. In this topic students have the opportunity to consider the ways in which different members of their community use media as a source of entertainment. Students also reflect on possible future developments in leisure-based media.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* To what extent do different groups in society use media to provide entertainment?
* How do large institutions try to control the provision of entertainment through media?
* How have new technologies influenced the ways in which media provide entertainment?
* How has the global nature of technology influenced the ways in which individuals use their leisure time?
* What are possible future developments in technology and in the media leisure industry?

Topic 9: Media and the Global Community

The use of technology has meant that media messages can be received from anywhere and has broken down traditional national boundaries. As potential creators and users of media products, students have access to the world. In this topic students examine the ways in which media have an impact on, and respond to, the global community.

In their study of this topic, students may consider some of the following questions:

* How has exposure to global media influences affected the cultural identities of small communities?
* How may an individual’s access to the global community via media help to break down barriers and lead to a greater degree of understanding?
* Who owns global media? Does ownership have any implications for society?
* Do some individuals and groups present a danger if they have unrestricted access to global media, either as creators or as users, and in what ways?
* What are possible future developments in technology and the spread of global media?

Suggestions for Other Topics

Further ideas for topics include:

* Media in Intercultural Contexts
* Alternative Media Outlets
* Community-based Media
* Indigenous Media
* Local School Media
* Talkback Programs
* Media Programming and Classifications
* Women in Media
* Violence in Media
* The Home Theatre
* Portrayal of War through Media
* Media Regulations and Codes of Practice
* Documentary and Reality
* Media and the Law.

Assessment Scope and Requirements

Assessment at Stage 1 is school based.

Evidence of Learning

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in Stage 1 Media Studies:

* Assessment Type 1: Folio
* Assessment Type 2: Interaction Study
* Assessment Type 3: Product.

For a 10‑credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through four or five assessments, with at least one assessment from each assessment type. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

For a 20‑credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through eight to ten assessments, with at least one assessment from each assessment type. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

Assessment Design Criteria

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by teachers to:

* clarify for the student what he or she needs to learn
* design opportunities for the student to provide evidence of his or her learning at the highest possible level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria consist of specific features that:

* students should demonstrate in their learning
* teachers look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.

For this subject the assessment design criteria are:

* knowledge and understanding
* research and analysis
* producing
* communication.

The specific features of these criteria are described below.

The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.

Knowledge and Understanding

The specific features are as follows:

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of media concepts, issues, and interactions.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.

Research and Analysis

The specific features are as follows:

RA1 Analysis and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts.

RA2 Research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.

RA3 Analysis of interactions with media.

Producing

The specific features are as follows:

P1 Design and planning of media texts.

P2 Use of appropriate production techniques and technologies.

Communication

The specific features are as follows:

C1 Reproduction of the forms and features of media texts, to convey meaning.

C2 Fluency of expression and use of appropriate media terminology.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

For the folio, students undertake at least one media exploration assessment in which they work either individually or in a group to explore, research, and reflect on an idea, question, or issue arising from the study of a topic.

The assessment can take a number of forms, for example:

* a debate
* a discussion
* an essay
* a group presentation
* a multimedia presentation
* an oral presentation
* a report.

Whether undertaking a media exploration assessment individually or in a group, each student presents an individual response, which should be a maximum of 800 words if written or a maximum of 5 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* research and analysis
* communication.

Assessment Type 2: Interaction Study

Students undertake at least one interaction study on a topic of their choice. Either individually or in a group, students interact with media and analyse their interactions. The topic that students choose should be based on their current or past media experience and their access to a variety of media resources.

For the interaction study, students could, for example, analyse their use and experience of:

* various interactive games
* media as they research career options within the media
* converging media such as mobile phones and the Internet
* new technologies and ways of adapting and adopting them for work, leisure, and/or educational purposes
* media in a global context.

Students identify and outline the topic they want to study and then choose the form in which they present their findings. The length and form of the response will vary, depending on the topic and approach chosen.

Whether undertaking an interaction study individually or in a group, each student presents an individual response, which should be a maximum of 800 words if written or a maximum of 5 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* research and analysis
* communication.

Assessment Type 3: Product

Students undertake at least one media production task in which they work either individually or in a group to:

* develop a plan for a production task
* identify relevant techniques to be used
* complete a final media product
* evaluate the final media product.

The final media product represents students’ accumulated understanding of concepts, conventions, and style, as well as the skills they have acquired in using available equipment to create a media product.

Where students decide to complete a media product as a small group, protocols need to be clearly documented and agreed at the beginning of the task. For example, students negotiate with their teacher to have their contribution to the group product assessed individually, or agree that all students in the group will obtain the same assessment.

Video productions should run for a maximum of 5 minutes (except for television advertisements or community service announcements that run for 30, 45, or 60 seconds), and should include appropriate post-production work such as audio, titling, and credits.

Animated video products should run for a maximum of 2 minutes and should contain appropriate post-production work such as audio, titling, and credits.

Podcasts and other radio productions that include music, sound effects, and spoken dialogue should be a maximum of 20 minutes. Podcasts or radio productions that exclude music should be a maximum of 5 minutes.

A multimedia task is one that involves the use of appropriate hardware devices and the manipulation of relevant software programs with multimedia functions, including static and moving images of digital video, animation, text, interactivity, and sound. Multimedia productions should contain a maximum of ten linked pages or layers. Digital video and animations that are part of a multimedia product should run for approximately 20 seconds.

Up to 30% of each finished product of any format may consist of pre-recorded content from other sources, unless the production is specifically addressing the techniques and styles of emerging genres such as Mashup or Anime Music Videos (AMV). All content from other sources must be acknowledged.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* producing
* communication.

Performance Standards

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers refer to in deciding how well a student has demonstrated his or her learning on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of a subject, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:

* referring to the performance standards
* taking into account the weighting of each assessment type
* assigning a subject grade between A and E.

Teachers can use a SACE Board school assessment grade calculator to help them to assign the subject grade. The calculator is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).

Performance Standards for Stage 1 Media Studies

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| - | Knowledge and Understanding | Research and Analysis | Producing | Communication |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | Comprehensive and sustained knowledge and understanding of media concepts, issues, and interactions.  Perceptive knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts. | Thorough and well-informed analysis and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts.  Insightful research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Perceptive analysis of interactions with media. | Comprehensive design and planning of media texts.  Highly proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies. | Comprehensive reproduction of the forms and features of media texts, to clearly and consistently convey meaning.  Fluent expression, using consistently clear and appropriate media terminology. |
| B | Well-considered and mostly sustained knowledge and understanding of media concepts, issues, and interactions.  Well-considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts. | Well-informed analysis and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts.  Well-considered research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Well-considered analysis of interactions with media. | Detailed design and planning of media texts.  Proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies. | Sound reproduction of the forms and features of media texts, to clearly convey meaning.  Mostly fluent expression, using clear and appropriate media terminology. |
| C | Considered knowledge and understanding of media concepts, issues, and interactions.  Considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts. | Informed analysis and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts.  Considered research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Considered analysis of interactions with media. | Considered design and planning of media texts.  Competent use of appropriate production techniques and technologies. | Competent reproduction of the forms and features of media texts, to convey meaning.  Generally fluent expression, using appropriate media terminology. |
| D | Partial knowledge and basic awareness of media concepts, issues, and interactions.  Basic awareness and some understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts. | Basic consideration and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent in one or more media texts.  Some recognition and superficial consideration of one or more ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Description of one or more interactions with media. | Partial design and some planning of media texts.  Basic use of some simple and appropriate production techniques and technologies. | Some reproduction of the form and features of one or more media texts, to convey basic meaning.  Occasionally clear expression and use of basic media terminology. |
| E | Limited awareness of media concepts, issues, or interactions.  OFFICIAL  Limited awareness of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts. | Attempted description of a point of view, bias, value, or intent in a media text.  Attempted recognition of one way in which a group or individual is represented in media.  Attempted description of an interaction with media. | Attempted design or planning of a media text.  Attempted use of a production technique or technology that may be appropriate. | Attempted reproduction of the form and features of one media text.  Limited expression or use of basic media terminology. |

Assessment Integrity

The SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy outlines the principles and processes that teachers and assessors follow to assure the integrity of student assessments. This policy is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au) as part of the SACE Policy Framework.

The SACE Board uses a range of quality assurance processes so that the grades awarded for student achievement in the school assessment are applied consistently and fairly against the performance standards for a subject, and are comparable across all schools.

Information and guidelines on quality assurance in assessment at Stage 1 are available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).

Support Materials

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Subject-specific Advice

Online support materials are provided for each subject and updated regularly on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au). Examples of support materials are sample learning and assessment plans, annotated assessment tasks, annotated student responses, and recommended resource materials.

Advice on Ethical Study and Research

Advice for students and teachers on ethical study and research practices is available in the guidelines on the ethical conduct of research in the SACE on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).

Stage 2 Media Studies

Learning Scope and Requirements

Learning Requirements

The learning requirements summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 2 Media Studies.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. communicate informed responses to local, national, and global media issues

2. research and analyse media texts and contexts

3. analyse the ways in which societies are represented by media

4. analyse their own and others’ interactions with media

5. reflect on aspects of the dynamics of the media industry

6. apply knowledge of forms, contents, contexts, and audiences to design and produce creative, practical media texts.

Content

Stage 2 Media Studies is a 20‑credit subject that consists of a study of three topics within the framework of the four key media concepts.

Key Media Concepts

The four key media concepts — media representations, media conventions, media organisations, and media audiences — underpin the study of aspects of media and are essential to students’ critical reading of media texts and products.

The key media concepts provide an investigative framework to support students’ research, analysis, and production assessments. These key media concepts introduce students to, and support their understanding of, contemporary media construction and dissemination, and the social impact of media texts and products.

Media Representations

Students come to understand that media texts are the product of a process of selecting and organising images, sounds, and words. Their study leads them to understand how individuals and organisations construct meaning, and how individuals interpret meaning.

Using this key media concept, students determine the extent to which a media text has been mediated, changed, or constructed to suit the needs or expectations of the audience or creator of the text. Students also examine how media texts present individual behaviour or attitudes. Students reflect on the accuracy, appropriateness, and fairness of these representations.

Media Conventions

Media use conventions to communicate with audiences. Through these conventions, media present messages that are determined partly by the ideas and values of the media organisation and partly by the audiences as they construct meaning. A convention refers to the way in which messages are normally communicated within a particular medium, for example, moving images in a fixed frame in film and television, or the arrangement of icons on an Internet site. Media conventions are cultural; they develop over time and reflect the society that produces them.

Students develop a critical vocabulary with which to express their understanding of media conventions. Students could pose some of the following questions when examining media conventions:

* What non-verbal elements have been used to communicate meaning?
* How does the soundtrack or language used in the text contribute to the overall meaning?
* What symbols or images are there that contribute to understanding the text?
* To what extent has editing been used to enhance or change meaning?
* In what ways are sets, setting, and camera positioning important in structuring the text?
* In what ways do the creators of new media use or challenge traditional conventions?

Media Organisations

Individuals and organisations produce and distribute media texts. An individual or organisation has many reasons for producing a text: to sell a product or service, to persuade people to adopt a particular point of view, or to satisfy a need to be creative. With the wide use of information and communication technologies, small organisations are now able to communicate their ideas and views. As a consequence, many alternative voices can be heard and audiences can respond to the ideas and opinions generated in and through media.

When students examine an issue or a media text, they need to reflect on what they know about the institution that produced the media text. Students reflect on how the media text was distributed to its audience, as well as the ways in which the ownership or control of the media organisation influenced the content or presentation of an issue.

Media Audiences

Students are the audience for various media texts. The media sources they listen to, the advertising poster they see on a shop window, the television program they watch, and the website they visit — these are all texts that students may encounter during a typical day. Some media audiences are very small and local, whereas others are massive and global. The reading of a media text is not the same for all members of its audience; individuals bring their own opinions and interpretations to the reading of a text. Audiences are able to resist messages that they receive; an individual may question a view or portrayal of reality presented in a media text.

When students examine a media text they reflect on what they know about the audience for that text. Students consider the ways in which the audience could be influenced by the structure or content of the text, and the alternative readings that are possible.

Topics

The suggested questions for each topic contain a number of possible interpretative approaches. They are intended as a guide only and teachers may use their own knowledge and local resources in developing teaching and learning strategies and assessments.

The approaches taken to the study of these topics may be integrated; that is, students may use oral, written, and production forms that are appropriate to the topic being studied and to their own interests and background.

Students, in negotiation with their teacher, choose three of the following fourteen topics for study:

* Topic 1: Photojournalism
* Topic 2: Documentaries
* Topic 3: Cult Television/Film
* Topic 4: Music and Media
* Topic 5: The Internet
* Topic 6: Television Genres
* Topic 7: Community Media
* Topic 8: Short Films
* Topic 9: Advertising and Audiences
* Topic 10: Globalisation and Media
* Topic 11: Youth and Media
* Topic 12: Children and Media
* Topic 13: Media Ethics and Regulation
* Topic 14: Cultural Diversity in Media.

When planning a program of study, teachers may develop additional topics, using the key media concepts as a framework to guide the development of each topic: media representations, media conventions, media organisations, and media audiences.

Topic 1: Photojournalism

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* To what extent does the photojournalist present a realistic view of his or her subject?
* What effect does the expectation of the audience have on the photojournalist?
* How may the work of a photojournalist change the ways in which individuals view the world?
* How can the layout and accompanying written text contribute to the impact of the work of a photojournalist?
* To what extent does a photojournalist simply record an event as opposed to being involved?

Topic 2: Documentaries

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* What distinguishes the documentary as a media form?
* To what extent is the documentary an accurate account of an event or issue?
* How may viewing a documentary change the ways in which individuals view the world?
* What issues might a creator of a documentary encounter in finding an audience for his or her work?

Topic 3: Cult Television/Film

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* What features of cult television programs or films attract specific audiences?
* Why do audiences of cult television programs or films form communities of interest?
* In what ways do media organisations create audiences and markets for products related to cult television programs or films?
* How may cult television programs or films challenge the conventions adopted by mainstream media?

Topic 4: Music and Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* What is the impact of music used in a range of media forms?
* To what extent has Internet file-sharing of music or streaming services challenged traditional music producers, publishers, and distributors?
* How are audiences created for particular forms or styles of music?
* In what ways does music allow individuals to form a group identity?
* In what ways can changes in society be charted through a study of popular music?

Topic 5: The Internet

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* How have new information and communication technologies influenced the development of the Internet?
* How has the Internet given individuals access to the global community?
* What are the implications if/when individual organisations or governments control access to the Internet?
* In what ways do organisations and groups use the Internet to carry out business, promote political views, entertain, inform, and educate?
* What makes an effective Internet website for a range of creators and audiences?

Topic 6: Television Genres

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* In what ways does a television show conform to, or challenge, the conventions of its genre?
* How do the producers of a television show in a particular genre create and maintain their audiences?
* In what ways do media audiences identify with, or challenge, individuals who appear in television shows?
* How do ethical and legal constraints impact on the production and broadcast of television programs?

Topic 7: Community Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* How do independent community media such as newspapers, television, and radio address local needs and interests?
* To what extent do community media depend on local support, finance, and involvement in their operations?
* What roles do people play within community media?
* To what extent are community media regulated by state and federal laws?

Topic 8: Short Films

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* How and where can creators of short films present their work?
* How and why are conventions used or challenged in short films?
* How does the use of symbolism, or the manipulation of narrative features, in a short film contribute to the impact and understanding of the film-maker’s ideas?
* How do creators of short films reach and build an audience for their work?

Topic 9: Advertising and Audiences

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* To what extent, and why, do media organisations rely on advertising revenue?
* How do media create audiences that are potential markets?
* In what ways are the conventions of media advertising used and challenged by creators and users of media texts?
* How do the age, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status of audiences influence the ways in which they interpret media advertising?
* To what extent are ethical and legal questions considered when an advertiser is designing an advertising campaign?

Topic 10: Globalisation and Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* In what ways can global media affect the cultural identity of small communities?
* What are the implications for local and national media of increasing media globalisation?
* How may individuals use new media technologies to make connections beyond their own local and national boundaries? To what extent could these connections affect individuals and communities?
* How will the creation and use of emerging technologies change global media?
* In what ways does the increasing speed of file sharing affect individuals and organisations that produce and access media texts?

Topic 11: Youth and Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* What images of young people can be found in media?
* To what extent is the portrayal of young people in media determined by the expectations of the audience?
* How do the gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status of groups of young people influence the ways in which they are represented in media?
* How do media market to young people?
* In what ways do media address the recreational and educational needs of young people?

Topic 12: Children and Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* In what ways do media address the recreational and educational needs of young children?
* What are some of the techniques used by media to market to children?
* Why is it necessary to have regulations to control the media messages that children receive?
* What conventions of media are aimed at children?

Topic 13: Media Ethics and Regulation

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* In what ways are media regulated?
* In what cases do media make decisions for ethical reasons?
* How do media determine what is appropriate for audiences?
* In what ways can individuals and organisations challenge, or use, media ethics and regulations to change media products and processes?
* How do media and their audiences determine and apply appropriate ethical and regulatory systems?
* How do perceptions of age, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status influence the ways in which ethics and regulations are applied in media?

Topic 14: Cultural Diversity in Media

In their study of this topic, students may consider some or all of the following questions:

* To what extent do mainstream media reflect the cultural diversity of Australian society?
* How do groups in society communicate to their communities other than through mainstream media?
* To what extent do media representations of cultural identity reflect stereotypes and assumptions about groups of people?
* To what extent is cultural diversity being affected by the globalisation of media?

Assessment Scope and Requirements

All Stage 2 subjects have a school assessment component and an external assessment component.

Evidence of Learning

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in  
Stage 2 Media Studies:

School Assessment (70%)

* Assessment Type 1: Folio (30%)
* Assessment Type 2: Product (40%)

External Assessment (30%)

* Assessment Type 3: Investigation (30%).

Students should provide evidence of their learning through six or seven assessments, including the external assessment component. Students undertake:

* two or three media exploration assessments, and one media interaction study for the folio
* two media products, each of which is supported by a producer’s statement
* one investigation.

Assessment Design Criteria

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by:

* teachers to clarify for the student what he or she needs to learn
* teachers and assessors to design opportunities for the student to provide evidence of his or her learning at the highest possible level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria consist of specific features that:

* students should demonstrate in their learning
* teachers and assessors look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.

For this subject the assessment design criteria are:

* knowledge and understanding
* research and analysis
* producing
* communication.

The specific features of these criteria are described below.

The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.

Knowledge and Understanding

The specific features are as follows:

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.

KU3 Understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products.

Research and Analysis

The specific features are as follows:

RA1 Research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts.

RA2 Research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.

RA3 Analysis of interactions with media.

Producing

The specific features are as follows:

P1 Design and planning of media products for selected audiences.

P2 Use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions.

Communication

The specific features are as follows:

C1 Reproduction of the structural and conventional features of different media texts, to convey meaning.

C2 Fluency of expression and use of appropriate media terminology.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio (30%)

For the folio, students undertake two or three media exploration assessments, and one media interaction study.

The media exploration assessments and interaction study use the investigative framework provided by the four key concepts: media representations, media conventions, media organisations, and media audiences.

Media Exploration

A media exploration assessment is designed to give students the opportunity, either individually or in a group, to explore and reflect on an idea, question, issue, or skill arising from the study of a topic. Students undertake two or three media exploration assessments.

An assessment can take a number of forms, for example:

* a debate
* a discussion
* an essay
* a group presentation
* a multimedia presentation
* an oral presentation
* a report.

Whether undertaking a media exploration assessment individually or in a group, each student presents an individual response. The combined word length of the media exploration assessments should be a maximum of 1500 words if written or a maximum of 10 minutes if oral, or, if in multimodal form, a maximum of six linked pages or screen shots, with an average of 100 words per page or screen shot, or a 10-minute video report.

Media Interaction Study

Students undertake one media interaction study on a topic of their choice. Either individually or in a group, students interact with media and analyse their interactions. The topic that students choose should be based on their current or past media experience and their access to a variety of media resources.

For the media interaction study, students could, for example, analyse their:

* use of interactive games
* use of media to investigate career options and pathways within the media
* use of converging media such as mobile phones and the Internet
* use of social networking sites
* experience of cult media content
* experience of television genres
* experience of an advertising campaign involving several media
* experience of music on various media, such as mobile phones, television, and the Internet
* use of new technologies and ways of adapting and adopting them for work, leisure, or educational purposes.

Students identify and outline the topic they want to study and then choose the form in which they present their findings. The length and form of response will vary depending on the topic and approach chosen.

Whether undertaking the media interaction study individually or in a group, each student presents an individual response, which should be a maximum of 800 words if primarily written or a maximum of 5 minutes if primarily oral, or, if in multimodal form, a maximum of four linked pages or screen shots, with an average of 100 words per linked page or screen shot, or a 5-minute video report.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* research and analysis
* communication.

Assessment Type 2: Product (40%)

This assessment type is designed to give students the opportunity, either individually or as a group, to plan, produce, and reflect on a media product. Students undertake two media products, each of which is supported by a producer’s statement.

Where students decide to complete one or both media products as a small group, protocols need to be clearly documented and agreed at the beginning of the task. For example, students negotiate with their teacher to have their contribution to the group product assessed individually, or agree that all students in the group will obtain the same assessment.

In this assessment type students work either individually or as a group to:

* create a production and dissemination plan and schedule
* identify relevant production techniques and styles to be used
* complete a final media product based on the plan
* provide a producer’s statement.

Video productions should run for a maximum of 5 minutes (except for television advertisements or community service announcements that run for 30, 45, and 60 seconds), and should have appropriate post-production work such as audio, titling, and credits.

Animated video productions should run for a maximum of 2 minutes and should contain appropriate post-production work such as audio, titling, and credits.

Podcasts and other radio productions that include music, sound effects, and spoken dialogue should be a maximum of 20 minutes. Podcasts or radio productions that do not include music should be a maximum of 5 minutes.

Students who undertake a media production that includes photojournalism or photographic representations should submit a folio of a maximum of twenty images that the student has created and edited, representing a chosen theme.

A multimedia task is one that involves the use of appropriate hardware devices and the manipulation of relevant software programs with multimedia functions, including static and moving images of digital video, animation, text, interactivity, and sound. Multimedia productions should contain a maximum of ten linked pages or layers. Digital video and animations that are part of a multimedia product should run for approximately 20 seconds.

Up to 30% of each finished product of any format may consist of pre-recorded content or content from other sources, unless the production is specifically addressing the techniques and styles of emerging genres such as Mashup or Anime Music Videos (AMV). All content from other sources must be acknowledged.

When a media product is finalised, students complete a producer’s statement of a maximum of 500 words. In the producer’s statement students reflect on the elements of the production, including the:

* central idea of the production
* use of different production techniques
* suitability of the final media product for its intended audience
* ways in which the media product uses or challenges the conventions of the selected text.

The producer’s statement is unique to a particular media product by students and will not necessarily follow a set structure.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* producing
* communication.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation (30%)

This assessment type is designed to give students the opportunity to undertake one independent investigation of a current media issue and to present their findings.

The focus of the investigation is the cultural, political, or economic impact of media on contemporary society. Through the investigative process, students develop skills in selecting and synthesising information from a range of primary and secondary sources. Students use their skills of critical analysis to review, interpret, and evaluate information and viewpoints. Students use data from these sources to reach a logically developed conclusion.

Students use the key media concepts (media representations, media conventions, media organisations, and media audiences) to develop an appropriate topic for their investigation, based on a current media issue. There is no list of prescribed issues for the investigation; teachers are encouraged to negotiate a suitable issue and topic with students. The following list of possible issues/topics is not exhaustive and students should not be constrained by the range represented:

* The impact of the digital revolution on the entertainment industry
* The potential contribution of creative industries to national and state economies
* The extent to which media challenge or confirm cultural values
* The role of media in forming youth identity
* Media audiences — how they are created and how they can resist.

The topic that students develop for the investigation should be based on an issue that has been the subject of public debate or coverage within the previous 12 months. Students formulate a question to be addressed in the investigation. The report should have an introduction in which the methods and sources used are listed. The findings of the investigation should be outlined and substantiated in the body of the report.

The report for the investigation could take one of the following forms:

* predominantly written, incorporating visual elements such as graphs, charts, images, or films

*or*

* produced and presented in multimedia form.

The report should be a maximum of 2000 words if presented in written form or the equivalent if presented in multimedia form.

The following specific features of the assessment design criteria for this subject are assessed in the investigation:

* knowledge and understanding — KU1, KU2, and KU3
* research and analysis — RA1 and RA2
* communication — C2.

Performance Standards

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers and assessors refer to in deciding how well a student has demonstrated his or her learning on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of each school assessment type, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:

* referring to the performance standards
* assigning a grade between A and E for the assessment type.

The student’s school assessment and external assessment are combined for a final result, which is reported as a grade between A and E.

Performance Standards for Stage 2 Media Studies

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| - | Knowledge and Understanding | Research and Analysis | Producing | Communication |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | Comprehensive and sustained knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.  Perceptive knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.  Insightful and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products. | Thorough and well-informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.  Comprehensive research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Perceptive analysis of interactions with media. | Comprehensive design and planning of media products for selected audiences.  Highly proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions. | Comprehensive reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to clearly and consistently convey meaning.  Fluent expression, using consistently clear and appropriate media terminology. |
| B | Well-considered and mostly sustained knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.  Well-considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.  Well-considered and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products. | Well-informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.  Well-considered research into and informed analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Well-considered analysis of interactions with media. | Thorough design and planning of media products for selected audiences.  Proficient use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions. | Sound reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to clearly convey meaning.  Mostly fluent expression, using clear and appropriate media terminology. |
| C | Considered knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.  Considered knowledge and informed understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts  Considered and informed understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products. | Considered and informed research into and analysis of different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts and in the media investigation.  Considered and informed research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media.  Considered analysis of interactions with media. | Considered design and planning of media products for selected audiences.  Competent use of appropriate production techniques and technologies, and media conventions. | Competent reproduction of the structural and conventional features of media texts, to convey meaning.  Generally fluent expression, using appropriate media terminology. |
| D | Partial knowledge and basic awareness of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions.  OFFICIAL  Basic awareness and some understanding of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.  Recognition and some understanding of facts, opinions, and bias in media texts or products. | Basic consideration and recognition of different points of view, bias, values, or intent in one or more media texts and in the investigation.  Identification of some of the ways in which groups or individuals are represented in media.  Description of one or more interactions with media. | Partial design and some planning of media products for a selected audience.  Basic use of some simple and appropriate production techniques and technologies, and some basic media conventions. | Some reproduction of the structural and conventional features of one or more media texts, to convey basic meaning.  Occasionally clear expression and use of basic media terminology. |
| E | Limited awareness of media structures, issues, concepts, or interactions.  Limited awareness of how audiences influence, and are influenced by, forms and content of media texts.  Limited recognition of facts, opinions, or bias in a media text or product. | Attempted description of a point of view, bias, value, or intent in a media text, and/or the investigation.  Attempted recognition of one way in which a group or individual is represented in media.  Attempted description of an interaction with media. | Attempted design or planning of media products.  Attempted use of a production technique or technology, and one or more basic media conventions, which may be appropriate. | Attempted reproduction of the structural and conventional features of one media text.  Limited expression or use of basic media terminology. |

Assessment Integrity

The SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy outlines the principles and processes that teachers and assessors follow to assure the integrity of student assessments. This policy is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au) as part of the SACE Policy Framework.

The SACE Board uses a range of quality assurance processes so that the grades awarded for student achievement, in both the school assessment and the external assessment, are applied consistently and fairly against the performance standards for a subject, and are comparable across all schools.

Information and guidelines on quality assurance in assessment at Stage 2 are available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).

Support Materials

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Subject-specific Advice

Online support materials are provided for each subject and updated regularly on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au). Examples of support materials are sample learning and assessment plans, annotated assessment tasks, annotated student responses, and recommended resource materials.

Advice on Ethical Study and Research

Advice for students and teachers on ethical study and research practices is available in the guidelines on the ethical conduct of research in the SACE on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).