



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

Communication and Culture COMM1

**Unit 1: Understanding Communication and
Culture**

Final

Mark Scheme

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 meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

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UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

MARK SCHEME (Jan 2012)

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 recognising 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 a total in the margin at the end of each answer.

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

Level	Marks	AO1: This tests the ability of candidates to communicate in the register of Communication and Culture	Marks	AO2: This tests the ability of candidates to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification	Marks
		<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

UNIT 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

MARK SCHEME (Jan 2012)

Question 1

- 1** Culture has a complex set of ‘rules’ which we learn and share. These are the codes, often unwritten, which guide our behaviour as we engage in cultural activities.

Explore the codes involved in one of the following:

- EITHER**
1 (a) Christmas shopping (20 marks)

- OR**
1 (b) arranging a date (20 marks)

- OR**
1 (c) sitting this exam. (20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>A clear, concise explanation of the selected situation. Explicit and convincing evidence that the concept of ‘code’ in relation to cultural practices is thoroughly understood. Supporting examples are apposite, contrasting and clearly linked to the chosen situation.</p>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p>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.</p> <p>Reasonably convincing, if partially flawed, attempt to explore chosen situation. Some evidence that the concept of ‘code’ in relation to cultural practices is understood. Examples are relevant and support the exploration of the chosen situation.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p>Likely to work through practical answers with limited evaluation.</p> <p>The chosen situation is described rather than explored or readings offered are less than convincing. Concepts of ‘code’ and/or ‘cultural practices’ 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>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</p> <p>At this level, any justifications offered are inappropriate. Descriptions of the chosen situation are limited. There are likely to be serious misinterpretations of ‘code’. Examples lack relevance or are, in the range 1 – 3 marks, absent.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Question 2

2. Self-presentation is a serious business.

Using examples from your own experience and study, support **one** of the following arguments about self-presentation.

EITHER

2 (a) Self-presentation is unconscious and unplanned. As Goffman said: “We act better than we know”. (20 marks)

OR

2 (b) Self-presentation is very much a conscious and deliberate offering of our identities. (20 marks)

OR

2 (c) The conscious and unconscious elements of our self-presentation are complementary. Some signs we give, others give us away. (20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions. Clear, confident justifications of how the chosen argument convinces including, probably, some reference to why other arguments are less convincing. There is some explicit evidence of conceptual understanding.
3 (11 – 15 marks)	Likely to focus on keywords and address theory in advance of practice. Attention to detail is key here. Reasonably well-informed justifications of how the chosen argument operates. Some evidence that key terms in the question are understood. In the range 11 – 12 marks, descriptive material may predominate over conceptual references.
2 (6 – 10 marks)	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. 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.
1 (1 – 5 marks)	Uncritical explanation of the statement. Little else offered. Explanations are inappropriate or inept. Little or no understanding of key terms in the question.
0	No relevant response.

Question 4

4. Using this text as a starting point explore the notion of celebrity in contemporary culture.
(20 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (16 – 20 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</p> <p>Confident, well-informed analysis with strong evidence that relevant debates about culture 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>
3 (11 – 15 marks)	<p>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of ‘celebrity’ as a key focus and to relate this to the ‘practices’ of contemporary culture. Evidence will be sound and detailed.</p> <p>Competent understanding of the stimulus is evident with some analytical response. Alternative explanations demonstrate some familiarity with the terms of debates about contemporary culture.</p>
2 (6 – 10 marks)	<p>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.</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>
1 (1 – 5 marks)	<p>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</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>
0	No relevant response.

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.

Question 3

TEXT: Police Community Action Programme leaflet.

- 3 (a)** Who is the intended audience? How do you know this? (4)
- 3 (b)** Explore the ways in which the leaflet seeks to address its audience. (6)
- 3 (c)** Any text is a particular combination of sign choices. Which sign choices do you consider most significant in this text? Give reasons for your answer. (10)

	3(a)		3(b)		3(c)	
Level	Audience	Mark	Mode of address	Mark	Sign choices	Mark
4	A skilful response which demonstrates secure knowledge. Knowledgeable and specialist.	4	Handles the question 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 'audience' demonstrated in reference to the text.	3	'Address' clearly understood and applied relevantly. At least one kind of 'address' is referenced and evidenced.	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 audience.	2	Communication and Culture concepts are generally understood even when not skilfully applied.	2 – 3	Competent, active reading of text 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					