



**General Certificate of Education
June 2013**

Communication and Culture

COMM3

Unit 3: Communicating 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.

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UNIT 3: COMMUNICATING CULTURE

MARK SCHEME (June 2013)

Aims

When you are marking scripts your aim should be:

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

Approach

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

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

The Principles of 'Best Fit'

This paper requires candidates to make two extended responses in essay format. Thus, although aspects of each response (like its technical accuracy) can be addressed separately, the ultimate discretion of the examiner must be reserved for an appreciation of the essay as a whole.

In this case, marks are notionally divided between the three Assessment Objectives (AO1, AO2, AO3) in the ratio 1:4:5. Individual mark ranges are suggested for each AO, but these are provided **for guidance only. Ultimately the response should be placed at the 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 ringed total in the margin at the end of each answer.

Generic Marking Grid

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	AO3: This tests the ability of candidates to apply knowledge	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>		<i>This reflects the degree to which the content of the work manages to provide insightful analysis of more sophisticated texts and situations.</i>	
4	31-40	Highly technical in its register and/or creative and/or proficient in its use of the chosen format.	4	Knowledge and understanding will be very good in terms of its range of knowledge and/or depth of understanding.	13-16	Analysis will be exploratory and open and will offer insights into its chosen theme.	16-20
3	21-30	Sound in terms of its range and control and good in terms of its effectiveness.	3	Level of knowledge and understanding will be secure and will evidence sound subject specialist knowledge.	9-12	Analysis will be good in the sense that it will offer a specific informed commentary on the candidate's cultural practices.	11-15
2	11-20	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.	2	Evidence will range from a limited, largely non-specialist relevance through to a simple but competent grasp of Communication and Culture content.	5-8	Analysis will rise from being of limited use through to the establishing of competence.	6-10
1	1-10	Basic, non-technical and unconvincing.	1	Evidence will be basic, non-specific and unconvincing.	1-4	Analysis will be ineffective or unduly derivative.	1-5

UNIT 3: COMMUNICATING CULTURE

MARK SCHEME (June 2013)

Question 1

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The values, attitudes and beliefs we have about age and ageing are strongly shaped by our culture. These ideas relate to areas such as beauty and appearance, employment, consumer behaviour and leisure pursuits.

Some critics argue that today's age-obsessed culture sees all signs of ageing as weak and undesirable.

Others, however, argue that children today are under pressure to grow up too quickly.

Carefully read **Argument A** and **Argument B** (opposite) before attempting the task below.

Task:

Use your knowledge of selected theoretical perspectives and key concepts to evaluate the contrasting views expressed by Argument A **and** Argument B.

(40 marks)

Argument A

We are living in an increasingly infantilised culture. Nobody wants to grow up anymore and nobody wants to take responsibility. We resist all outward signs of ageing so that adults seem to want to dress and behave like youngsters by eating children's food, playing kids' games and enjoying the leisure activities usually associated with teenagers. Age discrimination is rife in most walks of life; not just entertainment and the media, business and politics. The cult of youth is so powerful that success in many fields is out of bounds to the over thirties.

We are so used to being pampered, kept safe and looked after by the 'nanny state' that we have lost the will and the ability to look after ourselves as adults.

Argument B

Far from being an 'infantilised culture', today's culture is one in which the pleasures and joys of childhood are being sacrificed. From a young age, children are encouraged to dress like adults and to share adult tastes in all cultural products and practices, including music, entertainment, leisure activities, social networking and personal possessions. One particularly sad example is the world of pre-teen girls' fashion. Under the influence of celebrity role models suggestive and inappropriate clothes have become commonplace for this group.

In such an intensely commercialised culture, it seems there is very little space for childhood or youth.

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>Responses at this level fully engage with the stimulus material, recognising contrasting and comparative elements. There is clear and convincing evidence of an evaluative approach; evidence which may be biased towards the effective use of practical examples or towards cogent argument. Theoretical and conceptual material is confidently applied in the context of the task.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to demonstrate a firm grasp of the contrasting points of view as exemplified by the two arguments. Conducts a reasonably wide-ranging and well-informed discussion around the issues. May focus on the variety of contexts suggested in the two arguments.</p> <p>These sound responses demonstrate an awareness of issues raised by the stimulus material. There is some evidence of an evaluative approach which may focus on either argument or practical examples. Some theoretical perspectives are applied relevantly and there is evidence of an ability to approach the task at a conceptual level.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to work through the given texts in a straightforward way with limited evaluation.</p> <p>At this level, responses tend towards description rather than analysis or evaluation. Perspectives and/or key concepts are likely to feature in the range 16-20, but application of these in the range 11-15 is likely to be limited, inappropriate or based on misunderstanding of basic principles.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</p> <p>Little understanding of the arguments put forward in the stimulus material is evident here. Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Section B

The **Cultural Sites** referred to in this section are: Spaces and Places, Fictions and Objects of Desire.

Question 2

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Explain why you find a particular theoretical approach helpful in the analysis of the intersection between **two** sites of culture. (40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions. Thorough and contrasting analysis.</p> <p>The chosen theoretical approach is applied to an intersection in a detailed, appropriate and thorough analysis. Responses demonstrate an informed awareness of the two cultural sites as well as relationships between them (the intersection). The response draws widely and convincingly on key concepts and clearly contrasting theoretical perspectives. However, the systematic and comprehensive application of all perspectives and key concepts is not expected.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on the close analysis of a suitable case study as a way of demonstrating the intersection between two sites of culture.</p> <p>A competent theoretical analysis of the chosen intersection contributes to a convincing demonstration of an understanding of the relationship between cultural sites. Both of the relevant cultural sites are featured. The discussion deploys the selected theoretical approach and key concepts convincingly and coherently.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. Likely to come to easy conclusions without arguing through the case. Unfounded assertions.</p> <p>Offers analysis of examples with limited explanation of the contribution these make to an understanding of the interlinking of the sites. Grasp of key concepts may be vague or incomplete. In the upper half of the level there is likely to be some attempt to apply a theoretical approach and/or concepts but in the range 11-15 these may be limited or inappropriate in their application. Limitations in theoretical understanding may be compensated by the quality of descriptive examples, or vice versa. Answers that consider the two chosen cultural sites entirely separately rather than the intersection between them are unlikely to achieve marks above the lower half of this level.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Uncritical explanation of the question. Little else offered.</p> <p>Examples may be present but flawed. Very limited conception of the relationship between the cultural sites (intersection). Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Question 3

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Discuss the meanings and practices of everyday life associated with **one** of the three cultural sites you have studied. (40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</p> <p>Clear, confident understanding of the meanings and practices of everyday life in the context of a chosen cultural site. Key concepts and theoretical approaches are incorporated into well-informed, convincing discussion. Responses are likely to be well illustrated with telling examples of cultural practices and/or cultural products.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of <i>the meanings and practices of everyday life</i> linked to the chosen site. Key concepts are likely to be used effectively.</p> <p>Develops an informed discussion based on a thorough understanding of the chosen site and an awareness of the meanings and practices of everyday life. Responses are likely to be illustrated with appropriate examples of cultural practices and/or cultural products. Theoretical approaches and key concepts used in support of coherent arguments.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to offer evidence of study of a specific site and then to attempt to engage with discourse and/or mode of address in this context.</p> <p>Some understanding is evident of the chosen cultural site but at this level responses may struggle to offer convincing discussions based on both meanings and understanding. In the upper half of this level, the suitability of practical examples may compensate for conceptual knowledge, but in the range 11-15 anecdotal, vague or inappropriate evidence is likely to predominate.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</p> <p>In the upper part of the range (6-10) there is some attempt to engage either with a legitimate cultural site or with theoretical approaches. Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Question 4

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“All environments subtly include or exclude certain groups of people as well as certain values and beliefs. In this sense, environments are ideological.”

To what extent do you agree with this view of **spaces and places**? (40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>The key concept <i>ideology</i> is thoroughly well understood and suitably applied in the context of the question. Examples chosen are apposite and clearly contrasting. Case study examples as well as conceptual material are integrated into a well informed discussion with a strong focus on the evaluative aspect of the questions. There is clear evidence of an ability to read critically in relation to examples of spaces and places.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on the issues of the question: the interpretation of spaces and places as ideological.</p> <p>At this level responses are able to engage at a conceptual level but the implications of the question may not be fully grasped. Examples of spaces and places are thoroughly explored with clear evidence of the candidate’s ability to ‘read’ such texts. There is an attempt to explore the notion that spaces and places are inclusive or exclusive.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to focus on specific examples of spaces and places, which have formed the basis of their preparation for this examination.</p> <p>At this level, responses are likely to offer generalised readings of examples with only limited consideration of <i>ideology, inclusion and exclusion</i>. For marks in the upper part of the level (16-20) there should normally be some attempt to deploy relevant concepts. In the range 11-15, description is likely to predominate over analysis.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Responses lack any real understanding of the terms of reference of the question. Likely to focus exclusively and anecdotally on personal experience.</p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Question 5

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Culture exposes us to so many stories that we often perceive our own experiences and relationships in narrative terms; we see ourselves as characters in our own fictions.

Discuss this view of **fictions**.

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>The key concept <i>narrative</i> is thoroughly well understood and explored in the context of the questions. The discussion is well illustrated by apposite examples with a clear focus on the implications of <i>ourselves as characters</i>. Ideas are supported by evidence and argument. Theoretical approaches are used appropriately.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to use key concepts and theoretical approaches appropriately. Discussion includes references to theories and theorists.</p> <p>Examples are relevant and appropriate. Clear evidence of analytical ability. Well-informed discussion, though as this level may struggle with the full implications of <i>ourselves as characters</i>, particularly in the lower half of the range.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to identify specific examples and use them as a starting point for a discussion or use generalised examples to conduct an exploration of fictions with limited acknowledgement of the specificity of the question. Likely to focus on examples rather than arguments.</p> <p>Some understanding of ‘fictions’ as a cultural site and of the relationship between selected examples, probably at a personal level. In the upper half of the level there is evidence of analysis but in the lower half description and uncontextualised personal responses are likely to predominate.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Struggles to understand what the question demands.</p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

Question 6

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“A few material objects are required to serve survival needs such as food, warmth and shelter. Apart from these, the value we place on material things is purely symbolic.”

Discuss this view of **objects of desire**.

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</p> <p>The implications of the statement are thoroughly understood and explored. The symbolic nature objects of desire is thoroughly well understood. Convincing arguments and explanations are well supported by evidence. The discussion is well-informed by conceptual material and apposite examples.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p>Likely to lead with the notion of symbolic value in relation to objects of desire. Evidence of reasonable level of theoretical understanding.</p> <p>Responses at this level demonstrate a good understanding of ‘objects of desire’ as a site for the study of cultural products and practices. Well informed discussions draw on a range of relevant case studies/examples. Some evidence is provided to suggest an understanding of different theoretical approaches/theorists.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p>Likely to lead with the experiences of products and practices and work back towards the question with broad, generalised examples.</p> <p>Some understanding of 'objects of desire' as a cultural site is evident here. For the marks in the upper part of the level (16-20) there are relevant references to symbolic value. Discussion may be one-sided rather than balanced in its assessment of the view expressed in the question. In the range 11-15, description is likely to predominate over analysis.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p>Likely to focus anecdotally on personal experience. Struggles to cope with the demands of the question.</p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.