



## GCSE Media Studies

### Introduction

GCSE Media Studies is being reformed in Wales for first delivery from September 2017. The reformed GCSE Media Studies will be produced and delivered by WJEC, and will be the only versions of the qualifications available to learners on state funded programmes in Wales, as no other exam board has decided to develop these qualifications for use in Wales. As part of the reform process we are asking for views on the proposed content, structure and assessment of the reformed qualification.

We have developed the proposals in this questionnaire through consultation with a number of stakeholders including WJEC, schools and colleges practitioners, universities and the Welsh Government. The outcomes of this questionnaire will help inform the development of approval criteria and regulatory conditions for the new GCSE Media Studies. The specifications and sample assessment materials for these qualifications will be developed and approved on the basis of the approval criteria published by Qualifications Wales.



## GCSE Media Studies

### Subject criteria, aims and content

The current GCSE Media Studies subject aims and content can be found at the link below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/371260/2011-11-25-gcse-subject-criteria-for-media-studies.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371260/2011-11-25-gcse-subject-criteria-for-media-studies.pdf)

GCSE Media Studies is also being reformed in England. The subject aims and content requirements for the reformed GCSE Media Studies in England as prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE) can be found at the link below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/459554/2017-GCSE-Media-Studies-subject-content.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459554/2017-GCSE-Media-Studies-subject-content.pdf)

#### **Subject aims and objectives**

The current subject aims for GCSE Media Studies state that the aims and objectives for all GCSE specifications in Media Studies require learners to:

- develop enquiry, critical thinking and decision-making skills through consideration of issues that are important, real and relevant to learners and to the world in which they live;
- develop their appreciation and critical understanding of the media and its role in their daily lives;
- develop their practical skills through opportunities for personal engagement and creativity;
- understand how to use the key media concepts to analyse media products and their various contexts.

For the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales, we propose adopting the current aims and objectives, but with some minor changes, as detailed below.

GCSE Media Studies must enable learners to:

- develop enquiry, critical thinking and decision-making skills through consideration of issues that are important, real and relevant to learners and to the world in which they live;
- develop their appreciation and critical understanding of the media and its role in their daily lives;
- develop their practical skills through opportunities for personal engagement and creativity;
- understand how to use theoretical concepts and specialist subject-specific terminology to analyse media products and their various contexts;
- evaluate and reflect on their own work.

**Q1: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed subject aims for the GCSE Media Studies in Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Subject content

We propose that the subject content for the new GCSE Media Studies for Wales should be based on a combination of elements from the existing subject criteria, the new content requirements specified for the reformed GCSE in England, and additional elements suggested by stakeholders in Wales to incorporate a Welsh perspective on the subject. We set out below the detail of the proposed content under the headings of: knowledge and understanding, media forms, media products, and skills.

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

We propose that the knowledge and understanding required in the new GCSE Media Studies specifications should remain the same as required by the current subject criteria, with one addition, highlighted in bold below:

- how media forms, codes and conventions create meanings;
- representation in the media: how the media portray events, issues, individuals and social groups;
- contexts of media production, distribution and consumption;
- how different audiences/users respond to and interact with media products and processes;
- media products, concepts and contexts, to inform their practical production work;
- media technologies.

We do not propose specifying the fine detail of the content to be included in the specification. We expect the awarding body to set out the detailed content on which learners will be assessed. In submitting its specification for approval the awarding body should provide a rationale explaining the basis on which specific content has been included.

We expect the content specified by the awarding body to include aspects of theory as appropriate to the topics covered and as necessary to permit a meaningful treatment of the media forms and products to be studied.

**Q2: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed knowledge and understanding requirements for the new GCSE Media Studies in Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Media Forms

The subject content prescribed for the new GCSE Media Studies in England stipulates that learners must study examples of all the following media forms:

- television;
- film;
- radio;
- newspapers;
- magazines;
- advertising and marketing;
- online, social and participatory media;
- video games;
- music video .

Our initial consultation with stakeholders suggests the new GCSE Media Studies in Wales should also require learners to study all of these media forms. Stakeholders also suggested that consideration of the Welsh perspective should be included in the study of these media forms, as appropriate.

We therefore propose that the new GCSE Media Studies specification in Wales should require all learners to study all of the media forms listed above and that, where appropriate, a Welsh perspective should be included in the study.

**Q3a: To what extent do you agree/disagree that learners should be required to study all the media forms proposed through their study?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

**Q3b: To what extent do you agree/disagree that media forms should include a Welsh perspective where appropriate?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Media products

A new feature introduced by the DfE requirements for England is for all learners to study in depth at least one audio/visual, one print and one online media form and to do this through a detailed study of contrasting media products set by the awarding body. Stakeholders in Wales indicated that this proposal improves the depth and breadth of study.

We propose the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales should require learners to study in depth at least one audio/visual, one print and one online media form through contrasting media products set by the awarding body. Learners must be provided with a choice of media products to study. When submitting its specification for approval, the awarding body must explain how and why it has selected the media products included in its specification.

**Q4a: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the subject content for GCSE Media Studies in Wales should include set products and study in depth at least one audio/visual, one print and one online form?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

We also propose that, taken together, the media products set for study by the awarding body must be of sufficient substance, significance and variety to allow opportunities for interpreting, analysing and exploring the media concepts and theories studied as part of the course. Overall, we propose the media products set for study must encompass a range of structures, forms, historical periods and intended audiences; they must also include at least one English medium and one Welsh medium product.

**Q4b: To what extent do you agree/disagree that GCSE Media Studies in Wales should include the requirement for media products to encompass a range of structures, forms, historical periods and intended audiences?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

**Q4c: To what extent do you agree/disagree that GCSE Media Studies in Wales should include the requirement for at least one English medium and one Welsh medium product to be studied?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Skills

The current subject criteria stipulate that all specifications in GCSE Media Studies must require learners to develop the ability to:

- analyse and respond to media texts/topics using key media concepts and terminology;
- research, plan and construct media products and evaluate those products and processes;
- present ideas and arguments supported by evidence.

We propose to maintain these required skills in the reformed GCSE media Studies in Wales.

**Q5: To what extent do you agree/disagree that GCSE Media Studies in Wales should include the skills requirement of the current specification?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Assessment objectives

Assessment Objectives determine how the subject content should be assessed.

The Assessment Objectives and their weightings in the current GCSE Media Studies are:

	<b>Assessment objective</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>AO1</b>	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed.	20-30%
<b>AO2</b>	Analyse and respond to media texts/topics using media key concepts and appropriate terminology.	20-30%
<b>AO3</b>	Demonstrate research, planning and presentation skills.	20-30%
<b>AO4</b>	Construct and evaluate their own products using creative and technical skills.	20-30%

The following Assessment objectives and weightings are proposed for reformed Media Studies GCSEs in England:

	<b>Assessment objective</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>AO1</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the theoretical framework of media</li><li>• contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes</li></ul>	30%
<b>AO2</b>	Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts, to make judgements and draw conclusions	40%
<b>AO3</b>	Create media products for an intended audience, by applying knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to communicate meaning	30%

For the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales we propose using similar assessment objectives and weightings as are being proposed for the reformed GCSE Media Studies in England, with a minor change to the wording of AO1 to reflect the difference in the subject aims, objectives and content.

We further propose that the weighting of AO3 should be increased to 35% to allow for planning, self-reflection and evaluation to be assessed through non-examination assessment.

We propose the following assessment objectives and weightings for the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales:

	<b>Assessment objective</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>AO1</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the theoretical concepts of media studies</li><li>• contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes</li></ul>	30%
<b>AO2</b>	Apply knowledge and understanding of the conceptual framework of media studies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• analyse media products, including in relation to their contexts</li><li>• evaluate their own practical work</li></ul>	35%
<b>AO3</b>	Develop and create media products for an intended audience, by applying knowledge and understanding of the conceptual framework of media studies to communicate meaning	35%

**Q6: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the assessment objectives proposed should be adopted for GCSE Media Studies specifications for Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Non examination assessment (NEA)

The current specifications for GCSE Media Studies include non examination assessment (identified as 'controlled assessed task').

The balance between examination and non examination assessment for the reformed GCSE Media Studies in England is 70% and 30%, respectively. Stakeholders in Wales felt that recognition for individual research should be included within the NEA of GCSE Media Studies in Wales to ensure an appropriate level of recognition is placed on the practical, analytical and evaluative skills associated with Media Studies.

We therefore propose that non examination assessment should constitute 40% of the overall assessment of the new GCSE Media Studies qualification for Wales.

#### **Q7: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed NEA weightings for GCSE Media Studies in Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Non examination assessment requirements

Stakeholders in Wales indicated that learners should be able to be assessed through a collaborative approach to media production which reflects the current practices used in Higher Education and the global media industry.

Stakeholders were also in support of including research and planning, which is linked to the production within the NEA for the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales.

We propose the following requirements for the NEA components of the reformed GCSE Media Studies in Wales:

Qualification	Proposed requirements for Wales
GCSE	One media production with assessment of individual research, development and reflection, applying knowledge and understanding of media language and representation. Briefs set by awarding body and reviewed every year.

**Q8a: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed requirements for non examination assessment for GCSE Media Studies in Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

**Q8b: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the media production can be an individual or group task for GCSE Media Studies in Wales?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Tiering

In some GCSEs, some or all of the qualification is assessed through tiered exam papers. In tiered assessments different grades are available at each tier; in most GCSEs the grades available are A\* to D are the higher tier and grades C to G in the foundation tier. GCSEs in some subjects are tiered because for some subjects the level of difficulty of the assessment is determined more by how candidates respond to questions (essay style questions for example) than by the question itself, whereas in other subjects the level of difficulty is determined more by the nature of the questions asked than on the answer given (such as where there is only one correct answer). Subjects that rely more on the difficulty of the questions to differentiate between candidates tend to have tiered assessment. Tiered assessment avoids the challenges involved in trying to set a single paper to assess the whole cohort. If these subjects were not tiered, then the exam papers would need to be bigger to include enough questions at each level of difficulty, which would increase the amount of assessment required. There is also a risk that the assessment would be less reliable, because research shows that more able candidates often lose marks on the less challenging questions and less able candidates are demotivated by the more challenging ones.

The Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19 year olds in Wales recommended that “tiering should only be allowed where there is a clear case for doing so due to the nature of the subject”.

We propose that GCSE Media Studies in Wales should not be tiered.

**Q9: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposal that GCSE Media Studies will not be tiered?**

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



## GCSE Media Studies

### Continuing professional development/resources

**Q10: What support and resources do you feel centres and teachers may require to achieve maximum readiness to deliver the revised specification?**

**Please provide comments**



## GCSE Media Studies

### Equality impact

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have 'due regard', when making decisions, to ensure there is no discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals or groups, to ensure equality and to foster good relations in relation to protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual reassignment).

**Q11: With this in mind, please highlight below if you feel any of this proposal has the potential to have a positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics and whether any of the proposal would cause accessibility issues for learners in Wales.**



## GCSE Media Studies

### Personal details

**Participants under the age of 16 are requested NOT to fill in this section.**

If you supply contact details, we may contact you for clarification of your answers. Qualifications Wales (QW) will not share these details, or details of your answers with any third party.

#### Personal details

Name

Company

Email Address

**Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of your organisation?**

- Individual
- Organisation

**Please select the type of organisation or choose 'not applicable' if responding as an individual**

- School
- College
- University
- Qualification Awarding Body
- Government (Local, National, UK or EU)
- Non-Applicable
- Other (please specify)

**Are you a: (please select as appropriate)**

- Teacher
- College Lecturer
- University Lecturer
- Student
- Parent
- Other (please specify)