

OxfordAQA

International GCSE

Media Studies (9257)

Selected Media Products: Teacher Guidance

For teaching from September 2024 onwards
For International GCSE exams in June 2026 onwards

Selected Media Products Guidance

What are Selected Media Products?

A Selected Media Product (SMP) is a media product chosen by the centre to exemplify a particular media form.

The Selected Media Products are also the method by which the Media Studies Framework is taught. Allowing centres to choose their own media products gives them the freedom to construct a course with media products that are culturally relevant and of interest to their students.

How are Selected Media Products used?

The SMPs provide the method by which centres deliver the specification content. They provide a focus for contextual study and development of analytical technique as well as the means of making judgements. They also provide models for the NEA project.

How are Selected Media Products assessed?

Individual SMPs are not assessed since different centres will (apart from the prescribed television product) use different SMPs. What is being assessed is knowledge and critical understanding of the Media Studies Framework, including media contexts (AO1) and the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the media studies framework to support analysis and evaluation (AO2). The SMPs provide the means by which candidates can demonstrate these objectives.

In the exam, students will need to draw on their study of the SMPs. Some questions require students to choose SMPs to use in their responses, while others in Section C require students to refer to specific media forms exemplified by their SMPs. It is therefore essential that a range of SMPs are selected which between them illustrate the entire Media Studies Framework and which are appropriate to the contextual studies of specific media forms.

What is the prescribed television product?

This is a selected episode from a television series that all students are required to study. The episode will be the focus of the assessment in Section A of the examination. Additionally, the prescribed television product fulfils the same role as all other SMPs in Sections B and C.

The prescribed television product is *Doctor Who*, 'Kerblam!' Series 11, Episode 7.¹

¹ The prescribed television product will be updated every three years.

What Selected Media Products can be chosen?

Additional to the prescribed television product, centres need to select a range of SMPs which cover the selection parameters in section 3.2.1. Students must study at least twelve Selected Media Products exemplifying six media forms: audio, e-media, print, video, news, and advertising. These are:

Form	Media Product	Requirements	Additional guidance
Audio	One radio station	The station incorporates both music and the spoken word. The study needs to include the station's online presence. At least one of the two audio products (either radio or podcast) should be commercial, ie should carry paid-for advertising, sponsorship or subscription.	The online presence could include, for example, the radio station's website and/ or its social media feeds). It is suggested that a contemporary ² sample of the radio station's output rather than a single programme be covered.
Audio	One podcast	The podcast is unrelated to the radio station and incorporates both music and the spoken word. At least one of the two audio products (either radio or podcast) should be commercial, ie should carry paid-for advertising, sponsorship or subscription.	It is suggested that two or three contemporary episodes of the podcast (or parts of episodes) be used.
E-Media	One video game	Playable on a mobile phone and/ or tablet.	While both E-Media products do not need to be linked, where they are this can provide an interesting line of study. For instance, a mobile game created in association with a group such as a successful K-Pop act with a huge following on Instagram and TikTok.

² For the purpose of this specification, this means the products should have been made available to the public audience no more than ten years before the date of examination

E-Media	The online presence of a significant person or group	The person/ group must have multimillion social media followers and may be a celebrity, opinion leader, influencer, blogger or similar (not government department or large organisation). The study should focus on three postings in the space of a single week.	It is suggested that posts might be taken from different social media platforms, depending on which parts of the Media Studies Framework are being explored.
Print	One magazine	Focusing on the arts or entertainment or lifestyle/ leisure. The study should include the online presence of the magazine, represented by at least one website or two social media feeds.	It is suggested that selected pages from at least two editions of the magazine be explored, including contents pages, as well as several relevant pages from the website and linked posts from the social media feeds.
Video (film)	One film	Produced and made available between 1960 and 2000.	It is suggested that centres consider selecting a film that has relevance for a 21 st century audience (for instance a remake or part of current franchise.) To provide opportunities for comparison and contrast, centres may wish to consider selecting a film from a similar genre to the prescribed television product, <i>Doctor Who</i> (eg science fiction/ fantasy.)
Video (television)	One television programme. This is selected by OxfordAQA.	Doctor Who, 'Kerblam!' Series 11, Episode 7.	This is the prescribed television product. Students should study the episode in relation to Media Language, Media Representations, Media Industries and Media Audiences, as well as all four contexts of the media.
News	At least one newspaper	At least one national newspaper or one regional newspaper. The same news story	It is suggested that selected pages from at least two editions of the newspaper be explored, including the front page. While not

		across a range of media.	required, centres may also wish to consider examining two contrasting newspapers, such as tabloid and broadsheet or left wing/right wing political bias.
News	One television news programme	The same news story across a range of media.	It is suggested that additional to the common news story report, that centres select key sections of a news programme for analysis.
News	One news website	Must be separate and distinct from the newspaper and TV news programme. The same news story across a range of media.	It is suggested that news story be one which has some continuity or reference to historical events in order to meet the requirement for coverage of historical contexts.
Advertising	One print or moving image advert	Created before 1980.	It is suggested that the non-contemporary and the contemporary adverts are different formats, allowing students the opportunity to analyse both print and moving image.
Advertising	One print or moving image advert	A contemporary advert.	It is suggested that the non-contemporary and the contemporary adverts are different formats, allowing students the opportunity to analyse both print and moving image.

Further guidance on the selection of SMPs can be found in *OxfordAQA International GCSE Media Studies (9257) Scheme of work*.

Do individual SMPs have to be used to study all four aspects of the Media Studies Framework?

No, however centres need to ensure that the SMPs taken as a whole, meet the requirements of the four areas of the Media Studies Framework:

- Media Language
- Media Representation
- Media Industries
- Media Audiences

Centres need to select SMPs that:

- enable the study of different types of audience and different types of producer
- provide rich and challenging opportunities for interpretation, analysis and critical understanding
- enable the study of emerging developments and issues in the media.

Ideally, it is envisioned that each of the four areas will be covered across two or three different SMPs. It is recommended that, when centres plan the course of study, they check that between them the SMPs allow students opportunity to study the entire content outlined in the specification between pages 15-25 (key topic areas and Further Detail).

SMPs should also allow candidates the opportunity to learn and practise the terminology found on pp39-48 of the specification ('Glossary of terms') since they should be familiar with these terms and be able to define, use and exemplify them.

It is important that the study of the prescribed television product covers all the key topic areas and Further Detail in the Media Language and Media Representations sections of the specification, since questions in Section A might focus on any of these. Centres are advised that Media Industries and Media Audiences should also be considered when exploring this SMP, given the requirement to cover all four contexts of the media (see below).

Do individual SMPs have to be used to study all four contexts of the media?

This depends upon the media form. Some media forms require the coverage of all four contexts, although there is some flexibility where two SMPs are explored within the same media form (for example, advertising). Section C will always include at least one question which links a specific media form (for example film) with a specific context (for example historical).

The four contexts to be covered are:

- cultural context
- economic context
- technological context
- historical context.

Centres are advised to make sure that the SMPs cover the specific contexts outlined below. This will inform selection and delivery of the SMPs. For example, the studies of the television and film SMPs will both need to consider the historical positioning of the products in 2018 (the first broadcast of *Doctor Who*, 'Kerblam!') and 1960-2000 respectively, possibly reflecting influences on them and influences they had. The study of news requires an understanding of historical context: this might involve choosing a news story which demonstrates continuity by being about a contemporary event with a historical dimension, or it might include considering the historical contexts which influenced the news provider chosen.

In some cases, there will be a crossover between the contexts (for example, there is likely to be a link between historical, technological and economic contexts depending upon the chosen film SMP). Centres should not feel that each context should be studied in isolation, but candidates should be clear about how they might apply specific contexts to specific media forms given the requirements of Section C of the exam.

It is therefore essential that when centres plan the course of study, they make sure that the SMPs allow students opportunity to explore the specific contexts required for each media form. As noted above, in the exam, some questions in Section C will require students to link SMPs to contexts. These questions are restricted as follows:

SMP	Context
Audio (radio)	Cultural and Economic
Audio (podcast)	Cultural and Technological
E-Media (video game and personality online presence)	Cultural, Economic and Technological
Print (magazine)	Cultural and Economic
Video (film)	Cultural, Economic, Historical and Technological

Video (drama single episode of a series) This SMP is the prescribed television product and is pre-selected ³	Cultural, Economic, Historical and Technological
News (news story)	Cultural, Economic, Historical and Technological
Advertising (video and print)	Cultural and Historical

Centres are advised that, as part of their planning, a consideration of relevant contexts might inform decisions on how specific areas of the MSF are explored in relation to SMPs.

Do Selected Media Products need to be contemporary?

Unless otherwise stated, all SMPs should be contemporary. For the purpose of this specification, this means the products should have been made available to the public audience no more than ten years before the date of examination.

The three non-contemporary SMPs are:

- TV (produced and made available to the public in 2018)
- Film (produced and made available to the public between 1960 and 2000)
- Advertising (a print or moving image advert created before 1980).

Do students need to study all the Selected Media Products?

It is essential that students study examples of all the SMPs as set out in section 3.2.1. The SMPs are the means to deliver the specification. However, the SMPs are not “key texts” to be learned in detail. The teaching and learning of SMPs should foster an understanding of the interconnectedness of the four elements of the Media Studies framework and the relevant contexts of the media. This means the some SMPs might be studied in depth whilst others might be covered more lightly. The amount of time spent on each SMP (or media form) will depend on the centre’s choices for how it covers the Media Studies Framework as well as the specific contextual requirements of each form/ SMP.

Do students only need to study the Selected Media Products?

No. It is advisable that centres supplement the SMPs with examples of other media products in order to practise analysis and to develop a full knowledge and understanding of the Media Studies Framework, including the contexts of the media. However, the exam will only require candidates to refer to examples of SMPs as outlined in Section 3.2 of the specification.

³ *Doctor Who*, *Kerblam!* Series 11, Episode 7.

Can a centre use the Close Study Products from AQA GCSE Media Studies 8572 as Selected Media Products?

While it is envisioned that centres will select a range of different media products as their SMPs, it is possible to use some of the Close Study Products from AQA GCSE Media Studies 8572. However, only Close Study Products that adhere to the selection parameters in section 3.2.1 can be used as SMPs. See below:

Close Study product (8572)	Selected Media Product (9257)	Does it adhere to selection parameters?
His Dark Materials: The City of Magpies (2020)	n/a	n/a
Doctor Who: An Unearthly Child (1963)	n/a	n/a
Marcus Rashford online, social and participatory media	The online presence of a significant person or group	Yes
Kim Kardashian Online, social and participatory media	The online presence of a significant person or group	Yes
Blackpink The Game	Mobile video game	Yes, until May 2033.
Lara Croft Go (2015)	Mobile video game	No, because the release date falls outside the demands of the contemporary video game. However, centres might consider <i>Tomb Raider Reloaded</i> , another mobile entry in the <i>Tomb Raider</i> series, released in February 2023 and so valid until 2033.
The Daily Mirror 10.1.24	News (national newspaper)	Yes. However, centres would need to source versions of the same news story from a television news programme and news website.
The Times 10.1.24	News (national newspaper)	Yes. However, centres would need to source versions of the same news story from a television news

		programme and news website.
Galaxy chocolate television advert (2014)	Advertising (television)	No, as the production date falls outside the demands of the contemporary and non-contemporary advert.
NHS Blood and Transplant online campaign video Represent featuring Lady Leshurr (2016)	Advertising (online)	No, as the production date just about falls outside the demands of the contemporary and non-contemporary advert.
OMO Print advert from Woman's Own magazine, 5 May 1955	Advertising (print)	Yes
Radio 1 Launch Day. Tony Blackburn Breakfast Show. Sept 1967 (excerpts)	Radio	No, as this show is not contemporary. However, students may study the contemporary output of Radio 1 as a whole.
Kiss Breakfast on KISS Radio	Radio	Yes, although the SMP focus would need to be KISS Radio as a whole and focus on contemporary output.
Black Widow (dir. Cate Shortland 2021) –	Film	No
I, Daniel Blake (dir Ken Loach, 2016)	Film	No
Front cover of Tatler, January 2021 –	Print (Magazines)	Yes, until the exams in 2030. However, centres would also need study the online presence of the magazine.
Front cover of Heat, 21-27 November 2020	Print (Magazines)	Yes, until the exams in 2030. However, centres would need study the online presence of the magazine.
Arctic Monkeys – I Bet You Look Good on the Dance Floor (2005) Music video	n/a	n/a

Blackpink – How You Like That (dir. Seo Hyun-seung), 2020 Music video	n/a	n/a
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How can centres ensure that their choice of SMPs are effective and suitable for the needs of the exam?

Centres may wish to test their SMPs against the SAMs papers, e.g. how well could candidates answer selected questions in section B and question C based on the centre selection. Centres are also advised to map SMPs against the key topic areas and Further Details of the Media Studies Framework to make sure that all have been covered

Do Selected Media Products need to be in English?

No, SMPs can be in any language (apart from the prescribed television product) but exam responses must be in English, including references to and quotes from these media products.

How do Selected Media Products link to the NEA?

Each of the six NEA projects is based on one of the media forms covered in the specification. The briefs link to aspects of the SMPs and might provide centres with a means of choosing specific SMPs (for example, the audio NEA is a radio piece so centres might want to focus their radio SMP on a station which includes some of the elements highlighted in the NEA brief). One or two of the NEA briefs are a little more prescriptive (e.g. the magazine brief and the news brief) which might guide centres to specific SMPs (e.g. arts magazines, a story from a national newspaper).

Who is responsible to deciding the appropriateness of Selected Media Products?

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the products selected are appropriate to the age and understanding of their International GCSE Media Studies students.

Where can centres access further information about planning the course and selecting SMPs?

Centres planning the course are advised to read *OxfordAQA International GCSE Media Studies (9257) Scheme of work*.