

AS

At AS, Units 1 and 2 provide an integrated and complementary introduction to the study of communication and culture. Both units deal with the personal level of communication and candidates' own experience of cultural products and cultural practices. The interaction between the individual and the broader cultural environment is a key area of investigation.

A2

At A2, Units 3 and 4 build on the work established in AS, providing an integrated and extensive programme of study. Texts and contexts are more challenging and there is a greater focus on theoretical approaches to contemporary culture. Both units cover issues associated with cultural reproduction, cultural transmission and cultural meanings from a variety of critical perspectives. Key concepts include power, discourse and technology.

Unit 1: Understanding Communication and Culture

Written Paper, 1 hour 45 minutes

50% of total AS marks, 25% of total A Level marks

- Two questions about culture and communication
- Two questions inviting guided analysis and interpretation of cultural practice(s) and a cultural product/text

Available January and June

Subject Content

- The nature of culture
- Definitions of culture
- The meanings and practices of everyday life
- High culture and popular culture
- The relationship between culture and value
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- Identity and self-presentation
- Group communication
- Reading images and products

Unit 2: The Individual and Contemporary Culture: Portfolio

Coursework, moderated by AQA

50% of total AS marks, 25% of total A Level marks

- A piece of independent work
- Investigation in Communication, Culture and the Individual (500 words)
- Exploration of Cultural Products and Practices (1000 words)
- Presentation on My Culture comprising visual and audio components
- Topics set by AQA
- Web-folio/portfolio of work

Available June

Subject Content

- Communication, culture and the Individual
- Cultural contexts and practices

Unit 3: Communicating Culture

Written Paper, 2 hours

25% of the total A Level marks

- A compulsory essay question relating to theoretical approaches and key concepts
- One essay from a choice of five, relating to a cultural site or sites

Available January and June

Subject Content

- A close study of a cultural site i.e. spaces and places, fictions, objects of desire
- A study of dominant and alternative approaches to the understanding of communication and culture
- An investigation of the rationales for capitalism, globalisation and consumerism in relation to cultural products and practices
- Key concepts and cultural sites

Unit 4: Communication and Culture in Practice: Portfolio

Coursework

25% of the total A Level marks

- A major piece of independent work
- Case study (2000 words)
- Web-based presentation
- Topics set by AQA
- Web-folio/portfolio of work

Available June

Subject Content

- The construction and maintenance of our personal and social identities
- Analysis of social and cultural 'rituals'

Assessment Objectives

AO1

Demonstrate skills in the application of communication forms and competence and creativity in applying the conventions of written and multimedia formats

AO2

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, and critical debates relevant to the discipline of communication and culture

AO3

Demonstrate analytical, comparative and interpretive skills in applying relevant concepts and perspectives to cultural products and culture practices

AO4

Demonstrate the ability to identify and investigate primary and secondary material appropriate to the exploration of key concepts in communication and culture