

## Media Studies A-Level

### Introduction – An Outline of the Course

Media Studies is the exploration of how the media shapes, and is shaped by, the world we live in today. Throughout this two-year course, you will look beneath the surface of the products you consume daily to critically examine how the media shapes our thinking, identities, and economic landscapes. You will get the chance to closely analyse and compare media products in relation to key social, cultural, economic, and historical contexts. You will explore, evaluate, and analyse a variety of media products, from magazines to video games, and will get the chance to develop your own practical skills across a range of different media forms.

The course focuses on four key areas:

1. **Media Language:** the visual, technical, audio, and language codes used in media to construct and communicate meaning.
2. **Media Representations:** How the media portrays individuals, groups, experiences, and ideas.
3. **Media Audiences:** How media forms target, reach, and are interpreted by different groups.
4. **Media Industries:** How media processes of production, distribution, and regulation affect products.

This is a two-year course and is assessed using 2 formal examinations in the summer of Year 13 and one piece of practical coursework that is completed in Year 12 (Non-Exam Assessment).

### What skills will you develop?

A-Level Media Studies will teach you a range of skills that will benefit you not only during your studies but also in your development post-18. These include:

- Building the ability to construct clear arguments and closely evaluate media products.
- Developing critical thinking skills by analysing contemporary issues within media.
- Improving your research skills by looking at key criticism and theory.
- Improving discussion and debating skills through the discussion of contemporary issues such as media regulation or freedom of speech.
- Gaining a deeper understanding of society and how the media shapes our lives.

### What will you study in the first term of Media Studies?

#### Media Language

In this topic, you will learn how to “read” media. You will consider how we can decode hidden messages in media texts and will look at how signs, codes, and conventions create meaning. You will study how narratives are structured, analyse genre codes, and explore cultural concepts like postmodernism.

## **Media Representation**

In this topic, you will explore how the media constructs reality and builds stereotypes. You will investigate how different social groups, ethnicities, genders, and identities are represented (or misrepresented) in the texts we consume. You will get the chance to explore key theoretical perspectives, including ideas about representation, identity and feminism.

## **Advertising and Marketing**

This topic will focus on how media language and representations are engineered to sell products or ideas to specific target demographics. You will closely analyse print adverts, television commercials, and interactive marketing campaigns. You will study how audiences are categorised and how persuasive techniques tap into cultural ideologies and consumer psychology.

## **Music Videos**

In this topic, you will look at how directors use visuals, choreography, and editing to bring a video to life. You'll analyse historical music videos alongside modern ones to see how solo artists and bands construct their identities, challenge social norms, and push creative boundaries. We will also explore how the shift from MTV to YouTube and TikTok has changed how music videos are funded, shared, and consumed globally.

## **Summer Gap Task and where to find this**

The best way to prepare for your A level Media Studies Course is to complete the summer gap task that has been set.

On the [school website](#), if you click on Sixth Form and follow the list until you see Year 11 into 12 Gap Tasks. Click on this and find the Media Studies task.

We have selected a range of tasks to immerse you in a few different topic areas and develop your critical thinking skills in preparation for September.

You don't have to complete this work in one go. Why not wait until you have a rainy day?

We are really looking forward to seeing you in September!