



Government of **Western Australia**  
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

# MEDIA PRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS

GENERAL COURSE

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Year 12 syllabus

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

## **Important information**

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2024.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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## Rationale

The Media Production and Analysis General course aims to prepare all students for a future in a digital and interconnected world by providing the skills, knowledge and understandings to tell their own stories and interpret others' stories. Students learn the languages of media communication and how a story is constructed using representations. Students are encouraged to explore, experiment and interpret their world, reflecting and analysing contemporary life while understanding that this is done under social, cultural and institutional constraints. Students as users and creators of media products, consider the important role of audiences and their context.

Digital technologies have had an impact on and extended the capacity that the media play in all Australian lives. Through new technologies, the role of the audience has shifted from a passive consumer to a more active participant, shaping the media through interaction and more accessible modes of production and dissemination of media work. Students' interaction and opportunity to use technologies enables them to engage with current media and adapt to evolving media platforms.

The creation of convergent and hybrid media means that the system of communication changes as new media are developed. The local and global media contexts are continuously interacting, making audiences global consumers of media products. Through the consumption of global media work, awareness of global issues creates a collective consciousness and sense of responsibility, giving rise to the notion of audiences also being global citizens. Through the process of investigation, students are able to engage with topics, issues and themes which have global and local relevance and artistic movements and styles which in turn, create new notions of media aesthetics.

The production of media work enables students to demonstrate their understanding of the key concepts of media languages, representation, audience, production, skills and processes as well as express their creativity and originality. When producing media work, students learn to make decisions about all aspects of production, including creative choices across pre-production, production and post-production phases. This provides an opportunity for students to reflect on and discuss their own creative work, intentions and outcomes. Within this process, skills are developed enabling students to manipulate technologies which simulate industry experiences.

## Course outcomes

The Media Production and Analysis General course is designed to facilitate achievement of the following outcomes.

### Outcome 1 – Media ideas

Students use critical awareness and cultural understandings to explore and develop media ideas.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand how media communicate ideas in particular contexts and for different audiences and purposes
- explore technologies, codes and conventions to create meaning and develop ideas
- present ideas, designs and/or production plans.

### Outcome 2 – Media production

Students use skills, techniques, processes, conventions and technologies to create media work for audience, purpose and context.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- use media skills, process and technologies
- use media codes and conventions for audience, purpose and context
- fulfil a range of production roles and responsibilities.

### Outcome 3 – Responses to media

Students use critical, social, cultural and aesthetic understandings to respond to, reflect on and evaluate media work.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand how meaning is constructed in media work
- understand interrelationships between media work, cultural contexts and audiences
- use strategies to investigate and comment on media work and evaluate media productions.

### Outcome 4 – Media in society

Students understand the role of media in society.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand the impact of technological developments, and controls and constraints, on media production and use
- understand the influence of social, historical and cultural contexts on media production and use
- understand how cultural values are influenced by the media and in turn influence media production.

## Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

### Structure of the syllabus

The Year 12 syllabus is divided into two units which are delivered as a pair. The notional time for the pair of units is 110 class contact hours.

#### Unit 3 – Entertainment

Within this broad focus, students will expand their understanding of media languages, learning how codes and conventions are used to construct entertainment media.

#### Unit 4 – Representation and reality

Students will consider different types of representations and how they relate to the construction of reality within media work.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- suggested contexts – a context in which the unit content could be taught
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

### Organisation of content

The course content is divided into five content areas:

- Media languages
- Representation
- Audience
- Production
- Skills and processes.

#### Media languages

An understanding of media languages is fundamental to the study and practice of media. In learning the languages of the media, students develop conceptual understandings and skills relevant to:

#### System of communication

The ‘system of communication’ is the process by which a medium creates messages and how audiences interpret the messages, producing dominant, negotiated or oppositional meanings. The system consists of communication models, techniques, technologies and audience context.

Traditional media are radio, television, film and newspaper (print). New emerging media, also known as 'convergent and hybrid media', such as the internet, personal communication devices and computer games, acknowledges the increasing integration of media and their systems of communication.

Knowledge of how the system of communication works is integral for students to understand and produce media work.

### **Narrative, codes and conventions**

Narratives are intrinsic to media work and the narrative elements of character, setting, conflict and resolution are essential components of storytelling. Codes and conventions are tools used in the construction and deconstruction of narratives. The way they are applied can be analysed in terms of genre and style. Producers construct preferred meanings and viewpoints through the selection of technical, symbolic, written and audio codes and multiple meanings are interpreted by different audiences. An understanding of how selection processes construct meaning, realism and viewpoints in a range of media is an essential part of the course.

### **Representation**

The concept of representation is fundamental to the constructed nature of all media. Representation is the process where by concepts or physical objects are constructed to appear 'real/natural'. This includes people, places, events and ideas. The study of this process, known as 'mediation', enables students to understand how multiple meanings can be constructed and how they can be accepted or challenged by a specific audience. An important aspect of analysing representation is the process of stereotyping through which over-simplified representations become naturalised, and through shared values, they become associated with particular issues and cultural groups. This oversimplification occurs through selection processes to create a dominant reading. By applying the principles of encoding and decoding, students are able to communicate their understandings of the construction and interpretation of representations.

### **Audience**

In learning about how an audience constructs meaning, students develop conceptual understandings and skills relevant to:

#### **Audiences**

The application of media theory enables students to analyse the relationship between audiences and the media. Popular models for analysis include the Hypodermic Needle model, Uses and Gratifications and Reception theory.

A knowledge of media theory leads to the development of informed audience profiles based on age, gender, socio-economic and cultural background. These factors inform students' understanding of the media expectations and preferences of specific audiences for particular styles and themes within media work. In production, these factors become significant in the classification and censorship of media work.

#### **Subcultures**

An extension of audience analysis enables students to examine how subcultural groups, based on shared interests and values, experience the media differently from mainstream audiences. Understanding how the media cater for subcultural groups provides scope for experimentation within production work.



## Media trends

Engaging with the media of different times develops an understanding of the relationship between media work, audiences and context. Awareness of technologies, styles, narratives, representations and values from the past illustrates the changing nature of the media and of trends, values and audience expectations. Local, national and international media provide services for, and impact, particular communities.

## Production

Many factors shape the style of production and the media work that are produced. In learning about production, students develop conceptual skills and understandings relevant to:

### Major institutions and independents

The organisation of major institutions and independents is structured for both large and small scale media, with students investigating commercial and non-commercial media industries and modes of production. The products of these institutions are compared in terms of mainstream audience appeal and alternative styles which are produced for specific subcultures. The role of new technologies, enabling greater autonomy for independent producers, directly relates to the student production context.

Recognising the various purposes of the media and the ways in which media are used by mainstream and niche audiences is fundamental to understanding the media industry and its economic power base. How media use is influenced by demographic patterns, the expectations of producers and audiences, marketing strategies and measures of audience reach is critical when analysing the impact of specific media work on audiences.

### Production contexts

Contexts within which media production takes place are significant in shaping the content of media work. Investigation reveals how particular contexts have shaped the media: historical and political events that shape attitudes and the representation of people and issues, social and cultural trends that impact the style and content of media work.

The impact of controls and constraints that shape the style and content of media work must be recognised and the implications considered. There is a wide range of controls and constraints.

Ethical issues and legal implications control and constrain media. Debating the influence and impact of regulatory bodies and pressure groups, types of censorship and classification provides a basis for developing codes of conduct for student productions.

Technologies and factors related to production, such as budget, time, resources and audience expectations control and constrain production processes and audience reach.

Economic structures and practices also are factors that control and constrain media. It is important to consider the impact of ethos and objectives, sources of revenue and intended 'audiences' on the production of media work. Ownership, power and politics are all factors that control and constrain media.

## Skills and processes

An essential part of the course is the opportunity for students to practically demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of media concepts and theory in creating their own media work. Skills and processes integrate the practical skills and use of technologies required to create a media product.

Within skills, students are expected to use a production process which includes implementing pre-production techniques, fulfilling specific production roles, following health and safety guidelines and applying technologies in creative and original ways. Reflecting and evaluating on their own and peer/professional work enables students an opportunity to improve their understanding and skills of the production process.

The individual understanding and application of skills through specific roles within the production context aim to simulate industry production practices.

## **Representation of the general capabilities**

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Media Production and Analysis General course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

### **Literacy**

The Media Production and Analysis General course relies on multi literacies; oral, visual, kinetic, text based and digital literacy is fundamental to learning, communicating, creating and responding. Students use and develop literacy skills as they describe, appraise and document their own media work and those of their peers, responding to, interpreting and analysing increasingly complex media work made by others. They use their literacy skills to access knowledge, make meaning, express thoughts, emotions and ideas, interact with and challenge others.

### **Numeracy**

An appreciation of and ability to apply numerical concepts, such as size, space, time, proportion, angles, depth, ratio and pattern are all used in the Media Production and Analysis General course. Creating media work requires knowledge and understanding of measurement in order to manipulate space, time and form.

### **Information and communication technology capability**

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability enables students in the Media Production and Analysis General course to use digital tools and environments to represent their ideas and media work. They use digital technologies to locate, access, select, document and evaluate information, work collaboratively, share and exchange information, and communicate with a variety of audiences.

### **Critical and creative thinking**

The Media Production and Analysis General course is dependent on the development of creative and critical thinking. In creating media, students draw on their curiosity, imagination and thinking skills to pose questions and explore ideas. They consider possibilities and processes and make choices that assist them to take risks and express their ideas creatively.

### **Personal and social capability**

Learning in the Media Production and Analysis General course promotes self-discipline, initiative, confidence, goal-setting, empathy and adaptability as students work individually and collaboratively.

When working with others, media students develop and practise social skills that assist them to communicate effectively, work collaboratively, make considered group decisions and show leadership.

### **Ethical understanding**

Ethical understanding is developed and applied in the Media Production and Analysis General course when students encounter or create media that requires ethical consideration, such as media work that is controversial, involves a moral dilemma or presents a biased point of view. They actively engage in ethical decision making when reflecting on their own and others' media work.

### **Intercultural understanding**

Intercultural understanding in the Media Production and Analysis General course assists students to explore new ideas, media and practices from diverse local, national, regional and global cultural contexts. Students are encouraged to demonstrate open-mindedness to perspectives that differ from their own and to appreciate the diversity of cultures and contexts in which artists and audiences live.

## **Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities**

The cross-curriculum priorities address the contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Media Production and Analysis General course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures**

The study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures enriches understanding of the diversity of media within Australia, analyses the stereotypes and perceived societal norms that media present, and develops an appreciation of the need to respond to media work in ways that are culturally sensitive and responsible.

Many Australian Indigenous media producers affirm connection with Country/Place, People and Culture through their media stories. Media created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders exposes students to a view of the Australian landscape that is unique, expressive and personal.

### **Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia**

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia provides rich, engaging and diverse contexts in which to investigate making and responding to media which have arisen from the rich and diverse cultures, belief systems and traditions of the peoples of the Asian region.

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability provides engaging and thought-provoking contexts in which to explore the nature of media making and responding and enables the investigation of the interrelated nature of social, economic and ecological systems.

Students use the exploratory and creative platform of the media to develop world views that recognise the importance of social justice, healthy ecosystems and effective action for sustainability. Through their media work they may persuade others to take action for sustainable futures.

## Unit 3 – Entertainment

### Unit description

The focus for this unit is on entertainment. Within this broad focus, teachers select learning contexts interesting to students and build upon the informal understandings they have already acquired.

Students expand their understanding of media languages, learning how codes and conventions are used to construct entertainment media. They examine the process of representation and the way values are constructed in media work. Students consider how the experiences of audiences influence their responses to media and how media work is shaped by the production context and through the production process.

Students analyse, view, listen to and interact with interesting and relevant media work. They also generate ideas and learn production skills and processes as they apply their knowledge and creativity in their productions.

### Suggested contexts

Within the broad area of entertainment, teachers may choose one or more of the suggested contexts (this list is not exhaustive):

- promotion and marketing strategies
- local and international film
- commercial, community and digital radio
- participation media
- fanzines
- animated sitcoms.

Media types – students must work in at least one of the following media in any year: film, television, photography, print media, radio and digital media.

### Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

#### Media languages

##### System of communication

- terminology, technologies and characteristics of specific media
- characteristics of media work designed to entertain
- features of commercial and non-commercial media

##### Narrative, codes and conventions

- narrative and genre conventions in entertainment media
- genre recognition and audience expectations
- codes and conventions that position the audience and construct meaning

## Representation

- why the media use stereotypical representations
- the social influence of stars and celebrities in popular media

## Audience

### Audiences

- how the purpose and context of the media work influence audience response
- how values are depicted in entertainment media through genre and representations

### Subcultures

- identifying subcultures based on cultural background, experiences, interests and occupations

### Media trends

- trends in entertainment media genres
- impact of technologies on audience reach and media use

## Production

### Major institutions and independents

- comparing commercial and non-commercial entertainment media in terms of
  - budgets
  - production costs
- targeting mainstream audiences
- marketing strategies to promote media work

### Production contexts

- making links between entertainment media work and their production context
- controls and constraints in commercial and non-commercial entertainment media production
- impact of changes in technology on media work

## Skills and processes

- collecting, interpreting and communicating information within given contexts
- demonstrating safe procedures when using technologies and resources
- applying team skills, including active listening, making decisions, goal-setting, time management, production responsibilities
- applying the production process, including application of technical skills and processes, scripts and storyboards or layout design
- reflecting on production processes
- evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the production and process

## Unit 4 – Representation and reality

### Unit description

The focus for this unit is on representation and reality. Representation is the act of re-presenting or constructing identities, places or ideas based on shared values and understandings. Students will consider different types of representations and how they relate to the construction of reality within media work.

Within this broad focus, students have the opportunity to choose from a range of media genres and styles and examine ways in which codes, conventions and techniques are used to dramatise and re-present reality while at the same time engaging and informing audiences.

In contexts related to representation and reality, students analyse, view, listen and interact with a variety of media work. They learn about production controls, constraints and responsibilities. Students continue to develop strategies and production skills when creating their own media work.

### Suggested contexts

Within the broad area of representation and reality, teachers may choose one or more of the suggested contexts (this list is not exhaustive):

- 'breakfast' television
- news and current affairs programs and websites
- community-based media
- lifestyle programs and magazines
- participation media
- talk back radio

Media types – students must work in at least one of the following media in any year: film, television, photography, print media, radio and digital media.

### Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

#### Media languages

##### System of communication

- characteristics of media in different times and contexts

##### Narrative, codes and conventions

- codes and conventions used to construct realism
- narrative and genre conventions used to construct representations in media work

## Representation

- representation of subcultures
- connotations associated with stereotypes

## Audience

### Audiences

- audiences' preferences and expectations of specific media
- how different viewing, listening and interacting contexts influence audience responses to media work
- connecting values in media work to audience values

### Subcultures

- values and attitudes of subcultural groups

### Media trends

- impact of new media on use and production

## Production

### Major institutions and independents

- comparing commercial and non-commercial media in terms of:
  - production types
  - sources of revenue
- marketing strategies to create a point of view

### Production contexts

- linking the production and social context to media work
- controls and constraints in commercial and non-commercial media production
- audiences' values impacting content

## Skills and processes

- collecting, interpreting and communicating information within given contexts
- demonstrating safe procedures when using technologies and resources
- applying team skills, including active listening, making decisions, goal-setting, time management, production responsibilities
- applying the production process, including application of technical skills and processes, simple scripts and storyboards or layout design
- reflecting on production processes
- evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the production and process

## School-based assessment

The *Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual* contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Media Production and Analysis General Year 12 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

**Assessment table – Year 12**

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Work in which students plan, conduct and communicate findings based on the analysis of audiences, media contexts and media examples using a range of frameworks and primary and secondary sources.</p>	25%
<p><b>Production</b></p> <p>Extended production project which can be completed as either a single task or as separate tasks. Students explore ideas, control and manage the processes required to manage the aesthetic quality of production.</p> <p>Independently, and in teams, manage a range of production processes, evaluating and modifying them as necessary.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of styles, structures, codes and conventions and the confidence and competence in the use of technologies, skills and processes in a range of contexts.</p>	60%
<p><b>Externally set task</b></p> <p>A written task or item or set of items of 50 minutes duration developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and administered by the school.</p>	15%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units.

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

In the assessment outline for the pair of units, each assessment type must be included at least once over the year/pair of units. The externally set task occurs in Term 2.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 3 and Unit 4, while the focus of the externally set task is on Unit 3 content only.

Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes. For example, student performance of production work could be validated by summative assessment through journal or portfolio contributions, pre-production planning materials and regular meetings where production work can be reviewed and authenticated by the teacher.



## Externally set task

All students enrolled in the Media Production and Analysis General Year 12 course will complete the externally set task developed by the Authority. Schools are required to administer this task in Term 2 at a time prescribed by the Authority.

### Externally set task design brief – Year 12

<b>Time</b>	50 minutes
<b>Format</b>	Written
	Conducted under invigilated conditions
	Typically between two and six questions
	This may include set questions, or a choice of questions. Students may be required to respond to media images
<b>Content</b>	The Authority informs schools during Term 3 of the previous year of the Unit 3 syllabus content on which the task will be based

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information.

## Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
<b>A</b>	Excellent achievement
<b>B</b>	High achievement
<b>C</b>	Satisfactory achievement
<b>D</b>	Limited achievement
<b>E</b>	Very low achievement

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units. The grade is based on the student's overall performance as judged by reference to a set of pre-determined standards. These standards are defined by grade descriptions and annotated work samples. The grade descriptions for the Media Production and Analysis General Year 12 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, through the Guide to Grades link on the course page of the Authority website at [www.scsa.wa.edu.au](http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au).

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the *WACE Manual* for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

## Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 12

<b>A</b>	Discusses how information and a range of codes and conventions are selected, and used to construct narratives, preferred meanings, stereotypes and/or viewpoints. Describes how aspects of media work can appeal to specific audiences.
	Performs production roles responsibly, selecting and using narrative elements, codes and conventions, technologies and skills to construct narratives, preferred meanings, representations and/or viewpoints. Effectively adapts plans and processes when problems are encountered during production.
	Discusses the relationship between media work and specific contexts, giving examples of events, social and technological trends, production contexts and audience values that have influenced the genre, style and/or content of media work.
	Discusses cultural experiences and values that influence the use of media work by audiences, and provides reasons for shared and alternative interpretations.
	Discusses the effect of specific controls and constraints operating in the media production context. Provides examples, such as technologies and resources, production finance, audience values and attitudes. Reflects on the production process, and evaluates the effectiveness of strategies used within own production.
<b>B</b>	Describes a range of codes and conventions, and explains how they are used to construct narratives, preferred meanings, stereotypes and/or viewpoints, and how they appeal to audiences. Fulfils a production role using narrative elements, codes and conventions, technologies and skills to construct meanings, and particular viewpoints in own media productions. Adapts plans and processes when particular problems are encountered during production.
	Describes links between media work and its context, for example, the influence of events, social and technological trends, audience values and attitudes that have influenced the genre, style and/or content of media work.
	Describes factors that influence the use of media work, explaining how values in media work relate to audience values. Provides examples of shared and alternative interpretations that might be made by audiences.
	Describes the impact of controls and constraints operating in media production. Includes examples, such as technologies, budgets and audience expectations. Provides a reflection of the production process used, and evaluates strengths and weaknesses of own production.
<b>C</b>	Identifies codes and conventions, and comments on the connection to narratives, meanings, stereotypes and/or viewpoints constructed, referring to audience appeal. Uses a range of production skills, techniques and processes, and deals with basic problems during production.
	Identifies key factors that have influenced the features and/or content of media work.
	Identifies key factors that influence how audiences use media work and provides some examples of alternative interpretations.
	Provides examples of controls and constraints, and their effect on media production. Includes an outline of the production process used, and evaluation of own production.

D	Lists some codes and conventions, and briefly comments on how they are used to construct narratives, meanings, stereotypes or viewpoints.
	Applies a limited range of skills, techniques and processes, and requires teacher guidance when solving production problems.
	Provides a limited explanation of some factors or trends that have influenced the features or content of media work.
	Provides simple examples of how media work is used and interpreted by audiences.
	Provides simple examples of controls or constraints with little explanation of how they influence media production.
	Refers to aspects of the production process used with little or no evaluation of own production.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade and/or has completed insufficient assessment tasks to be assigned a higher grade.