



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



# **MEDIA PRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS**

**ATAR COURSE**

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Year 11 syllabus

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2015.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

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

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## Rationale

The Media Production and Analysis ATAR 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 impacted upon and extended the capacity that the media play in 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 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 ATAR 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 11 syllabus is divided into two units, each of one semester duration, which are typically delivered as a pair. The notional time for each unit is 55 class contact hours.

#### Unit 1 – Popular culture

Students analyse, view, listen to and interact with a range of popular media, develop their own ideas, learn production skills and apply their understandings and skills in creating their own productions.

#### Unit 2 – Journalism

In this unit students will further their understanding of journalistic media. Students will analyse, view, listen to and interact with a range of journalistic genres and they undertake more extensive research into the representation and reporting of groups and issues 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 in which producers of media create 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 reflect the increasing integration of media and their systems of communication.

Knowledge of how these communication systems work 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. The analysis and production of alternative and experimental media enables narrative, codes and conventions to be challenged and for innovative styles to be created.

### **Representation**

The concept of representation is fundamental to the constructed nature of all media. Representation is the process in which 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, 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 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 on, 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 toward 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 experimental and avant-garde styles which are produced for specific 'niche' audiences and 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 demonstrate practically 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.

## Progression from the Year 7–10 curriculum

The Year 10 Arts curriculum links to this syllabus through an emphasis on contexts that are meaningful and relevant to adolescents. Through their study of media arts in Year 10, students explore media elements and skills and processes, integrated through the production process. They explore and question their own immediate media experiences and their understanding of the wider world.

Students create their own media work, and respond to their own and the media work of others, drawing on their developing knowledge, understanding and skills. They develop an appreciation of media, applying skills of critical analysis, evaluation and aesthetic understanding.

## 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 ATAR course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

### Literacy

The Media Production and Analysis ATAR 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 used in the Media Production and Analysis ATAR 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 this 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 ATAR 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 ATAR 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 ATAR 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 ATAR 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 ATAR 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 presents, 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 Asia region.

### **Sustainability**

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

Students may use the exploratory and creative platform of the media to develop personal and 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 1 – Popular culture

## Unit description

This focus involves identifying what is meant by ‘popular’ culture and considering the types of media, ideas and audiences from which popular culture evolves. Students analyse, view, listen to and interact with a range of popular media, develop their own ideas, learn production skills and apply their understandings and skills in creating their own productions.

There are many aspects of popular culture that can be used to provide students with interesting and relevant learning contexts, and an opportunity to explore how audiences consume popular media. Teachers should select learning contexts that are familiar to students or provide stimulation and new experiences.

In contexts related to popular culture, students have the opportunity to explore a variety of popular media work, and learn how to interpret the meanings created by codes and conventions.

Students develop production and analytical skills and apply their understanding of media languages and audiences while learning about and working in specific production contexts.

## Suggested contexts

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

- reality television
- music video clips
- social media
- radio
- television drama
- mockumentary
- animation
- computer games.

Media types – students must work within 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

- impact of technologies on popular media
- evolution of media technologies

## **Narrative, codes and conventions**

- narrative elements in different genres and styles, including characters, settings, conflicts, resolutions
- codes and conventions used to construct meaning
- realism in fictional narratives

## **Representation**

- the process of constructing representations
- linking representations to the values of mainstream and subcultural audiences
- the effect of using stereotypes

## **Audience**

### **Audiences**

- values that shape the interpretation and response to media work
- how meaning is encoded by the producer and decoded by audiences
- linking stars and celebrities to value systems

### **Subcultures**

- representation of subcultures
- particular subcultures' media preferences

### **Media trends**

- the impact and appeal of trends in media genres and/or styles

## **Production**

### **Major institutions and independents**

- comparing commercial and non-commercial media
- marketing strategies which appeal to specific audiences

### **Production contexts**

- the relationship between international media and Australian popular media
- effect of budgets on production
- censorship and classification

### **Skills and processes**

- investigating and analysing media
- knowledge and application of safety procedures

- applying production skills (independent management of time and technologies, management of team members, negotiating and adapting production processes, identifying problems and applying appropriate solutions)
- fulfilling defined production roles
- implementing production processes based on proposals, scripts and plans
- using conventional genres, styles and conventions
- reflecting on the production process
- evaluating own and others' productions (peer and/or professional)

## Unit 2 – Journalism

### Unit description

In this unit students will further their understanding of journalistic media. The breadth of this focus allows teachers to choose learning contexts that are of contemporary relevance and related to students' interests.

In contexts related to journalism students analyse, view, listen to and interact with a range of journalistic genres and they undertake more extensive research into the representation and reporting of groups and issues within media work. They draw on knowledge when developing ideas for their own productions.

Students extend their understanding of production practices and responsibilities. They become increasingly independent as they manipulate technologies and techniques to express their ideas in their productions.

### Suggested contexts

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

- Australian news media
- current affairs programs
- photojournalism
- television and radio journalism
- documentaries
- digital news media.

Media types – students must work within 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

- technologies and production processes in journalistic media
- media ownership, sources of revenue and expectations of particular media
- audience reach, accessibility and interaction

##### Narrative, codes and conventions

- narrative conventions in journalistic media work
- codes and conventions to construct realism
- constructing preferred meanings, values and point of view



## Representation

- representation of groups
- how changing values shape representations
- selection processes, including sources of information, style, selection, omission and emphasis
- representation of issues

## Audience

### Audiences

- social practices and cultural experiences that influence the interpretation of media work
- how different contexts influence the point of view of media work
- linking dominant values to audiences

### Subcultures

- comparing representations in media work produced for particular audiences

### Media trends

- immediacy and global access

## Production

### Major institutions and independents

- characteristics, benefits and limitations of concentrated media ownership
- characteristics, benefits and limitations of independent media production

### Production contexts

- social and/or political factors that bring about changes in media content
- how media use influences production for a specific audience
- ethical issues and legal consequences
- censorship and privacy

## Skills and processes

- investigating, analysing and evaluating media
- independent application of safety procedures in all production contexts
- applying production skills (independent management of time and technologies, management of team members, negotiating and adapting production processes, identifying problems and applying appropriate solutions)
- refining skills within defined production roles
- implementing production processes based on proposals and plans
- manipulating genres, styles and conventions
- reflecting on the production process
- evaluating own and others' productions (peer and/or professional)

## 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 ATAR Year 11 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

### Assessment table – Year 11

Type of assessment	Weighting
<p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Students plan, conduct and communicate findings based on the analysis of audiences, media contexts and media examples using a range of critical frameworks and primary and secondary sources.</p>	30%
<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 achieve 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 demonstrate the development of confidence and competence in the use of technologies, skills and processes in a range of contexts.</p> <p>Reflect on and evaluate own and peer production work.</p>	50%
<p><b>Written examination</b></p> <p>Typically conducted at the end of each semester and/or unit. In preparation for Unit 3 and Unit 4, the examination should reflect the examination design brief included in the ATAR Year 12 syllabus for this course.</p>	20%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units (or for a single unit where only one is being studied).

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 twice. In the assessment outline where a single unit is being studied, each assessment type must be included at least once. It is highly recommended that at least one of the production tasks be completed using the requirements specified in the practical (production) examination design brief found in the ATAR Year 12 syllabus for this course.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 1 and Unit 2.

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.

## Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units (or for a unit where only one unit is being studied). 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 ATAR Year 11 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 11

<b>A</b>	Analyses how selection processes and a wide range of codes and conventions are used to construct preferred meanings, representations, viewpoints and values in media work. Analyses how various aspects of media work will connect to audiences and their values.
	Produces quality media work, performing a range of skills, fulfilling key responsibilities and manipulating codes and conventions in own media productions to construct narratives, preferred meanings, representations and viewpoints that reinforce or challenge audience values. Solves unpredictable problems that arise during production.
	Makes clear connections between media work and contexts, referring to the influence of contextual factors such as trends, social attitudes and cultural values.
	Analyses how the use of media work is influenced by shared cultural experiences and values and discusses characteristics of particular audiences and/or subcultural groups who make alternative interpretations.
	Analyses a range of controls and constraints that influence media production in personal and professional contexts. Specifically discusses examples such as technologies, production context and audience expectations.
<b>B</b>	Discusses how the selection of information and the use of a range of codes and conventions construct preferred meanings, representations, viewpoints and/or values. Explains aspects of media work that will appeal to audiences.
	Performs production roles, fulfilling responsibilities, selecting and using skills, technologies, codes and conventions to construct narratives, meanings, representations and viewpoints. Adapts plans and processes when particular problems are encountered during production.
	Discusses and provides examples of some contextual factors such as trends, social attitudes and cultural values that have influenced the content or style of media work.
	Describes how the use of media work is influenced by cultural context and values and provides some examples and reasons for shared and alternative interpretations.
	Discusses the effect of specific controls and constraints operating in the media production context, referring to own productions and those of others. Explains examples such as technologies, team skills and audience context.
<b>C</b>	Identifies codes and conventions, briefly explaining how they are used to construct meanings, representations and/or viewpoints and appeal to audiences.
	Fulfils a production role, using skills, technologies, codes and conventions to construct meanings and/or viewpoints in own media productions that are produced for particular audiences and/or purposes. Solves a range of problems during the production process.
	Identifies and briefly explains some contextual factors such as trends and/or social practices that have influenced the content of specific media work.
	Identifies some cultural factors that influence the use of media work. Relates values in media work to audience values and provides general examples of alternative interpretations that might be made by subcultural audiences.
	Identifies controls and constraints operating in media production and provides some examples drawn from own productions and those of others. Describes examples such as technologies and team skills, deadlines and school expectations.

D	Identifies some simple codes and conventions and comments briefly on their use in the construction of meanings, representations or viewpoints.
	With teacher guidance, applies a limited range of skills, techniques and processes and deals with some predictable problems.
	Comments briefly on a limited number of contextual factors that have influenced the form or content of media work.
	Lists a limited range of factors that influence audiences and their media preferences, and provides some simplistic examples of alternative interpretations of media work.
	Gives examples of some controls and constraints operating in media production but provides little information about their effect on production processes.
E	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade.