

Preparing for A Level Media Studies

The best media students are those with an active and passionate interest in contemporary culture and current affairs. You should treat every media text you encounter – whether that be a newspaper, a television documentary, a Netflix drama series, a bus-stop advert, or a TikTok video – with a critical eye. You might have these questions in mind as you meet media texts in your everyday life:

- What is the form of this text? What is the genre? Is it conventional or unconventional?
- What techniques have been used to communicate meaning?
- Who has produced this text and what is its purpose?
- At whom is this text aimed? Who might its audiences be?
- How does this text represent individuals and events? Can I discern an ideological message?
- Why might different people have a different response to this text?

Subject Fundamentals

In addition to considering 'media in the wild', you may wish to introduce yourself to some of the core academic and theoretical approaches that underpin Media Studies as a subject. The following brief reading list serves as a useful introduction, but is by no means exhaustive.

Media Studies: The Basics, McDougall & Pollard (2019)

Semiotics: The Basics, Daniel Chandler (2017)

Media Theory for A Level, Mark Dixon (2019)

Exam Board Information

At A Level we follow the Eduqas specification:

<https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/d3fbs2s3/eduqas-a-level-media-studies-spec-from-2017-e-27-05-2021.pdf>

Online Materials

Long Road College A Level Media Blog: <https://lr-media.blogspot.com/>

Archive of the BBC Radio 4 Media Show: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00dv9hq>

Practical Skills

As part of the Media Studies A Level, you will complete a coursework task involving the design and production of both a magazine spread and music video. You could familiarize yourself with some of the host of free online tools or smartphone apps that are available to help you develop content.

- Canva – an accessible and powerful online graphic design platform
- Adobe Lightroom – downloadable for smartphone, this app offers high-level image manipulation tools
- Adobe Rush – easy-to-use video editing software
- Adobe Photoshop (£) – explore the new AI-driven generative features