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| **Birmingham School of Media – Assignment Brief** | |
| **Programme:** | **BA (Hons) Media and Communication** |
| **Module:** | **MED4119 Researching the Media** |
| **Assessment method and scope:** | **Research report** **1:** comprising a textual analysis, 3000 words in length (within +/- 10%), worth 50% of your module mark. |
| **Learning outcomes:** | This assignment supports your achievement of module learning outcomes 1 and 2, which are:   1. Demonstrate skills in the textual analysis of media texts, within their technological, social and cultural contexts. 2. Demonstrate skills in the identification, reading and application of relevant media studies literature in empirical research. |
| **Submission date:** | **12 noon. 11 December 2017.**  Upload your assignment to the designated Research Report 1 assignment submission point on the MED4119 Moodle, using the provided feedback form and coversheet.  *Work submitted late is subject to penalties, which are set out in the*[*academic regulations*](https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/academic-services/information-for-students/academic-regulations-and-policies)*.* *If you think you might struggle to meet your assessment deadline you should read the University’s procedure for*[*extenuating circumstances*](https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/Student-Affairs/Appeals-and-Resolutions/Extenuating-Circumstances-Procedure)*or speak to your Module Leader or Student Success Adviser.* |
| **Assessment outline:** | This assignment requires you to execute a research project that analyses a specific media text, using appropriate analytical techniques and theoretical perspectives introduced in module readings and class discussions. We expect you to engage critically with relevant academic debates, and to evaluate your own study’s contribution to those debates.  The report should demonstrate your skills in research and the presentation of findings in a scholarly format, using an academic writing style and referencing in the Harvard Style (including a bibliography).  To establish the focus for your investigation, you should choose a case study media text and develop a clear research question that can be answered through the analysis of this text. You will need to carry out both primary research (that is your textual analysis) and secondary research (reading relevant academic books and journal articles) to complete the assignment. Carry out your analysis and interpret your findings using relevant theoretical perspectives from your secondary research, and write up the discussion of your findings. Make sure that you develop a persuasive argument in response to your research question. |
| **Requirements:** | You need to present your work in a scholarly format, using an academic writing style and Harvard Style referencing (including a bibliography). Use double line space and add page numbers. Proof read your work very carefully. Organise your report using this structure:   1. Introduction 2. Discussion of findings 3. Conclusion 4. Bibliography 5. Appendices if appropriate. This might be extracts from your media text, for example. All appendix items should be clearly referenced in the main body of the report.   Please see the additional assignment guide for further advice about how to write these sections. |
| **Feedback:** | You will receive written feedback within 20 working days of the assignment submission deadline (16January 2018). It will include feed forward advice focusing on how you can improve your performance in future assignments. |
| **Support:** | You will gradually build up draft work for this assignment through your weekly directed study tasks. You will bring each completed task to class, where you will collaborate with fellow students to peer review the work (this means that you will evaluate each other’s work and identify ways to improve it). In week 5 you will learn how to edit these tasks together into a coherent research report, and you will submit this draft to your tutor for formative feedback. Over the last half of the term, you will continue to expand and improve your assignment through weekly directed study tasks and peer review. You will then once again edit everything together into a coherent research report and submit it for summative assessment before the deadline. |
| **Advice:** | **What you need to do for the assignment:**   1. **Choose a media text**. This might be a social media feed, a piece of music, an image, a radio show, a video game, a news article, etc. (You will do this in week 1.) 2. **Develop a clear research question** that can be answered through the analysis of this text. 3. **Carry out primary research** by analysing your chosen media text in response to your research question. Use appropriate textual analysis techniques that we have introduced on this module. 4. **Carry out secondary analysis** by identifying and reading relevant academic books and journal articles. You can use set readings but you should also conduct some independent secondary research using the library resources. 5. **Interpret the findings** from your primary research using relevant theoretical perspectives from your secondary research. 6. **Write up the discussion of your findings**, using the research report format (see below for further information about that format). This discussion needs to:    1. Develop a persuasive argument in response to your research question.    2. Engage critically with relevant academic debates.    3. Evaluate your own study’s contribution to those academic debates. |
| **Plagiarism:** | You are reminded of the [University regulations](https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/Academic-Services/Information-for-Students/Assessment/Avoiding-Allegations-of-Cheating) on cheating. Except where the assessment is group-based, the final piece of work which is submitted must be your own work. Close similarity between submissions is likely to lead to an investigation for cheating. |
| **Resubmissions:** | The resubmission deadline for failed work is 12 noon, 13 July 2018. |

**Marking Criteria: Research Report 1**

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|  | **0 – 39%**  **Fail** | **40 – 49%**  **Third** | **50 – 59%**  **2:2** | **60 – 69%**  **2:1** | **70 – 79%**  **First** | **80 – 100%**  **First** |
| Criterion 1  Mark:  25% | Definition and use of key concepts as tools for analysing the forms and functions of your chosen media text. (Learning outcome 1) | | | | | |
| Not up to the minimum standard expected. Very limited or flawed definition and application of key concepts. Major omissions in selection or definition. | Basic definition and application of key concepts, but not wholly successful. Omits some key concepts or important aspects of those concepts. | Demonstrates a clear grasp of the majority of key concepts by providing sound definitions and applying the concepts competently. Weaknesses in selection, definition or application do not undermine the whole assignment. | Demonstrates a command of key undergraduate skills and knowledge. Very well developed definition of key concepts. Solid application of key concepts. | Demonstrates a high level of undergraduate skill and insight. Excellent definition of key concepts. Shows originality in application of concepts. Virtually no errors or omissions. | Performance exceeding what would be expected of an undergraduate student. Highly sophisticated definition and application of key concepts. |
| Criterion 2  Mark:  25% | Examination of your chosen media text within its technological, social and cultural contexts. (Learning outcome 1) | | | | | |
| An unreflective and uncritical response to the brief. Weak examination of text and lack of supporting evidence. Little consideration of contexts. | A fair attempt to meet the demands of the assignment. Limited examination of text, and some provision of supporting evidence. Basic consideration of contexts. | A sound performance. Competent examination of text and appropriate provision of supporting evidence. Sound consideration of contexts. | A good or very good performance. Solid examination of text supported by evidence. Well developed consideration of contexts. Employs analysis and reflection, rather than description. | A comprehensive performance. Imaginative examination and substantial consideration of contexts. Shows originality of synthesis and insight. | A highly sophisticated understanding of the parameters of the brief. Exceptional examination of text with comprehensive supporting evidence. Highly sophisticated consideration of contexts. |
| Criterion 3  Mark:  25% | Use of relevant academic secondary sources to interpret findings from primary research. (Learning outcome 2) | | | | | |
| Very limited or flawed use of academic secondary sources. Major omissions of sources. Offers description rather than interpretation. | Satisfactory use of academic secondary sources, but with some important weaknesses. More emphasis on interpretation required. | A fair attempt to meet the demands of the assignment. Appropriate use of academic secondary sources, sound interpretation of findings. Evidence of some basic independent learning. | Very good use of academic secondary sources, very well developed interpretation of findings. Shows evidence of relevant additional work and independent learning. | Excellent use of academic secondary sources, insightful interpretation of findings. Evidence of substantial additional work and independent learning. | Outstanding use of academic secondary sources, exceptional interpretation of findings. A response to the brief to be expected of a post-graduate student. |
| Criterion 4  Mark:  25% | Clarity and coherence of expression, organisation, structuring, design and layout of the report. Use of academic conventions. Inclusion of appropriate appendices. (Learning outcome 2) | | | | | |
| Poor clarity and incoherent structure. Very limited or flawed use of academic conventions. May be a short or incomplete piece of work, for example with appendices missing. | Barely reaches the minimum standard required for presentation. Weak structure. Some use of academic conventions, including appendices. | Clearly written and structured report. Appropriate design and layout. Competent use of academic conventions. Appropriate appendices included. | Articulate and coherent expression, well structured, very good use of academic conventions. All appropriate appendices included. | Cogent expression and excellent organisation and structure. Fully meets the requirements of the brief in terms of academic conventions and the inclusion of appendices. | Professionally written and structured, exceeds the requirements of the brief in terms of academic conventions. All appendices included. |