# VCE Media 2018–2023

# Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are ‘convergent’ and ‘hybridised’ media forms?

Both convergent and hybridised media forms are products of social and digital media. Convergence media is the combining and merging of media forms and technologies to produce media experiences combining voice and video. Hybridised media is the convergence of media technologies such as digital photography, video and text combined to produce a hybridised media form such as ‘blog’ or an online ‘zine’.

2. What are media codes and conventions?

Media codes and conventions are described in the Cross-study specifications, and build on knowledge covered in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Media Arts curriculum. Media codes and conventions are embedded in all areas of study in VCE Media Units 1–4. The codes and conventions construct the form and the meaning in media products. Different media codes are relevant to different media forms. Media codes include the use of the camera, acting, setting, mise en scene, editing, lighting, sound, special effects, typography, colour, visual composition and graphics. Media conventions include story principles, form and structure, character and story arcs, cause and effect, point of view, the structuring of time, elements of a page layout, paper stock, titles and credits, hyperlinking, mounting and framing of images.

3. What is the difference between ‘story’ and ‘narrative’?

Story refers to all the elements that contribute to a narrative. Therefore the media codes and conventions are an integral component of a story. The story is the organisation of images, sounds and/or words to form a narrative. The narrative is the meaning created by the story and the way in which the audience is engaged by, reads and consumes the story. The Cross-study specifications provide further detail.

4. What is the Media production process?

The Media production process is integral to Units 1–4 in VCE Media. The stages of the process scaffold throughout Units 1 and 2. The stages in the process are: Development, Pre-production, Production, Post-Production and Distribution. Each stage has discrete activities and the process provides a structure for students to understand the creation of a media product. Critical, creative and reflective thinking strategies are included in the creation, development and design of the Media product. Students should know the stages of the process and discuss their theoretical application in Media production as well as demonstrate their practical skills and knowledge in each stage. Further detail is provided in the Cross-study specifications.

5. What is the difference between Unit 1, Area of Study 3: Australian stories and Unit 2, Area of Study 1: Narrative, style and genre?

Unit 1, Area Study 3 and Unit 2, Area of Study 1 focus on different aspects of media products. Australian stories focuses on production of media products in two or more forms and the concept of audience in an Australian context. ‘Narrative, style and genre’ introduces factors that impact on media professional’s works in the construction of narratives. Students study the personal styles of a range of media creators and producers. Unit 2 builds on the knowledge and skills developed in Unit 1.

6. Can you explain what media forms should be studied in Unit 1 and Unit 2?

Units 1 and 2 have been designed to introduce students to the variety of media forms and products in contemporary society. In Unit 1, Area of Study 1, 2 and 3 and Unit 2 Area of Study 1 students must study a range of media forms, that is at least two. Unit 2, Area of Study 2 allows the students to focus on the construction of a narrative in a selected media form. Unit 2, Area of Study 3 focuses on the relationship between the media and the audience over a range of media forms.

7. Why are there only two School-assessed Coursework tasks in Units 3 and 4?

Unit 3, Area of Study 1: Narrative and Unit 4, Area of Study 2: Agency and control in and of the media, are designed to allow students to investigate and examine the theoretical aspects of Media in depth. The focus of Units 3 and 4 is on the School-assessed Task as a research project and practical application of knowledge and skills.

8. In Unit 3, Area of Study 1, is there a requirement for one of the selected media products to have been released in the five years prior to the current year of study?

The media product selected for study in Unit 3, Area of Study 1 must have been released in the five years prior to the student undertaking the study in Unit 3. This is to enable students to study current media forms and investigate the development of narrative and audiences over time.

The focus of the study is on the audience engagement, consumption and reading of the narrative in media products. Audiences dependent on their background can read narratives differently. The engagement, consumption and reading can change over time from a period of months to years after the release of the media product.

9. What are the ‘characteristics and construction’ of media narratives and how do these differ from the function of media codes and conventions?

The characteristics and construction of a media narrative is dependent on the media form and the characteristics of consumption. For example the technological difference in production may mean that characteristics of a film narrative is different to video. The function of different print forms such as a fashion magazine versus a newspaper also influence the construction of a narrative. In photographic forms, a documentary series has a different narrative construction to that of a series of marketing photographs.

Media codes and conventions work together to engage an audience, structure the narrative and convey meaning. This is what is meant by the relationship of the audience and the media narrative.

10. What are the requirements for the research in Unit 3, Area of   
Study 2?

There is advice on the approach to Unit 3, Area of Study 3 in the VCE Media Advice for teachers. The research forms the initial stage of the School-assessed Task and informs the Production design stage of the Media production process. Students research aspects of a media form to develop ideas and skills that they plan to use in their production design and the creation of their product. They will analyse the codes and conventions, genre and style in a range of media products and investigate how audiences read and are engaged by the structural qualities of media products. In their research they will document and record their findings and evaluate them to develop ideas and skills for their own media product.

11. What are the requirements for the Production design in Unit 3, Outcome 3?

The Production design in Unit 3, Outcome 3 is the working document for the production in Unit 4, Area of Study 1. Students create the rationale, outline the vision and its relationship with a specified audience, the style and the opportunities and constraints of the Media production. Students produce an intention, audience and narrative statements in the Production design and document the genre and style of their production. The Production design contains technical documentation in written and visual forms appropriate to the media form in which the student is working that provides a detailed overview of what the finished product will be.

12. What are the requirements for the reflection and evaluation that is undertaken in Unit 4, Area of Study 1?

Reflection and evaluation are integral to the production and post-production stages of the Media production process. Students gather evidence, resolve ideas, refine their product and apply their understanding of the specified audience. Students complete reflective notes throughout the production and post-production stages of the Media production process. Feedback should be gained from multiples sources in forms such as surveys, test screenings or exhibitions, focus groups and interviews. Feedback should be documented in the Media production documentation. Students take notes on the feedback provided and identify ways of refining and resolving their work including changes to the production after feedback.

13. Are students allowed to outsource the printing of print and photography works in post-production?

Yes. Students are allowed to outsource the printing of their photography and print productions in the post-production stage of the Media production process. However, they must document all production elements in post-production including paper stocks, colour management and final presentation of images in the media production documentation. These notes form part of the documentation of the refinement and resolution of the production. Students may make further refinements of their productions after feedback from audience groups in post-production.