Media and Information Literacy Policies in the UK

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Dimension:	Abstract

This is a position paper on the capacity for media and information education in the UK in 2014 to facilitate media, digital and information literacy as defined by the European Commission (EC) and on the relationship between UK media/information education, regulation and law.

Because the UK has a long tradition of media education within the formal curriculum (schools and colleges), the premise of this report is that the most tangible evidence of media literacy education is to be found in the teaching of Media Studies at GCSE and A-level and in higher education. Therefore the most substantive section of the report is analysis of the extent to which achievement in Media Studies can be mapped against the EC objectives for media literacy.

For this purpose, media education in the mainstream curriculum is measured for its capacity to develop media literacy against a pragmatic working model derived from publications from the EC, COST/ANR, UNESCO and the UK regulator, Ofcom. Information education is currently a distinct category from media education in the UK, with a mandate for entitlement (in the case of e-safety) but without formal qualifications or assessment.

The report demonstrates that the composite model of media literacy is too broad in scope and ambition for mainstream education to 'deliver'. The model derived for this analysis, from EC, COST and Ofcom documents and reports, covers public sphere engagement and empowerment outcomes, a broad range of stakeholders, an equally broad range of media/information content/contexts and a pedagogic intention to combine cultural, critical and creative learning.

This analysis of formal media education concludes that the performance criteria and assessment objectives of teaching specifications and awarding body marking materials, combined with the achievement rates in the A and A* grade boundaries, indicate that only a small percentage of people studying media in the curriculum can be said to acquire all the cultural, critical and creative learning. Furthermore, specifications, combined with teacher choices, cover a relatively narrow range of the media/information contexts included in the COST definition. Finally, topic choice means that public sphere engagement and citizen empowerment is difficult to relate to achievement in Media Studies. Therefore the great success of the UK in providing media education in the mainstream curriculum (currently threatened by curriculum reforms for 2016) is balanced by the lack of a coherent match between curriculum content, assessment modes and media literacy policy objectives.

There is therefore a fundamental mismatch between the objectives of media literacy as articulated in policy and the capacity of education as the agent for its development in society. Related to this, media literacy/education is mistakenly burdened with responsibility for fixing access and engagement barriers that are media producer/design/regulation issues. The data and analysis in this report supports that view.

The UK is currently very well placed to provide media literacy through media education, given the status of Media Studies as an established curriculum subject. However, to coherently match Media Studies to the policy objectives for media literacy expressed in EC, COST and Ofcom statements, funding (for teacher training), and government support and endorsement for Media Studies is essential. Given the uncertainty over the continuation of Media Studies in the formal curriculum in secondary and further education, this is unlikely to be supported within the UK.

This report on the state of UK Media Education in 2014 is one of 28 reports mapping the state of Media Education in each of the EC member states. All reports can be found at www.translit.fr

Dimension:	**(Short) Historical background**

This is a position paper on the capacity for media and information education in the UK in 2014 to facilitate media, digital and information literacy as defined by the European Commission (EC) and on the relationship between UK media/information education, regulation and law.

Educational provision relevant to this report exists in four categories in the UK:

- Mainstream (formal) education – the study of media in the secondary, further and higher education curriculum, with specifications, qualifications and measurable assessment outcomes – Media Studies (and vocational equivalents), Film Studies and Media/non-literary textual analysis in English.

- Broader, but more variable and less measurable examples of media literacy across the curriculum and extra-curricular activity facilitated by educational institutions – for example, within literacy education in the primary curriculum, Citizenship, History, Art, and Sociology.

- E-safety policy in the school system.

- Computer and information literacy/education outside of the formal educational system.

This report covers the range of these areas, but does not separate the categories as they are often combined.

Alongside these four domains, there is clear evidence of ever-increasing 'user-generated' and 'peer-networked' learning, in particular in the case of 'how to' exemplification online. This is largely related to digital competence in using digital tools, as opposed to critical analysis of media/digital practices. This report accounts mostly for *formal provision by accredited educators* as opposed to the myriad of more fluid and 'horizontal' arrangements of media, learning and information in 2014.

Because the UK has a long tradition of media education within the formal curriculum (schools and colleges), the premise of this report is that the most tangible evidence of media literacy education is to be found in the teaching of Media Studies at GCSE and A-level and in higher education. Therefore the most substantive section of the report is analysis of the extent to which achievement in Media Studies can be mapped against the EC objectives for media literacy.

For this purpose, media education in the mainstream curriculum is measured for its capacity to develop media literacy against a pragmatic working model derived from publications from the EC, COST/ANR, UNESCO and the UK regulator, Ofcom.

Information education is currently a distinct category from media education in the UK, with a mandate for entitlement (in the case of e-safety) but without formal qualifications or assessment.

At the risk of rehearsing long-standing debates, before such an audit can be presented, the confused relationship between media education, literacy as an established educational field, media/digital literacies, computing, e-safety and Media Studies as a formal curriculum subject requires some initial mapping as media education in the UK in 2014 is framed, and to a significant extent constrained by these configurations of policy, discourse and curriculum.

A complex situation has developed whereby the status of Media Studies as a formal, schooled subject with recognized qualifications and related, albeit 'patchy' funding, provision of teacher training and professional development, networking associations and resource providers, progression routes to higher education and, for a period under the previous government, a policy discourse supporting media education is clearly favourable in the UK, compared to other countries in Europe. But at the same time the comparative status of Media Studies in popular discourse around education and academic/cultural value, combined with the scarcity of teacher training and funding for equipment in schools, as well as the lack of Media graduates teaching the subject, has led to an apparent failure of the subject to consistently 'deliver' the skills and attributes for media-literate citizens to match the theoretical and pedagogical ambitions of the EC.

This is clearly a symptom of the significant socio-cultural stratification and elitism that still pervades in UK education. The effect of this, this report concludes, is that *the UK is very well placed to 'deliver' media literacy on a broad scale, through Media Studies as an established curriculum subject in schools and colleges, but that this potential is continually undermined by a refusal by power-holding groups to legitimize Media Studies as an academic pursuit or as a civic entitlement.* The relatively high levels of public interest in media practices and consumer use of technology (as demonstrated by the interest in the Leveson Inquiry in public discourse, and the continuing debates in the popular domain around children's use of media and technology), the comparatively high levels of 'early adoption' of technology and devices, and the existence of Media Studies in mainstream education should, this report argues, place the UK in an ideal position to achieve high levels of media literacy. However, the continuing refusal of governments to sanction and fund teacher training in media education or to grant Media Studies credibility as either an academic discipline or a vocational route into employment prevents this.

The barriers present by power-holding groups are both discursive (ideological) and operational (civic, repressive). A long-standing 'discourse of derision', mobilized by politicians, elite universities, journalists and commentators, demonizes Media Studies as a 'Mickey Mouse subject' lacking either credibility within an academic modality (for its own epistemological sake) or a vocational modality (training people with skills needed for economic growth). At the same time, the failure of media institutions to value Media Studies by employing its graduates, the exclusion of the subject from entrance criteria for the leading universities, the tendency for schools to offer the subject for 'less academic' and/or challenging students, and the epistemological distinction maintained in education between 'high' and 'popular' culture provide physical 'apparatus' for the prevention of media literacy on a broad scale. Whether these operations are merely cultural prejudice – the failure of Cultural Studies to make its case – or a more overtly political and structurally repressive prevention of citizens to critique media power, or both, is a debate beyond the remit or scope of this report,

but it is an important – and arguably unique – aspect of the UK context for media education.

A key recommendation from this report is that *funding should be provided for more detailed research into this relationship between Media Studies and media/digital/information literacy* in order to provide robust evidence of the need for training and legitimation for the subject as the preferable 'conduit' for digital citizenship in the 21st century, and to provide a compelling case for a formal policy mandate for Media Studies as the agent for this.

In the main, this report describes and analyses media education policy and practice across the UK as a whole. Where and when other home nations provide exemplary contrast to England, these will be described.
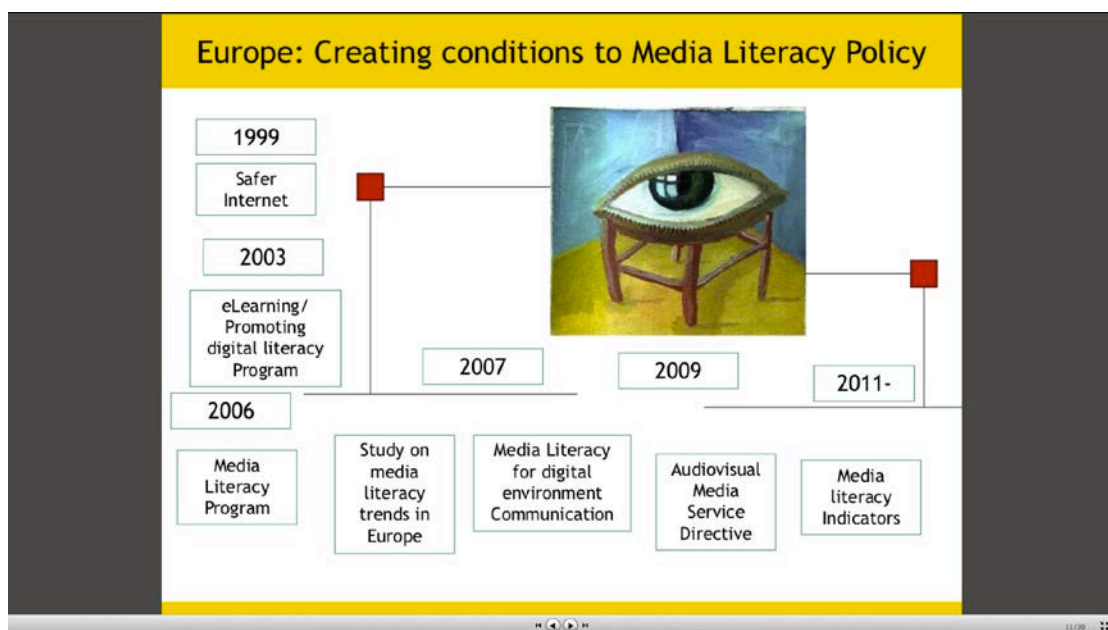
Figure 1: The EDEMUS Project

The EDEMUS Project (see Figure 1 above, from Tornero, 2012) divides media literacy levels into individual competences and environmental factors, as follows:

Individual competences: the capacity to interpret critically the flow, substance, value and consequences of media in all its many forms, so as to enable citizens to use the media and to communicate effectively through it.

Environmental factors: which affect the development of media literacy (including media education, media literacy policies and the roles of media and civil society organizations).

The focus of this report on environmental factors and some provisional working metrics will be applied to Media Studies in the UK as *an environmental factor influencing individual competences.*

The availability of Media Studies as a formal curriculum subject in the UK, with teaching specifications and academic qualifications at GCSE, AS and A2 levels and National Certificate and Diploma, along with formally recognized progression pathways to higher education courses, is distinct from other European countries. At the same time, the lack of any official designation and legal definition and/or policy for media education or media literacy means that the degree to which the formal qualifications are successful in 'delivering' the published EU objectives for students – 'use the media effectively'; 'having a critical approach to media as regards both quality and accuracy'; and 'using media creatively' (EC, 2009: 833) – is less clear.

In short, the UK is comparatively successful, then, in providing media education at a quantitative level, although national policy frameworks for media and information education/literacy are not currently in place.

This report focuses mainly on the formal study of media – in the form of Media Studies and vocational equivalents – at Key Stage 4 and in further education within the 14–19 curriculum, on the media element of the English curriculum at Key Stage 4, and on media elements of literacy and ICT in the primary curriculum. In addition, the current development of a new computing curriculum, to include coding, and imminent reforms to the broader 14–19 curriculum is discussed in order to describe their likely impacts on media and information education in the UK in the coming years.

In *Screen education: From Film Appreciation to Media Studies*, Bolas (2009) offers a forensic history of the struggle whereby 'film and media education began to get general acceptance in education' (2009: 21).

It is important to situate current developments in this ongoing 'struggle' within the history of literacy education in the UK.

> The need to set one literacy apart from another can only be explained by a need to use the concepts for other reasons, that is, to strengthen the professional status of its constituencies, or to take issue with the approaches used by proponents. (Tyner, 1999: 104)

Media literacy in the UK has never been an accepted and cohesively defined idea. The UK media regulator Ofcom (2004) offered a 'pragmatic' definition of media literacy as consisting of three competences – accessing, communicating and creating.

Cary Bazalgette is only one of a number of media educators who has found the term problematic:

> The very term "media literacy" is inherited from an outworn and discredited 20th century tactic; that of adding the term "literacy: to topics and issues in an attempt to promote them as new and essential aspects of learning. (Bazalgette, cited in Murphy, 2010: 24)

If we consider that, a year after offering this critique at the European Congress of Media Education Practitioners, Bazalgette co-convened, in her role as chair of the Media Education Association (MEA), an international Media Literacy Conference in London, the complexity of the issue is apparent – media education practitioners use

the term for pragmatic and political leverage whilst arguing for alternative semantics with one another.

Bazalgette's preference is simply to return to a reframed version of literacy as opposed to a set of variants (media literacy, new literacy, digital literacy, game literacy), but David Buckingham (2010), another leading protagonist in media education and Bazalgette's co-chair at the aforementioned conference, is highly sceptical of 'multimodal literacy' work. Buckingham has recently observed the declining prominence of media literacy in policy rhetoric and implementation, from the peak in attention shortly after the inception of Ofcom (a regulator charged with a neo-liberal agenda for equipping citizens with the necessary competences for 'responsible' participation in digital media) to the current reformulation of this as 'digital literacy', a more industry-friendly version, further away from the conceptual and critical practices of media education:

> There is now an urgent need to sharpen our arguments, and to focus our energies. There is a risk of media literacy being dispersed in a haze of digital technological rhetoric. There is a danger of it becoming far too vague and generalized and poorly defined – a matter of good intentions and warm feelings but very little actually getting done. (Buckingham, 2010: 10)

Today's international landscape for media literacy/education is characterized by four overlapping discursive models, each of which is integrated in various ways into formal institutionalized practice.

Social models locate elements of media literacy within 'new literacies' and 'multiliteracies', sharing the view that that 'the competencies that are involved in making sense of the media are socially distributed, and that different social groups have different orientations towards the media, and will use them in different ways (Buckingham, 2003: 39).

Competence models may be more or less 'protectionist' in their objectives but are defined by their attempts to benchmark media literacy against ages and contexts. These are generally dependent on normative judgments and definitions of a media literate person, group or whole society (Livingstone et al, 2012: 5).

Citizenship models operate within a broadly Habermasian (1993) model of public sphere communication and are often framed as a response to technology and in terms of engagement in participatory society – a 'new civics'. Another dominant strand of the citizenship model is the 'employability' discourse, which is more politically neutral – indeed, it entirely reproduces the neo-liberal hegemony – but nevertheless shares the assertion that media literacy competence is required for contemporary participation in the modern world.

Creativity models are perhaps the most contested variant of the media literacy discourse and also the least evident in practice. The role of Web 2.0 in facilitating creativity has been the subject of an overly polarized academic debate over the need or not for a Media Studies 2.0 (see Berger and McDougall, 2012).

There is great international variance in how these axes of affordance and protection –

in the EC wording these are 'key pre-requisites for an active and full citizenship and prevent and diminish risks of exclusion from community life' (Ding, 2011: 5) – are drawn, and how media literacy policy is mapped across them. This report maps media education in the UK against these overlapping but at times contradictory objectives. In addition, a framework for evaluating the provision of media education *for media literacy* is developed and applied from a composite of the more convincing existing models available in the literature from EU/EC and national policy sources.

Along with the four dominant discourses, four key sources combined for the purpose of developing a working model for practice are:

1. Livingstone's (2011) statement accounting for the objectives of *media literacy for the public sphere* as articulated in the plethora of EU/EC literature, conference proceedings and task force developments:

> Theoretical and pedagogic ambitions for media literacy among audiences are often huge, with the promotion of media literacy heralding the promise of empowerment, critical literacy, democratic engagement and participatory culture in a thoroughly mediated world. (Livingstone, 2011: 4)

2. McGonagle's use of a *Mediawijsheidkaart* (see Figure 2, produced by Mediawijzer.net under a Creative Commons licence) to represent the 'multiplicity and interconnectedness of *themes, target groups and stakeholders* (emphasis added) for media literacy' (McGonagle, 2013: 11).
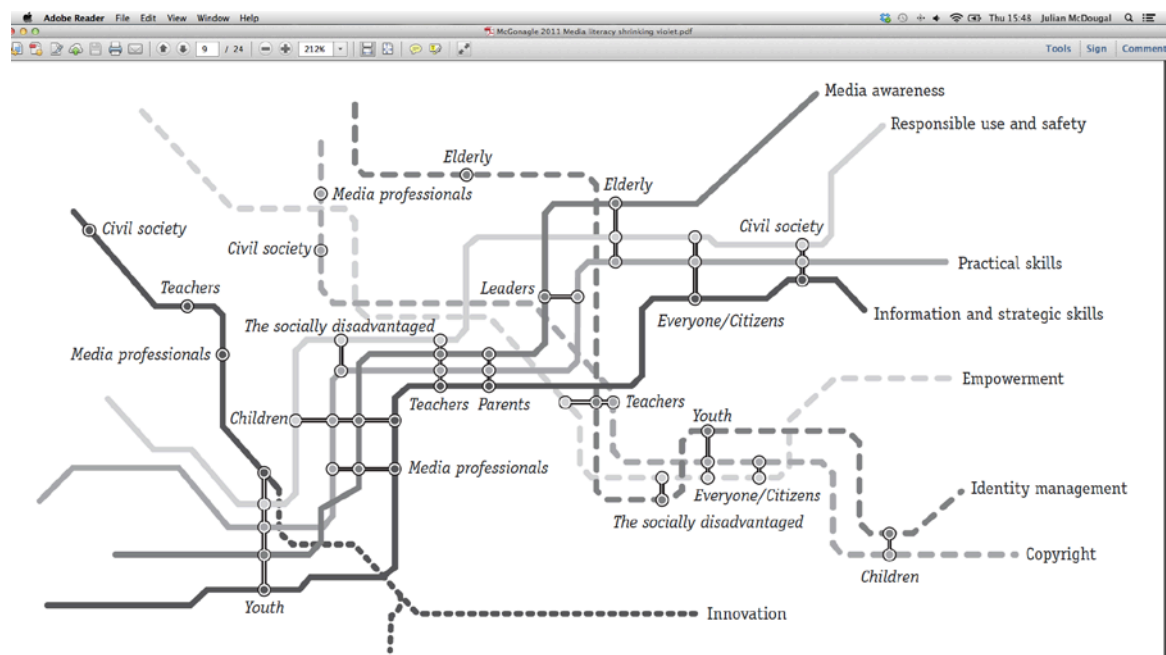

Figure 2: *Mediawijsheidkaart*

3. The *scope of coverage* defined by the ANR/Translit/COST template for analysis, defining media education broadly as including broadcast and broadband media and a range of bundled literacies, with literacy defined as 'encompassing info-competence

and other text and image based skills to interpret media messages and communication services.'

4. The UK regulator Ofcom, during the previous Labour government's administration, developed a media literacy *policy agenda* that was discontinued by the current coalition. A discussion of Ofcom's work, informed by the recent analysis provided by Wallis and Buckingham (2013), follows in a later section. This was the only published policy for in the UK that has sought to set out an entitlement for media literacy, defined as *the ability to access*, *understand and create communications in a variety of contexts* (Ofcom, 2008).

Cary Bazalgette (2010), along with Sonia Livingstone and David Buckingham, contributed to the development and proposed implementation of this policy, and proposed a model of three key elements of media literacy – configured along a distinction between time-based and space-based texts, as opposed to print/image or still/moving – to represent more clearly the scope of Ofcom's desired intervention (see Figure 3).
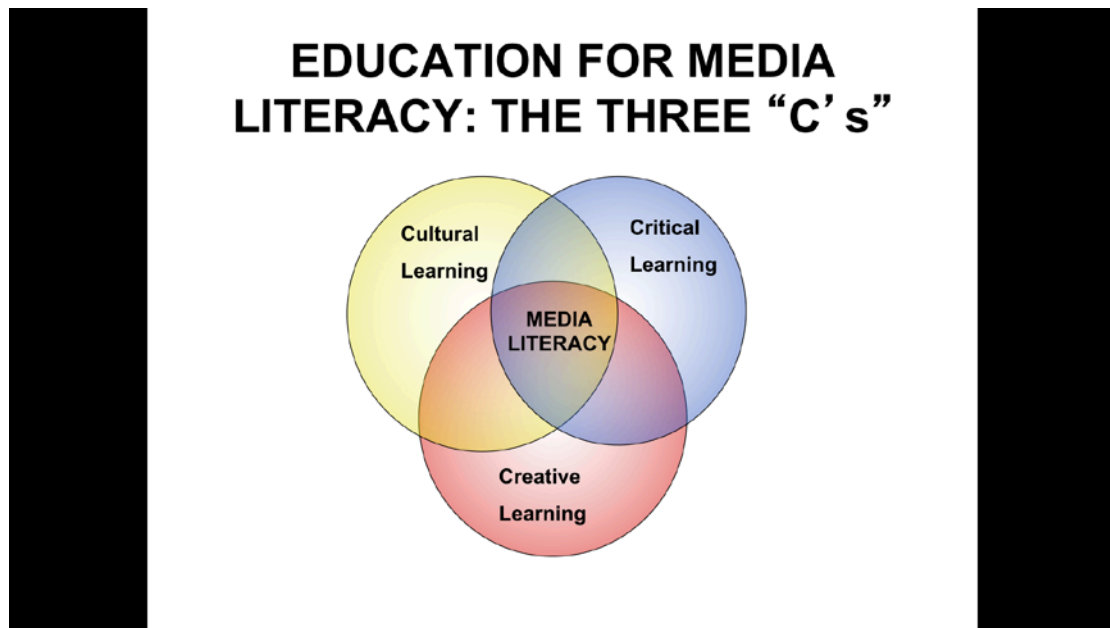
Figure 3: The 3 C's (Bazalgette, 2010 derived from Ofcom, 2008)

These four sources combined provide a working model of media literacy/education that can be used to audit current policy and practice. Taken together, they cover ambitions for *public sphere engagement and empowerment outcomes, a broad range of stakeholders, an equally broad range of media/information content/contexts and a pedagogic intention to combine cultural, critical and creative learning*. This report maps current media education practice in the UK against this working composite model and against the four overlapping discourses outlined above in order to also account for the hierarchy of values at work in the practice. In so doing the report bears witness to the complexity of media literacy as a range of social practices and attempts

to resist reducing media and information education to an instrumental set of 'binaried' competences.

Dimension:	Legal policy framework

The history of media education in relation to policy in the UK can be divided into three phases:

- Pre-Ofcom and EU intervention: the establishment of Media Studies, Film Studies and other related areas in the curriculum.

- 1997–2011 New Labour government and Ofcom media literacy intervention (in the EU context) with some correspondence to Media Studies.

- Post-Ofcom Coalition government, discontinuation of media literacy strategies but continuation of the EU context.

Digital convergence has mobilized broader discussions and policies around new forms of literacy and e-safety, which have continued in the Coalition's term of office, but the mapping of these to Media Studies was only attempted in any strategic sense during the Ofcom phase.

The only time media literacy featured in law was after the Communications Act (2003) and the formation of Ofcom. However, education was ignored in this legislation, which was the responsibility of a regulator and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and not the Department of Education (DfE).

Ofcom

The 2003 Communications Act gave a new regulator, Ofcom, a duty to promote media literacy. This gave media education credibility, but it has been argued that the promotion of media literacy by a regulator, monitored by the DCMS, as opposed to the DfE, made impacting on mainstream curriculum difficult to achieve. According to Wallis and Buckingham (2013), in the development of the White Paper proposals to the final legislation in the Act, a number of shifts undermined the potential of the act to fund and monitor media education:

> What had initially been proposed as a cross-departmental "national campaign" for media education had significantly reduced in scope to become a limited set of additional duties assigned to a single regulatory body with no statutory responsibility for education at all. (Wallis and Buckingham, 2013: 12)

Following the establishment of Ofcom and the development of its media literacy campaign, Ofcom funded, in association with the MEA and the Institute of Education, an international Media Literacy Conference (2010). Keynotes at this event illustrate the broad reach of and, at the same time, confusions and tensions surrounding this policy intervention. Mapping the keynote addresses to the dominant media literacy discourses above, the following range is evident:

- Social model – David Buckingham: *Education or regulation: how children and young people relate to media literacy in the 21st century*

- Creativity model – Henry Jenkins: *Remixing the canon: The 'messy business' of teaching reading in a participatory culture*

- Competence model – Becky Parry and Andrew Burn: *Media literacy in the classroom: how and what are students learning?*

- Protectionist model – Linda Papadopolous: *Education or regulation: how children and young people relate to media literacy in the 21st century* (response to David Buckingham)

- Citizenship model – Jonathon Douglas, Andy Williamson and Liesbet van Zoonen: *iPolitics: Political literacy in the new media age.*

In summary, because Ofcom never had direct responsibility for education, this intervention in media literacy education ultimately could not match the intentions of the EU for policy to be funded directly by government that would impact on education. Again, Wallis and Buckingham comment on the decoupling of educational provision and broader civic initiatives:

> From the broader educational and social-democratic aspirations that appeared to promise much at the outset, media literacy was steadily reduced to a limited set of concerns to do with protection from harm and with access to technology: it became a matter of what Robin Blake, the former Head of Media Literacy at Ofcom, described as "protecting kids from paedophiles and getting grannies online". (Wallis and Buckingham, 2013: 13)

Dimension:	Capacity-building: teacher training

Curriculum: Scope and coverage

Both GCSE and A-level Media are firmly established in the UK school/college curriculum. Figure 4 shows the numbers of students taking these qualifications with the four English/Welsh awarding bodies:

Year	GCSE students	A-level students
2000	24,754	13,507
2005	45,683	23,427
2011	67,433	26,630

Figure 4: GCSE Media and Film Studies entries 2000, 2005 and 2011 (www.bstubbs.co.uk/natfig.htm)

However, neither GCSE nor A-level study is mandatory, and thus these remain options taken by small percentages of students and are often provided as 'less academic' alternatives.

To demonstrate this in real terms of scale, taking GCSE as the most significant indicator of a general level of education in a subject area, given its context in compulsory education, around 600,000 students completed their GCSEs in 2013, of whom *59,119 took Media Studies (less than 10%;* DfE statistics).

Media education has been included in the formal, mainstream school curriculum in secondary (11–16) and further (16–19) education in the UK since the 1980s. Prior to this, it was available for 14- to 16-year-olds in the form of TV and Film Studies and in discrete, single module form. Usually taught by teachers with a degree in English, print, film and television have always dominated, with a theoretical orthodoxy privileging a conceptual framework consisting of genre, representation and narrative, with audience marginalized. Masterman's (1985) *Teaching the media* remains a seminal text for media teachers.

The genealogy of media education and/for media literacy in the UK is traced in various historical accounts (see Buckingham, 2003; Livingstone, 2009; McDougall and Potamitis, 2010; Scarratt and Davison, 2012). According to this emerging shared history, the 1980s saw Media Studies established in schools, with textual analysis and critical 'demystification' of the powerful media privileged over production work. In the 1990s, a development in vocational forms of media education (GNVQ, AVCE) provided an option for 14- to 19-year-old students to choose a more production-focused form of the subject (although this increased some unhelpful opposition between 'academic' and 'vocational' learning).

In the first decade of the 21st century, the internet's impact on 'DIY' creativity and both consumption and production of media led to all forms of the subject opening up the curriculum to the study of new forms (such as videogames), and giving more prominence to production work, although the choices of teachers in response to new options remained conservative in the main, with film, TV and news remaining the most popular cites of study. At the same time, the New Labour government's endorsement of media literacy education, and Ofcom's policy remit for media literacy, appeared to herald a new dawn, with Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell asserting in 2004 that 'in the modern world media literacy will become as important a skill as maths or science. Decoding our media will be as important to our lives as citizens as understanding great literature is to our cultural lives' (UK Film Council Press Release, January 2004).

In recent years, the impact of Web 2.0 has heralded a debate within the community of practice about the ability of these concepts to adapt to new digital, online and social media.

Early years and primary education in England

There is an abundance of published material on media literacy in the early years and primary sectors – see Bazalgette (2010), the research of John Potter (2012) and the report on the Institute of Education's longitudinal study into progression, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (2011).

However, despite clear evidence of good practice, the opportunity for a child up to the age of 11 to experience media education in school is determined by the interests of teachers in the political context of parent input to schools, another stratified set of variables. In the main, there is far more evidence of small-scale, extra-curricular projects in the pre-11 sector than any measurable provision within the literacy element of the curriculum. At the same time, all children are entitled to ICT and e-safety education, but the 'mapping' of this to media and information literacy objectives is minimal.

Research by Avery, McDougall and Pritchard (2011) into primary teachers' awareness of media literacy, as defined by Ofcom and in the context of the Byron Report, revealed minimal evidence:

> Only one of the five participants knew about media literacy. Teacher (B) said that "media literacy was the information, views, opinions, research released through newspapers, internet, emails, and computer software". After reading the Ofcom definition, teacher (A) responded that using technology can have an impact on a child's learning, regardless of ability. TA(A)'s idea of media literacy was an "up-to-date version of what was once pen and paper". TA(C)'s response related back to the Ofcom definition, suggesting that media literacy was "a way of communicating via computers and understanding the technologies out there". (Avery et al, 2011: 43)

Media in English

The National Curriculum for English has to date included media education under 'non-literary reading'. All children studying GCSE English will be entitled to this element, which is largely dominated by print journalism and advertising, with some use of film. The conceptual framework covers genre, content, target audience, purpose, language, form and structure, media context and cultural contexts. (See the Summer 2013 issue of *Teaching English*, the magazine of the National Association for the Teaching of English, on the theme of 'Digital English' for an overview of how English teachers approach this strand.) Again, however, this small element of the mainstream curriculum has now been removed, with no references remaining to media texts, as the magazine's editorial illustrates:

> We go to print at a time when media education appears to have been sidelined in Michael Gove's vision of the National Curriculum, shortly to be implemented. In this new curriculum, only traditional forms of language and creativity are privileged, as Jenny Grahame of the English and Media Centre suggests in her article: "the media, digital (and) moving image cultures in which children are growing up, and which frame their communicative experiences" are ignored. (Snapper, 2013: 1)

Scotland

Media education in Scotland is provided to very small numbers in the context of the UK and EU, but within this minority sector, there is a relatively high percentage of students receiving media education and a larger percentage of teachers with specialist training in the subject.

In Scotland, media education is part of the 3–18 Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), implemented in 2010, overseen by the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA). The CfE document *Literacy across learning* provides Scottish media educators with a multimodal context but no guidance on implementation. The Association for Media Education in Scotland (AMES) published a position paper in 2011 (*Breaking barriers*) to address such implementation issues, which was accepted by the SQA and Education Department with support from Scottish Screen. Instrell (2011) reports:

> Following discussions with the minister, AMES has had very productive discussions with Learning and Teaching Scotland and SQA. Also, with the assistance of Scottish Screen, SQA has piloted a Scottish survey of Literacy (primary 4, primary 7 and secondary 2) which will feature multimodal texts such as moving image as well as traditional monomodal texts. Scottish Screen's Moving Image Education project has been successful in a number of schools and local authorities. The Dundee-based Consolarium has implemented games-based learning in many schools. And recent CPD events for primary, secondary and teacher educators on game-based learning and 21st Century Literacy involved over 300 educators from all sectors of Scottish education. (Instrell, 2011: 29)

Northern Ireland

Media is incorporated into English/Irish education in Northern Ireland at Key Stage 3 (www.nicurriculum.org.uk/key_stage_3/areas_of_learning/english).

Queen's University Belfast delivers a post-primary teacher training qualification with Media Studies content.

However, the failure of the Ofcom media literacy strategy to adequately connect with mainstream education is reported by media educators in Northern Ireland, with the following factors impacting on media education noted:

- The efforts by the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission (NIFTC) in consultation with the British Film Institute (BFI) to develop a common definition and action plan to address media literacy in Northern Ireland articulated in the 2004 report *A wider literacy. The case for moving image media education in Northern Ireland* and the establishment of an implementation group to follow up this report.

- The development of a number of in-service and teacher training programmes and 'lead practitioner' pilot projects in secondary schools.

- The introduction of 'Moving Image Arts' at AS-level from 2005 and ongoing curriculum reform (although student numbers are very low).

- The development of 'creativity centres' and programmes in Belfast, Derry and Armagh.

- The impact of the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly on policy making and funding.

- The impact of the religious structure of education in Northern Ireland on course delivery and approaches to identity politics and citizenship education.

- The lack of involvement, support and visibility of Ofcom NI in relation to these activities.

In relation to the issue of religion as a context for media education:

> Media literacy plays an important role in relation to citizenship education. However citizenship education may be problematic in the context of Northern Ireland if citizenship education is based solely on national identity and patriotism. Indeed some stakeholders are of the opinion that teachers may be reluctant to tackle issues related to identity and citizenship in the Northern Ireland context. (McCloskey, 2005: 219)

It is clear that there is more potential currently for dialogue between media educators and policy makers in Scotland and Northern Ireland than in England and Wales. However, in the European context, the number of students engaged in Scotland and Northern Ireland is very small.

In summary, whilst over 30 years of curriculum inclusion for media education may be the envy of other countries, it is crucial to note that successive governments since the inception of Media Studies have marginalized and devalued the subject in different ways, and even the endorsement rhetoric from the New Labour government and the policy initiatives from Ofcom were *never manifested in funding or any formal support for mainstream media education* in the form of Media Studies in schools and colleges.

The current position

At the time of writing this report, GCSE and A-level Media Studies do not appear on the list of approved subjects for re-development beyond 2016. The MEA have produced a lobbying statement (see www.themea.org.uk/2014/04/key-arguments-for-the-future-of-gcse-and-a-level-media-and-film-studies).

In 2013, Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, stated the current view of the DfE:

> I certainly have no wish to dissuade anyone who wishes to pursue a course in media studies if that is their whole heart's desire.

> The current problem with subjects like media studies relates to the way our league tables work. They encourage schools to push a subject which, currently, actually limits opportunities.

> Irrespective of my views, it's a fact that some of our best universities consider media studies to be a less rigorous preparation for higher education than other courses. Students who take it up limit their capacity to choose freely between

universities. It's a simple truth that a pass in physics or further maths opens more doors.

But some schools still steer students towards subjects such as media studies because they know it's easier to secure a pass. That easier pass will boost their league table ranking. It is no accident that the huge rise in students taking media studies GCSE has occurred in state schools, where league tables matter so much, while in private schools, where the interests and demands of students and their families currently hold more sway, there has been no similar rush to embrace the subject. (Response to Matthew Taylor, Blog: www.matthewtaylorsblog.com/public-policy/michael-goves-response, accessed 3 September 2013)

Whilst this removal of Media Studies from the curriculum is new, the devaluing of, or lack of tangible support for funding for media education from governments has continued, in various forms, since Media Studies became established in the curriculum, varying from openly hostile comments lamenting the popularity of the subject within a broader 'dumbing down' of education discourse to an undermining of the subject's vocational outcomes or the more apparently neutral observations of the current secretary of state which, nonetheless, reinforce the prejudice against the subject in both popular discourse and the hierarchy of values reinforced by some universities.

Another obstacle to the further development of media education for media literacy has been the 'insulation' of various categories of media use from one another, with Media Studies separate from English, Art and other textual fields, and computing located in ICT. A clear example of the implications of this for media education is provided by the *Next gen report* (Nesta, 2011) and the government's response (DCMS, 2011). This report lobbies for investment in computing in schools to develop videogame design and visual effects skills in children, within an employability discourse rather than a critical literacy context. Media education does not feature in either the proposals or the response, with these elements of computing located in the domain of STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths). At the Media Education Summit hosted by Bournemouth University in 2012, Ian Livingstone, author of the report, told the audience of media educators that videogame publishers value students with qualifications in Physics, Maths, Computing and Art (see Livingstone, 2012).

A projection of the impact of this might reasonably be to suggest that the combined effect of the secondary curriculum reforms proposed by the Secretary of State and the response to the *Next gen report* will undermine media education in the UK, and place the educational entitlements at the heart of this report in a state of further 'limbo', between the cultural value afforded to English Literature as an academic discipline and the vocational importance assumed for games and effects education within the STEM subject cluster.

Higher education

The focus of this report is the relationship between EC objectives for media literacy and media education in UK schools, so there isn't scope for a detailed discussion of

media education in universities. However, a summary of the current situation is as follows.

In universities in the UK, there are a broad range of media-related qualifications ranging from general Media Studies and Film Studies courses to medium-specific options and general Media Production programmes. These are available at over 100 higher education institutions, subject to auditing in terms of student satisfaction, staff-student ratios and the research outputs of teachers. See www.theguardian.com/education/table/2013/jun/04/university-guide-media-studies-communications-librarianship for a full account.

The number of students able to take these qualifications is subject to funding allocations from the Higher Education Funding Council at institutional level.

A similar negative discourse surrounds the subject at degree level. James Curran, Professor of Media at Goldsmiths University, provides this account:

> A number of conservative educationalists have expressed dismay at the rise of media studies as an academic subject. For them, it symbolizes the dumbing down of higher education, the empty pretentiousness of new universities teaching Mickey Mouse degrees to low-grade students. However, reservations are not confined to "more means worse" opponents of university expansion. David Blunkett, when he was a Labour Education Minister, publicly regretted that too many youngsters were taking "narrow" courses like media studies with an eye to future employment instead of studying broader, more intellectually rewarding courses such as history. His ministerial colleague, Chris Smith, was openly sceptical about the intellectual rigour of media studies degrees, while the Arts minister, Mark Fisher, lamented that media students were being trained for jobs that did not exist. This ministerial consensus led the Labour government, in 1997, to consider ways of limiting the number of students doing media and communication courses.

> While nothing came of this, a new offensive was launched some ten years later. In 2008, Cambridge University warned that students taking "less effective" A-levels like media studies, without at least two "traditional" subjects, would find it difficult to secure a place. In 2011, the elite Russell Group of universities publicly declared that they favour "hard" 'A' level subjects over "soft" ones like media studies. There is now a move to extend this distinction across the university system. Introducing a report of the Conservative Fair Access to University Group in 2012, Conservative MP Rob Wilson called for 'the abolition of the current UCAS point system which rates high grades in maths and English just the same as those "Mickey Mouse" courses such as media studies. (Curran, 2013)

A recent editorial article in the *Media Education Research Journal* provides another detailed assessment of the value of media education in the context of these expressions of value and economic modality (see http://merj.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/MERJ_3-1-Editorial.pdf):

The key word here is "training", for despite the fact that media courses have been in existence in further and higher education since the 1970s, it has always been thought of as something to "prepare" students to work in a particular field; discourses of utility and employability have always surrounded the subject area; the employability (or not) of media graduates is the stick used to beat us, time-and-time again. Successive DCMS ministers did seem initially supportive of the UK's growing creative (and later digital) economy, and therefore media education generally. However, the central problem was that government saw only the financial benefits of the media and creative industries; so, any media education not geared towards the professions was seen as somehow a failure: a media education is only any good if it is training people for the creative economy. (Berger and McDougall, 2012: 3)

Information education policy and practice

Information education is now included in the English National Curriculum, separately from media education, with the following stated learning aims, across Key Stages 1–4, increasing in complexity from stage to stage:

- understand what algorithms are; how they are implemented as programs on digital devices; and that programs execute by following precise and unambiguous instructions;

- use technology safely and respectfully, keeping personal information private; know where to go for help and support when they have concerns about material on the internet;

- recognize common uses of information technology beyond school;

- design, write and debug programs that accomplish specific goals, including controlling or simulating physical systems; solve problems by decomposing them into smaller parts;

- understand computer networks including the internet; how they can provide multiple services, such as the world-wide web; and the opportunities they offer for communication and collaboration;

- use search technologies effectively, appreciate how results are selected and ranked, and be discerning in evaluating digital content;

- design, use and evaluate computational abstractions that model the state and behaviour of real-world problems and physical systems;

- understand several key algorithms that reflect computational thinking, such as ones for sorting and searching; use logical reasoning to compare the utility of alternative algorithms for the same problem;

- use two or more programming languages, at least one of which is textual, to solve a variety of computational problems; make appropriate use of data

structures such as lists, tables or arrays; design and develop modular programs that use procedures or functions;

- understand simple Boolean logic (such as AND, OR and NOT) and some of its uses in circuits and programming;

- undertake creative projects that involve selecting, using, and combining multiple applications, preferably across a range of devices, to achieve challenging goals, including collecting and analysing data and meeting the needs of known users;

- create, re-use, revise and re-purpose digital artefacts for a given audience, with attention to trustworthiness, design and usability;

- understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy; recognize inappropriate content, contact and conduct and know how to report concerns. (www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/2109 69/NC_framework_document_-_FINAL.pdf)

An example of media education and information education/e-safety overlapping is the coverage of an article published in the *Media Education Research Journal* by the *Times Educational Supplement* (TES) in August 2013 (www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6351211).

However, whilst the journal article discussed media education as an agent for supporting critical use of anonymous social media sites among teenage girls, the subsequent media coverage in the TES only focused on the content of the research into the dangers of social media among the age group.

Information education for child protection: **resources available to teachers (source: TES)**

Role of schools protecting children from 'sexting': This NSPCC briefing includes guidance on how schools can prevent and tackle problems involving sexting.

Child internet-safety guidance: Use this article and supporting materials to discover the risks of harm and ways to ensure children's safety online.

Pornography and pupils – a TES live webchat: Watch this discussion about the impact of widespread access to pornography among today's pupils and how schools and teachers can manage the consequences.

Exposed – the dangers of sexting: A 10-minute film tackling the issue of sexting that is aimed at the 14+ age group.

Consequences – sharing personal details online: A 15-minute film for 11- to 16-year-olds about staying safe online. The film shows how easily an offender can gather identify, locate and blackmail a young person.

First to a million – uploading video: An interactive film that helps young people explore issues associated with uploading video content online.

Safer social networking: Print these social networking profiles to help pupils understand the importance of controlling privacy and personal information.

Online safety quiz from Childnet: Children can work in pairs to complete this safety quiz, which presents some key online safety messages.

Legal designation

There is no formal designation and legal definition of media education currently in the UK. Equally, whilst Sonia Livingstone leads on reporting to COST, and other teachers and academics are engaged in networking and various experts' groups at the European level, no body is in charge of reporting to either the state or to the EU (see above for an analysis of the Communications Act/Ofcom 'moment').

Information education, in relation to child safety protectionism, is a legal entitlement, coming under the auspices of the Ofsted inspection framework (see www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2012/sep/14/oftsed-esafety-guidelines-september-2012 for a detailed breakdown). The following key requirements are in place:

- All staff should be aware and able to recognize e-safety issues with high-quality leadership and management to make e-safety a priority.

- High priority given to training and continuation training to all staff, including the contribution of the wider school community. One member of staff to receive accredited training (for example, to become an e-safety officer).

- Clear reporting processes.

- Rigorous, plain English policies and procedures integrated with other relevant policies.

- Progressive e-safety curriculum.

- Provision of a recognized internet service provider (ISP) with age-related filtering.

- Good risk assessment.

There are no legal documents currently framing media education policies. Nor is there a clear authority overseeing media education. However, Media Studies, Film Studies and related vocational qualifications in the 14–19 curriculum, the media element of the English curriculum and the primary literacy and ICT curricula and media elements of ICT and computing in secondary education all come under the National Curriculum and/or the authority of Ofqual and the DfE, whilst the institutionalized pedagogic practices and student achievement are regulated by Ofsted.

There are no mechanisms facilitating inter-ministerial relations on this issue within the current administration. However, the previous government convened a number of Associate Parliamentary Sub-Committees and consultancy events on media literacy with media academics, teachers and resource providers.

Dimension:	Capacity-building: funding

Funding for media and information education is provided from four sources:

- Media Studies courses in schools and further education funded by allocated public sector provision via taxation.

- Media courses in higher education funded by student fees.

- Information education/online safety within the curriculum funded by allocated public sector provision via taxation.

- Media, information and internet education projects, extra-curricular and cross-curricular projects funded by research councils, charities, not-for-profit organizations and industry stakeholders.

However, there is no formal allocation of direct funding for media and information education in the UK.

Funding councils such as the European and Social Research Council, Arts and Humanities Research Council are increasingly prioritizing research into using technology to make connections between arts providers, audiences and communities for broadly economic ends in relation to the identification of the creative industries in the UK as a growth sector. Media educators wishing to apply for funding for research are encouraged to focus on these areas.

Film education specifically is subject to another strand of research and policy. The 2013 *Screening film literacy* report, produced by the BFI, revealed that in the majority of cases across Europe, film literacy is tied in with literacy/mother tongue education as opposed to within a general media education programme, and that 25% of children in the UK receive any formal film education (the highest is in Denmark with 80% and Ireland, also with 80%), and made the recommendation that EU member states should provide core programmes of film education at primary and secondary levels, with annual figures of take-up and data on attainment and progression, and that the EC should provide research funding.

Until June 2013, Film Education was a long-standing provider of materials, resources and continuing professional development (CPD) for media teachers. Resources were mainly funded by film distributors, although more generic materials (on the film industry, genre, history etc.) were funded from within Film Education's annual budget of £700,000.

Film Education's resources were mainly funded by different sectors of the film industry. This funding was obviously based on self-interest, encouraging children and

young people via their teachers, to develop an interest in film and cinema and thus can also be looked on as materials encouraging audience development and as an example of private/public sector cross-engagement. Over 400 individual film titles and a welter of generic items were available for free download on the Film Education website, which was removed this year. At the time of Film Education ceasing to operate, around 14,000 teachers had requested materials.

In addition, Film Education ran training for teachers ranging from day-long sessions on particular curriculum subjects and the use of film within those subjects to major conferences that looked at critical and creative uses of film and digital video across the curriculum. Over its 26 years of existence, Film Education trained in excess of 4,000 teachers. At the time of reporting, the MEA is taking over hosting of the Film Education website so that teachers can still access the archive of resources.

The BFI's forward vision document, *Film forever* (June 2012), outlined its vision for the future of film education in the UK, consisting of 'a new education offer delivered by a new partner aimed at inspiring young people from 5-19 to watch, understand and make films.' The main objectives for film education will be a film club offer in every school across the UK, a new online platform for 5- to 19-year-olds with interactive production features, and a youth film academy (with £1 million of funding from the DfE) for 16- to 19-year-olds. This academy is explicitly intended to connect young people, teachers and industry, but within this vision there is less attention to formal education, with extra-curricular activity privileged. Film Club and First Light were successful in applying for the tender to deliver this film education strategy – Film Nation UK – securing £7 million per year over four years. See www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/announcements/quantum-leap-film-education-uk for more detail about Film Nation's remit.

Dimension:	Role of actors (outside school system)

The following summary and analysis of capacity combines actors inside and outside the school system, as these lines are more 'blurred' than the template assumes.

Actor	Category/ function	Funding	Impact (educational)
Association of Media Education Scotland (AMES)	Teacher development/ support	Public	100 members in two categories: individual and institutional, with a ratio of approximately 60:40 individual to institutional
Awarding bodies	Provision of qualifications + training materials for teachers + course materials for students	Registered charities Pearson =	Awarding bodies are the dominant

		private provider	provider of training for media teachers
BBC	Public Service Broadcaster with Media Literacy Strategy	Public (licence), with charter regulation	Minimal engagement with media teachers
British Board of Film Classification (BBFC)	Classification, regulation, educational materials	Independent, self-regulatory film industry body. Advisory (powers held by local councils)	Online materials commonly used by teachers
British Film Institute (BFI)	Educational materials, teacher training, educational projects	Charity governed by a Royal Charter. Awards lottery funding	Major provider of teacher development/ resources
Central School of Speech and Drama	Teacher training	Public/student fee income	Minor, 12 students on programme, but sole provider of Media Studies Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (carries qualified teacher status)
Centre for Excellence in Media Practice (CEMP)	Teacher development, research, projects, conference, publications, short courses Part of Skillset-accredited Media School	Public funding (HEFCE)/ student fee and research funding income	Major, but used mainly by higher education Student figures: 15 MA Creative and Media Education, 10 EdD in Creative and Media Education
Centre for Language and Primary Education	Promotes effective teaching and learning of literacy, language and literature in school, the community and at home	Public – charitable trust	Minor impact on media literacy within primary education
Channel 4	Broadcaster with some media	Commercial	Minor.

	literacy projects	(with Public Service Broadcasting remit, regulated by Ofcom)	Provides 'Breaking the News' project for students
Children's Media Foundation	Partners in research activities, point of contact for the press and policy makers seeking informed opinion on children's media matters, public lobbying, supports the BBC in maintaining the quality and range of its children's services, stages public debates to bring together parents, educators, academics, policy makers and the children's media industry, supports media literacy amongst children, young people and parents through media education and other initiatives, keeps the archive and history of children's media in the UK	Not-for-profit company	Large range of activity but minor tangible links with media education
Department for Education (DfE)/Teacher Development Agency (TDA)	Oversees education in schools, awarding body activity (Ofqual) and schools inspection (Ofsted), allocates teacher training funding (TDA)	Public (governmental)	Major impact on funding for teacher training, hierarchy of values through inspection and measurements of achievement
English & Media Centre (EMC)	Provides teacher development, publications and resources, lobbying, conferences, educational projects	Not-for-profit trust	Major provider of teacher development/ resources
Film Nation UK	Film education provision in schools	£28 million public funding, mainly from National Lottery	About to take responsibility for school sector film education. DCMS-backed, so major investment. Major impact expected
Higher Education Academy	Professional accreditation, allocates research grants, provides teacher development, conferences and networking	Independent organization, funded by the four UK higher	Major in higher education as funding provider for

		education funding bodies and by subscriptions and grants	educational research/ projects Has subject lead for Media
Institute of Education	Postgraduate media education courses, research, projects and events. See also DaRE	Public/student fee income, research grants	Major provider of postgraduate media education courses
Media Education Association (MEA)	Networking organization, regional groups, annual conference, lobbying, allocates small amounts of funding for projects and activities	Publicly funded subject association, previously with Ofcom backing	See detailed statistics below. Major provider of networking but low levels of activity
Media Education Research Journal	Publishes academic research into media education and pedagogy. Hosts conference seminars and events	Funded by subscriptions to commercial publisher (Auteur), CEMP and HEA (for events)	Online access to some content, small number of print subscriptions
Media Education Wales	Resources, teacher training, annual conference, workshops and projects for children, young people and adults	Not-for-profit organization	Major provider of film and media education and teacher development in Wales
Mediasmart	Provides free-of-charge educational materials to primary schools, which teach children to think critically about advertising in the context of their daily lives	Not-for-profit organization	Significant impact on one strand of media education (critical understanding of advertising) in primary sector
Mumsnet	UK's biggest network for parents, generating over 50 million page views and 9 million visits per month	Commercial (advertising funded)	Major impact on public discourse about children, media and e-safety
National Training Organization for Journalists	Accredits and advises in higher education. Professional awarding body recognized by Ofqual, an accreditation board, Student Council, focus groups and forums,	Cross-media charity	Major impact on higher education courses with journalism

(NCTJ)	and the annual Journalism Skills Conference		employment outcomes. Minor impact on schools
National Literacy Trust (NLT)	Funds research, projects and support for teachers to raise levels of literacy in the UK	Public charity	Minor lobbying role for media literacy, for example, responding to Cambridge Review of primary curriculum
Northern Ireland Screen	Funds programmes across economic, cultural and educational activities. Programmes include Film Education, Digital Film Archive, Cultural Cinema, Film Festival, Irish Language Broadcasting	Public	Major funding role in Northern Ireland film education
Ofcom	Regulator with duty to promote media literacy that it discharges through provision of research	Public: independent regulator	Major impact on media education objectives during New Labour government. Currently major impact on e-safety, industry and civic/access agendas, but minor role in education
Ofsted	Provides school and college inspection and publishes league tables and measurements of school/college performance in public domain	Public: inspector of schools (governmental)	Major impact on school and college priorities/ accountability
Screen Academy Scotland	Skillset accredited, Media and Film provider of CPD and short courses	Public: Skillset funded/ course income	Major impact on higher education in Scotland, some impact on schools and colleges
Skillset (Creative)	Accreditation and funding in higher education. Consultation work with industry, research and	Public: licensed Sector Skills Council for	Major impact on employability

	strategy, funding for schemes and project work, careers resources	entertainment media, fashion and textiles, publishing and advertising, marketing and communications	aspects of higher education Media courses
UK Literacy Association (UKLA)	National and regional provision and funding for consultants, teacher educators, researchers, inspectors, advisors, publishers and librarians. Publishes *Literacy* – journal of academic research	Public: charity	Some impact in working with media educators – more prominent during Ofcom phase: for example, Reframing Literacy Conference with BFI
Voice of the Listener & Viewer (VLV)	Monitoring children's and educational broadcasting, lobbying. Objectives include: Safeguard the independence of BBC governance and the quality and range of BBC programmes Monitor the work of relevant regulatory bodies, and try to ensure that they function in the interests of listeners and viewers Safeguard the future of Channel 4 as a public corporation with a public service remit Monitor the growth of cable, satellite and subscription services, and their impact on terrestrial and free-to-view services Support research into all aspects of broadcasting, including innovation in the sector and digital media Provide an open forum for the discussion of broadcasting issues and digital media by holding	Not-for-profit (membership funding)	Minor impact on formal education

	seminars and public conferences on topical themes at affordable prices throughout the UK		

More detail on the above examples

The BBC's Media Literacy Strategy is largely focused on digital content and online access, with the following objectives for partnership:

> As a leader in the field of content development, audience engagement and audience reach, the BBC will work at both a strategic and a practical level with external and internal partners to make the BBC's online media literacy content a cornerstone of partners' delivery models. As outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between BBC and Go ON UK, the BBC media literacy strategy is aligned with, but independent of the Go ON UK strategy. As a founder member of Go ON UK, the BBC has made a series of partner commitments to help make the UK the most digitally literate nation in the world. In addition, by harnessing its marketing and editorial reach, the BBC will work with Go ON UK partners to provide clear messages around the benefits of emerging technologies and building digital skills. (www.bbc.co.uk/learning/overview/about/assets/bbc_media_literacy_strategy_ may2013.pdf)

The majority of media teachers in the UK are English graduates. The most common route into teaching media is through a PGCE or equivalent postgraduate teacher training course in English, although more generic 'on the job' training routes are increasingly common, due in part to funding reforms. The percentage of media teachers holding degrees in the subject increases year on year, but the absence of accredited teacher training in the subject continues. There is, at present, only one media teacher training course, run by the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Media education training is thus dominated by Master's level courses that do not carry qualified teacher accreditation, modules within Master's in Education programmes and by CPD courses and events:

> The Training and Development Agency for Schools allocates places based on targets set by the Government. But a TDA spokesman says that as there is no shortage of media studies teachers, even if many of them have trained in other subjects, it not considered a priority subject. (Morrison, 2008: 12)

Master's-level media education courses are provided by the Institute of Education, the BFI and CEMP. Training courses and events that are not accredited are provided by a range of organizations, including the EMC, MEA and BFI. Increasingly, training provided by the awarding bodies is the dominant mode, but new government regulations about the ability of examiners to advise teachers on preparing students for examinations has reduced this provision in recent years.

Awarding body examiners are teachers who apply to assess coursework and/or exams. They are verified and trained during standardization meetings. Senior examiners are commissioned by the awarding bodies to provide training and exemplification materials for teachers.

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University media departments and research centres offer reports, conferences and journals which teachers in primary, secondary and further education can attend. However, funding for such activity is limited so higher education events continue to be dominated by higher education professionals. Exceptions are provided by the *Media Education Research Journal*, annual Media Education Summit and CEMP's MA and EdD courses for media educators, all of which have some cross-sector activity. The *Media Education Research Journal* and the Summit are available at reduced rates for teachers in schools and colleges, and both are regularly the forum for the dissemination of practitioner research by media educators working in primary, secondary and further education.

EMC is a not-for-profit trust that provides publications and professional development on all aspects of English teaching for teachers and students of literature, language and media in the UK and abroad. *Media Magazine* has 800 institutional subscriptions providing access to 40 A-level students each (32,000). The annual conference for media students is attended by 600. Professional development courses for media teachers cater for 220 teachers per year on average and, on average, each year Media Studies specific resource material for whole class use is provided for 500 institutions, covering 40 students per item = 20,000 students accessing resources. The media education element of their provision is continued through media input into English teaching resources. Based on annual sales of resources that are for general classroom use, these resources are likely to be used with several hundred thousand students each year.

MEA is a free-to-join organization that benefited from DfE and Ofcom funding at its inception. It convenes a national conference, has website registration and supports regional groups of media education to network and share good practice. The latest regional groups' report to the MEA executive outlines the following activity:

- Funded grassroots neworking groups are operational in Coventry, Oxford, Eastleigh, Northampton, London, Eastbourne, East Sussex, West Sussex, Bradford and South Hampshire. AMES also receives some MEA funding. The number of teachers engaging with the regional groups in England ranges from six to fifteen, with larger numbers working with AMES.

- There is ample evidence of teachers networking informally through social media and through open access to school/college coursework blogs, which act as informal good practice dissemination.

Media Education Wales, like MEA, does not have paid membership. It does not support regional groups but does fund and support groups of teachers on individual projects – for example, termly training to a group of six primary and secondary teachers as part of a three-year Film Agency for Wales project in the Afan Valley, and training 12 teachers on a recent inner-city filmmaking project in Cardiff. Media Education Wales' Filmschool Plus project has provided training around Wales for around 200 teachers over the last three years.

AMES also has no regional groups, but engages with Education Scotland (educational training etc. and HM Inspectorate), SQA (exam board), Creative Scotland (that took

over from Scottish Screen) and National Schools Partnership. AMES has around 100 members in two categories: individual and institutional, with a ratio of approximately 60:40 individual to institutional.

The MEA is currently in contact with new Arts Council Bridge organizations with a view to partnership work. Partnerships with arts organizations are increasingly seen as strategically advantageous to media education providers. The new collaboration between the Institute of Education and BFI (DaRE) explicitly moves away from a media education focus towards media arts.

Dimension:	Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside school)

Working metrics

In attempting to audit the success of formal Media Studies and related teaching and learning in the 14–19 sector, the following results can be drawn from achievement data.

Ten-year data (source: Joint Council for Qualifications) shows that GCSE (Key Stage 4, taken usually at age 16) Media Studies entries rose progressively, from 34,812 in 2003 to peak at 67,972 in 2009, following which a four-year declining trend has continued to 2013 with 59,119 entries. Of these entries over the past decade, the combined A/A* achievement rate has ranged from 14% (2003) to 16.7% (2009), whilst the A* to C performance (used in the UK as a benchmark for satisfactory achievement at this level for schools) has ranged from 58.1% (2003) to 66.6% (2012).

At A-level (generally taken at 18-19 years), the 2013 performance in Media Studies was as follows:

Total entry: 22,807 (3% of total A-level entry)
A/A* combined = 10.7%
Pass rate (A* to E) = 99.1%
A/B achievement (generally considered benchmark for first choice university entry) = 42.4%

Using the performance criteria and assessment objectives set by Ofqual for awarding body specifications and assessment procedures for Media Studies at GCSE and Media/Film Studies at A-level, it is clear that the only robust measurement of a student's acquisition of critical, creative and cultural media literacy would be to use the C grade as a minimal benchmark, as the published criteria for each qualification use wording such as 'competent' at this range, whilst D and E grades carry descriptors such as 'basic', 'limited' and 'partial'. However, the situation is more complex as the grading outcomes are a mathematical consequence of a range of discrete assessment modes – written exams, production coursework, research into media institutions, responding to previously unseen media texts in timed conditions. Thus, it is possible for a student to achieve a C grade by meeting all criteria in one context, but not in others – hypothetically, then, a young person might achieve 'competence' in creative media literacy but not in criticality. It is equally important to recognize that awarding bodies use statistical norm-referencing as opposed to qualitative/judgmental criteria-

referencing when setting grade thresholds – so the A and C grade thresholds are a percentile of the entry rather than a fixed indication of 'quality'.

The outcome of these two factors together is that we can only be sure that a student has met all of the criteria for the '3 C's definition of media literacy if they achieve an A grade. In this analysis, then, at the 2009 results peak, 11,351 young people taking a GCSE could be safely assessed as achieving full media literacy through formal education and in 2013, at A-level, 2,430.

There are currently no formal evaluation mechanisms for media literacy/education in the UK. This report has offered working metrics on how Media Studies could develop the capacity to deliver EC media literacy objectives, in the absence of any such formal evaluation in the public domain. As this report concludes, funding for such an evaluation, on a broader scale, is a priority.

During the redrafting of this report, another significant event has exemplified the disconnect between the good media education practice audited here and its lack of both scale and impact on public awareness, a result, we observe, of the lack of support at policy level. Alain de Botton, author and philosopher, appeared on BBC's Newsnight to discuss his new book which relates to news, and lamented the lack of any study of the news in UK education, seemingly unaware of the existence of Media Studies in the curriculum. See www.jomec.co.uk/blog/where-would-we-be-without-alain-de-botton for a detailed account and response by media educators.

Dimension:	General appreciation (and recommendations)

Two clear conclusions can be drawn from this report, as follows.

1. The composite model of media literacy is too broad in scope and ambition for mainstream education to 'deliver'.

The model derived for this analysis, from EC, COST and Ofcom documents and reports, covers *public sphere engagement and empowerment outcomes, a broad range of stakeholders, an equally broad range of media/information content/contexts and a pedagogic intention to combine cultural, critical and creative learning.*

This analysis of formal media education concludes that the performance criteria and assessment objectives of teaching specifications and awarding body marking materials, combined with the achievement rates in the A and A* grade boundaries, indicate that only a small percentage of people studying media in the curriculum can be said to acquire all the cultural, critical and creative learning. Furthermore, specifications, combined with teacher choices, cover a relatively narrow range of the media/information contexts included in the COST definition. Finally, topic choice means that public sphere engagement and citizen empowerment is difficult to relate to achievement in Media Studies. Therefore the great success of the UK in providing media education in the mainstream curriculum (currently threatened by curriculum reforms for 2016) is balanced by the lack of a coherent match between curriculum content, assessment modes and media literacy policy objectives.

There is therefore a fundamental mismatch between the objectives of media literacy as articulated in policy and the capacity of education as the agent for its development in society. Related to this, as Sonia Livingstone has observed in a previous report for COST (*Ambitions, policies and measures*), media literacy/education is mistakenly burdened with responsibility for fixing access and engagement barriers that are media producer/design/regulation issues. The data and analysis in this report supports that view.

2. It is clear that the UK is currently very well placed to provide media literacy through media education, given the status of Media Studies as an established curriculum subject. However, to coherently match Media Studies to the policy objectives for media literacy expressed in EC, COST and Ofcom statements, *funding (for teacher training), and government support and endorsement for Media Studies is essential.* Given the uncertainty over the continuation of Media Studies in the formal curriculum in secondary and further education, this is unlikely to be supported within the UK.

RECOMMENDATION

In order to provide compelling evidence for (2) and to protect media education in the UK, which is currently in a very vulnerable position, *funding should be prioritized now, whilst large cohorts are available to participate, for broader research into the capacity for Media Studies in schools and colleges to develop media and information literacy as defined in EC objectives and for equivalent mapping exercised across the EU to identify successful and transferable educational practice related to formal qualifications and/or accreditation.*

Dimension:	Good practice

Capacity: Examples of best practice in media education in England (2013, source: Pete Fraser)

Latymer School in Edmonton, London, is a mixed selective school with a long tradition of media education, being one of the first schools to teach Film Studies back in the 1970s. Students have the option of Media Studies at GCSE in Years 10 and 11, where a systematic approach to building skills and critical awareness helps to ensure a really high level of achievement. Many of the students go on to A-level Media, thus ensuring a four-year course of study. A significant proportion goes on to further study at degree level and in some cases, to work in media industries. One of the approaches where Latymer has been particularly successful is in getting students to faithfully recreate extracts from existing media texts as non-assessed tasks in order to build skills and understanding for their own creative work. Examples can be found on the extensive YouTube account.

www.latymermediashowcase.blogspot.co.uk

City and Islington Sixth Form in London is one of the biggest centres in the country for Media A-level, with close to 300 students on roll. The team of staff ensure a common approach to tasks and provision of equipment, and constantly try to upgrade

technology to enable improvement. The teachers take a very proactive approach to improving their own practice, very much functioning as a team, keen to learn from other teachers elsewhere. The extensive networks of blogs linked to the central hub gives a good sense of how well they make use of online technologies on a large scale. The quality of both written and production work is high across the cohort of students.

http://candimedia6.blogspot.co.uk

Cranford Community College, an academy in East London with almost all students of Asian origin, has a small but flourishing media department which prides itself on its innovative approach. Students are encouraged to be independent and creative in their interpretation of tasks; this is exemplified in the work on their websites, often finding new tools to use and lively and humorous approaches. Numbers for the AS and GCSE cohorts are increasing each year. The school offers GCSE Film Studies alongside GCSE Media Studies to students opting for a double GCSE and plan to begin Film Studies at A-level in the near future.

http://cranfordmedia.wix.com/mod2013
http://cranfordmedia.wix.com/cranfordmoderation2012

Long Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge has innovated in media education for many years. It was for a long time the biggest centre for A-level Media Studies and is currently the largest for A-level Film Studies. It was the first centre in the UK to introduce whole class editing on the iMac DV with the invention of iMovie in 1999, one of the first to experiment with online video well before the arrival of YouTube, using a program called iCritique back in 2003, and the first to try large-scale blogging with students for Media Studies in 2007. Now a key site for innovation is its Diploma course, with an emphasis on maximizing the potential of technology and creative approaches to all aspects of teaching and learning.

lramd.posthaven.com
www.flickr.com/photos/30136544@N08/with/9248173152
http://vimeo.com/user2347984

Churchdown School in Gloucester has a lively and enthusiastic approach to media education, with a big proportion – around 40% – of its sixth form doing Media Studies. Students take a very proactive approach to working with digital media and are very inventive in their use of online technologies. The standard of production work is very high and students show great determination to get the 'look' of their work as effective as possible!

churchdownmediahub.weebly.com

Funding for media education within institutions is determined by allocations of budgets within the broader curriculum. Some institutions place a higher premium on the use of technology than others. Where schools and colleges offer both academic and vocational media qualifications, or have cross-curricular approaches, equipment allocation is generally higher.

Case study data: Technical resources for Media teachers in England (2013: source Pete Fraser)

The following provides a sample of equipment available to a range of Media departments in schools and colleges. All of these teachers are following the OCR specifications at GCSE and/or A-level, which is the specification that includes the most production work.

School/college type and location	Number of students	Equipment available and comments from teachers
School (London)	40 Y10, 40 Y11, 26 Y12, 20 Y13	PCs in classrooms + dedicated extra room for media work total 25 PCs and 4 Macs; filtered web, YouTube available, sites can be unblocked if requested, but takes too long. 2 DSLRs, 10 mini DV cameras and IWB in both teaching rooms – well used. Full-time technician
College (South of England)	140 AS, 120 A2 Media; 100 Film AS, 60 Film A2+ GCSE Film 15, Diploma L2: 20; Diploma L3 40 each year	6 classrooms each with 12 Macs; over 40 Sony video cameras, 12 flip cameras, 3 DSLRs. Trolleys of 44 MacBooks for diploma. One IWB rarely used. No web filtering, all overseen by teachers in horseshoe-shape layouts. Full-time technician
College (London)	180 AS Media, 110 A2 Media, 60 Film AS, 40 Film A2	70 Macs in classrooms; IWB well used, 25 Pro HD JVC cameras, 15 GY-HM100 cameras; 4 IWBs, filtering off after a long battle. Technician full time + assistant
School (London)	12 each year AS and A2	PCs in classrooms and a room with 10 Macs for dedicated work. IWB used imaginatively. Had a set of iPads that were stolen. Reasonable cameras
School (South of England)	40 AS, 27 A2	Classroom has about 10 Macs. Some cameras, not particularly high quality. Internet access frustrating
School (South of England)	8 AS, 16 A2	PCs around classroom for print work, annex with two Macs for editing. Internet now accessible but complex form filling for access. YouTube only available in Media
School (South of England)	36 AS, 24 A2 + Film Studies, 20 in each; 25 GCSE	PCs in one room and Macs in the main teaching room (about 15); all Macs allow full internet access – only place in school for this. Some new video cameras
School (East Anglia)	44 AS, 30 A2	PCs for editing in study area also used by sixth form. Media students have access to more sites (e.g. YouTube) through their login. More PCs in media classrooms (30 in total). Range of cameras
Academy	15 each AS and A2,	Purpose-built Mac rooms with 20 in each,

(Midlands)	GCSE and Level 2 also	laptop trolley and IWB in good use; lots of good quality cameras. Full internet access under teacher supervision
School (Midlands)	12 each AS and A2; 30 GCSE	14 Macs in an outbuilding; two rooms shared with Photography in main school, up-to-date Macs and a range of cameras. Web access but lots of technical problems mean children often have to login via teacher account
School (South of England)	20 each A2 and AS; 25 GCSE	3 rooms each of 12 Macs; lots of good video cameras
College (South of England)	150 AS, 100 A2. Around 30 in each year doing Film	Three rooms of 14 Macs; c.20 camcorders and two DSLRs; full internet access under teacher supervision. Full-time technician
School (South of England)	15 AS, 15 A2	12 PCs in a room and annex; about 6 camcorders; web access via login for media students. Filtering unblocked after teacher made the case for it for improved results
College (North of England)	100 AS, 80 A2	6 edit suites in one space with technician support. Very large PC room with over 30 PCs for Photoshop etc., timetabled for use. Full-time technician. Lots of cameras of various ages
School (South of England)	80 AS, 50 A2; lots of other courses	Classroom with 20 PCs, 9 set-up edit suite next door; several cameras but all shared with BTEC, Film and Diploma – different management. Full-time technician shared amongst them. Web access after battle with IT support
School (South of England)	10 each at AS and A2, 25 in each year at GCSE, 10 in each at L2 Diploma	PC room (large) with 15 PCs. Previously Macs but switched. Web access problematic – no blogging or YouTube. Adobe Premiere running on server but IT technicians not competent to run it and quite obstructive. Good cameras include DSLRs
School (Midlands)	35 A2 Media, 45 AS Media, 45 Y10 GCSE, 45 Y11 GCSE	Room of 13 Macs for editing. Lots of problems with servers, incompatible machines and software and with web access – have to login via teacher account for YouTube, for example. 9 Sony Handycams. Full-time technician (female – only one encountered in research)
College (North of England)	100 AS, 70 A2	Split over three sites. Mac rooms in each with 20+ machines. Some good cameras. Web access generally good
School (Midlands)	30 AS, 20 A2	Room with PCs just upgraded to Adobe 6. Several DSLR cameras. Internet access pretty good. Only one teacher proficient

		with technology
School (London)	30 A2, 50 AS	Lots of students have own MacBooks. Small edit suite with 5 stations. Good cameras. Full-time technician
Academy (London)	15 A2, 18 AS, GCSE: 25 Y10 Media, 25 Y11 Media, 15 Film GCSE	60 media PCs, 30 Macs, 8 DSLR, 8 Canon HD, 20 flip cameras. 3 IWBs. Good web access

Cameras available to media teachers vary widely from flip cameras to expensive HD semi-pro cameras, but the majority are using kit in the £200-500 range for high-quality coursework. Few teachers have studios (more common in further education) or purpose-built spaces, relying more on adapting the classroom. Software is most commonly Photoshop, Final Cut, and Adobe Premiere.

Dimension:	**References and resources**

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http://ejc.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/05/25/0267323113483605).

Links to key resources, documents, websites

Advertising Education Forum, impartial organization offering perspectives on advertising with specific regard to children: www.aeforum.org

Association for Media Education in Scotland (AMES): www.mediaedscotland.org.uk

Auteur Publishing, publisher of student and teacher resources for Media and Film Studies: http://auteur.co.uk

BBC Media Literacy Strategy: www.bbc.co.uk/learning/overview/about/assets/bbc_media_literacy_strategy_may2013.pdf

BBC Northern Ireland: www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/learning/initiatives.html

British Film Institute (BFI) Education, the British Film Institute's education department, offering teacher and student resources: www.bfi.org.uk/education

Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom (CPBF): www.cpbf.org.uk

Centre for Excellence in Media Practice (CEMP), based at Bournemouth University. Offers continuing professional development (CPD) courses in Creative and Media Education at Master's and Doctoral levels, the *Media Education Research Journal* and hosts the annual Media Education Summit: www.cemp.ac.uk

Channel 4 'Breaking the News' Project: www.channel4.com/learning/breakingthenews/index.html

Creative Skillset, national training and development organization for broadcast media: www.creativeskillset.org

DaRE, digital arts research group collaboration between the Institute of Education and the British Film Institute: http://darecollaborative.net/category/film

Department for Education (DfE): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

Department of Education, Northern Ireland (DENI) Teacher Training Provision: www.deni.gov.uk/index/school-staff/teachers-teachinginnorthernireland_pg/10_teaching_in_northern_ireland-initial_teacher_education-pg.htm#detailsof_provision

English & Media Centre (EMC), student and teacher resources and INSET/CPD: www.englishandmedia.co.uk

Film Nation UK: www.filmnationuk.org

Journalism.co.uk, for journalists, also used by students researching institutions and press legislation or for context for coursework or for career information: www.journalism.co.uk

Media Education Association (MEA): http://www.themea.org.uk/
Media Education Research Journal: www.auteur.co.uk/index.php?main_section=28&textentryid=297

Media Guardian, commonly used by teachers and students: www.theguardian.com/media

MediaMagazine, educational magazine for Media Studies students: www.mediamagazine.org.uk

Mumsnet internet safety materials: www.mumsnet.com/internet-safety

National Literacy Trust (NLT): www.literacytrust.org.uk

National Media Museum, offers a range of online material and student study/CPD events: www.nmpft.org.uk

Northern Ireland Advisory Committee to Ofcom: www.Ofcom.org.uk/about/csg/adv_cmmt_nations/acni/?a=87101

Ofcom, the website of the regulator, includes media literacy bulletins and publications: www.ofcom.org.uk

Ofcom Media Literacy: http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/media-literacy-pubs

Our media, grassroots 'we media' site campaigning for environmental change through local and global media action: www.ourmedia.org

Theory.org, David Gauntlett's media theory website is commonly used by teachers and students: www.theory.org.uk

Voice of the Listener & Viewer (VLV): www.vlv.org.uk