



Subject: FILM STUDIES

Exam Board: WJEC

Levels available: AS (1 year) and A2 (2 years)

Subject Leader: Mr J Campbell

Course Information:

Why should I study this subject?

If you love film past and present, want to learn more about the distinctive cinemas of Britain, Ireland, America and Europe, and are thinking of studying it at university, then this is the course for you. In many ways, as a subject it is most like English Literature, involving the study of whole films and extracts in close textual detail. An example of study might include examining *Brief Encounter* for its representation of sexual repression in the 1940s or the contribution of British silent film to the history of film. It goes much further than Media Studies in its approach to film and the depth and diversity of film it offers. It provides an excellent and enriching introduction to film culture.

What do I need to do the subject?

You will need grade Cs on the Higher Papers in English Language and English Literature (demonstrating your ability to critically study a text). You need to be open-minded about all forms of film and be prepared to watch and read about them in your own time. You also need to like writing extended essays, as this is the key form of assessment in this subject.

Can I take both Media Studies and Film Studies?

There are no prohibited combinations and there will be no overlap in areas of prescribed study. The courses do have key concepts in common but film is studied in greater depth and diversity and the approach taken differs substantially from Media Studies, in which film provides only a small area of study. However, be aware that taking both could narrow your options later on.

Unit 1: Film - Making Meaning 1

You will learn how film communicates meaning using sign systems, narrative, genre, form and style and how the audience actively 'reads' meaning into a text. You will build on your knowledge by writing two pieces of film analysis and completing a piece of original creative work.

Assessment: Coursework portfolio of 2 extended essays and a feature-film screenplay/storyboard.

Unit 2: Producers and Audiences

This unit studies the film industry and the social practice of film consumption in both the UK and America. Institutions will be studied by looking at case studies of producers, distributors, exhibitors and the cultural role of the audience.

Assessment: 90 min examination.

Unit 3: Messages and Values - British and Irish Cinema

For this unit you will study the social messages and values communicated by British and Irish films past and present. This will include the way attitudes are communicated through film. Examples may include the social revolution of the 1960s or how social problems are dealt with in the comedy genre.

Assessment: 90 min examination.

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The Advanced Level (AS + A2) Specification

Unit 4: Film- Making Meaning 2

You will build on the skills and understanding gained at AS by doing key pieces of coursework. The work includes researching films by a particular director and a creative piece such as film journalism, screenwriting or the production of a short film.

Assessment: Coursework portfolio of 2 pieces of extended research and a short film/ piece of film-writing.

Unit 5: Studies in World Cinema

You will study a film style or movement from the 20th century. Examples may include 1950s French New Wave cinema, including seminal films such as *A Bout de Soufflé*. You will also study contemporary world films, for example the Brazilian film *City of God*.

Assessment: 90min examination.

Unit 6: Critical Studies

This unit brings together everything you will have learned on the course at a sophisticated level. Examples of the types of topics considered will be early cinema (pre-1917), spectatorship, media effects, censorship and the ideologies communicated by film.

Assessment: 120min examination.

*** The academic nature of this course demands that both extracts and whole films of all classifications are shown. A-Level Film Studies is not a vocational subject nor a practical film-making course.**