

A LEVEL FILM STUDIES

Film Studies is the academic study of film and is designed to deepen your understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of film.

Specific course entry requirements

College entry, (please refer to the Entry Requirements section for further details).

How will I be assessed?

A level Film Studies is assessed by both coursework and written examination. The coursework element is worth 30% of your overall grade, while the written examination is worth 70% of your overall grade.

What will I study?

The course covers a range of cinematic styles, periods and cultures. We start with study of the principles of film form, including editing, cinematography, sound and mise-en-scene. We also cover areas such as genre, narrative, representation, ideology and the variety of contexts in which films can be placed. Much of this early part of the course will use well-known, fairly familiar examples from British and Hollywood cinema.

We will then start to study specific films for particular components of the A level examination. Component 1 is focused on British and American narrative cinema.

For section A, we will compare at least one classical Hollywood picture (1930-1960) with another from the New Hollywood era (1961-1990), looking at the ways in which key directors have achieved distinctive visions within different production contexts. Another section deals with American film since 2005, comparing examples of mainstream Hollywood to more independent films in order to examine spectatorship issues.

The final section will involve study of two post-1995 British films with a focus on representation, ideology and different critical approaches.

Component 2 brings even greater variety to our study of film.

One section involves comparison of two non-English language films (1990-present) focusing on technique and style. Another section offers the chance to study a feature-length documentary film in detail, examining various theories about realism and exploring the problematic gap between fact and fiction. We then look at films from the silent period (1915-1930) when early cinema represented an innovative high-point for modernism. The final section is an opportunity to study experimental film from the 1960-2000 period; we look at cinema that has challenged audience expectations through distinctive approaches to narrative structure, editing, sound, mise-en-scene and cinematography.

The third component is coursework and will consist of a 4-5 minute short film supported by an analysis of about 1800 words in which you explain your stylistic and narrative choices in detail.

Where will this course lead me?

The majority of our students progress to university courses each year; many of them take degree courses in Film or related areas, while others use their Film Studies A level to access a wide range of other degree courses.

In addition to jobs specifically in the film industry, the A Level course can help you to access a wide range of careers in areas such as journalism, public relations, research, teaching and many others.