

A-level Film Studies

Board and Specification: WJEC Eduqas

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Subject specific entry requirements:

Grade 6 in GCSE English Language.

What skills are required of students?

- Independent reading and research skills, along with the ability to understand and explore the social, cultural and political context of different films.
- The ability to learn and accurately use specific terminology related to the study and production of film as an art form.
- Drafting, redrafting and editing, along with the ability to discuss their own opinions about cinematography with the rest of the class.
- Students should be able to work independently on their own short film, with guidance from their teachers.

Course Outline

Film is a powerful and culturally significant medium – it is an art form in itself. As an A-level Film Studies student, you will have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of films and broaden your knowledge and understanding of the range of responses films can generate within the audience and society itself. As part of the A-level course, students will study mainstream American films from the past and the present as well as a range of recent and contemporary British films; American independent films and also global films. In addition, students will also examine silent films and other significant film movements so that they can gain a sense of the development of film from its early years to its still emerging digital future.

In terms of assessment, all students will sit two exams at the end of the two-year A-level course. These exams are worth 70% of the final A-level grade. The remaining 30% of the overall grade is made up by the non-examined assessment. For this piece, students will be required to write a screen play for a short film plus a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay, along with an evaluative analysis.

Module titles and codes:

Component 1: Varieties of film and filmmaking: assessed through examination

Students will study six feature-length films, taken from Hollywood (1930-1990); American films since 2005 and British films since 1995. Students will answer three exam questions in total, based on the study of films from these time periods.

For courses starting 2026, we study Vertigo (Hitchcock, 1958), One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (Forman, 1975); La La Land (Chazelle, 2016), Captain Fantastic (Ross, 2016); Shaun of the Dead (Wright, 2005), Trainspotting (Boyle, 1996).

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes, 120 marks, worth 35% of the A-level

Component 2: Global filmmaking perspectives

Students will study five feature-length films drawn from the following areas: global film; documentary film; silent cinema and experimental film. Students will answer one question on each of these topics.

For courses starting 2026, we study Pan's Labyrinth (del Toro, 2006), City of God (Meirelles, 2002); Amy (Kapadia, 2015); Buster Keaton shorts; Memento (Nolan, 2000)

Written exam: 2 hours and 30 minutes, 100 marks, worth 35% of the A-level

Component 3: Non-examined assessment: Production

This is the coursework element of the A-level: now referred to as the non-examined assessment. Students will work on and produce their own original short film. This will be accompanied by an evaluative analysis of between 1600 and 1800 words.

Worth 30% of the A-level, assessed by teachers, moderated by WJEC, 60 marks

What kinds of work will you do in class and at home?

Researching different film movements.
Watching, re-watching and analysing key films from the course's syllabus.
Essay writing and exam practice.

Shooting and editing your own short film(s)
Writing notes.
Discussion.
Presenting your ideas to the rest of the class.

What other A-levels does this subject connect well with?

Film Studies connects well with many other subjects – especially those that require analysis, discussion and independent thinking. Furthermore, the screenplay NEA is ideal for students who have a creative spark! Understanding the social, cultural and historical context of the different films and significant periods within the history of film is also key, meaning that History, Sociology and even Politics are A-levels which link particularly well with this course. Also, A-level Film Studies requires students to explore film as an art form, meaning that Fine Art and other arts-based subjects are good combinations to study alongside this A-level.

Film Studies A-level is highly respected by all universities as admissions tutors are aware of the high standards and commitment the course content demands and also the extensive range of skills which students are required to develop and hone – ranging from writing a professionally formatted screenplay to appreciating and understanding complex cinematography and film production techniques. Film Studies graduates go on to work in many different fields, such as screenwriting, editing, journalism, drama and even directing!

What types of university course will be helped by this A-level?

Film Studies; Media Studies; Business Studies and Marketing; Theatre Studies; Drama; English Literature; English and Creative Writing; English Language; Psychology; Sociology; History; Education; Journalism and Linguistics.