

A LEVEL FILM STUDIES



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We study a diverse range of films from different parts of the world and from different periods: mainstream and independent, documentary, silent films, experimental and short films.

You will learn how to analyse and comment on how films are made – how the camera is used, location and setting, editing, sound and performance. We will explore how and why audiences respond in similar or different ways to film: how do films reflect their social, cultural, historical and technological contexts?

You will learn about theoretical approaches to film – for instance, different ideas about how narratives or stories are communicated and different ideas about how audiences engage with or are influenced by films.

Critical debate is a key feature of the course so you will develop skills to evaluate and interpret what you see and the ideas of others.

Examples of the films we will study include: *Casablanca* (classic Hollywood); *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (later Hollywood); *Winter's Bone* (contemporary independent film); *Sweet Sixteen* and *This is England* (modern British); *Victoria* (contemporary European / German film).

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Staff in our department are highly qualified and experienced at A Level teaching.

- Discussions in small groups and with the whole class
- Presentations and lectures
- Individual and group research
- Using on-line video resources
- Practical creative work
- How to use relevant software
- Improving your note-making
- Learning new theories
- Devising arguments and debates
- Making links between films
- Learning new technical terms
- Planning and writing essays
- Quizzes and learning games
- Effective revision

Students prepare for lessons by reading, viewing and research; we have excellent resources in the LRC and on-line. We then share and discuss ideas in the classroom. Our student feedback is outstanding and a high proportion of students are so inspired they carry on to study Film at university level.

A LEVEL ASSESSMENT

Component 1 (Exam: 35%)

- Hollywood 1930- 1990: compare Hollywood films from earlier and later periods.
- American film since 2005: study 2 films, one mainstream and one independent.
- British Film since 1995: study 2 British films.

Component 2 (Exam: 35%)

- Global Film: study of 2 films, one European and one from outside Europe.
- Documentary: study of 1 documentary film.
- Film movements – Silent Cinema: study of 1 film or a group of films.
- Film Movements – Experimental film from 1960 – 2000.

Component 3 (Production Coursework: 30%)

- Produce a screenplay plus photo storyboard and written evaluation.

ENTRY AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS

We require at least a level 4 at GCSE English or English Language though we strongly recommend you have level 5 or above as the course involves well developed skills of reading and writing.

We organise optional trips and visits during the year – the average cost for one of our trips is about £25. (Students can of course apply for financial support.)

WHAT NEXT?

Film Studies goes well with a very wide range of other subjects.

The skills you learn are highly valued by employers in all areas of work: the ability to interpret challenging material, understand complex ideas, select evidence, research, analyse, construct an argument and write with confidence and plan and produce your own creative work. Film Studies A Level can lead to employment in business, marketing, journalism, teaching, health, the media, the law, creative industries in the arts and many other areas of work.

CONTACT US:

Telephone: 01905 362600

Email: enquiries@wsfc.ac.uk