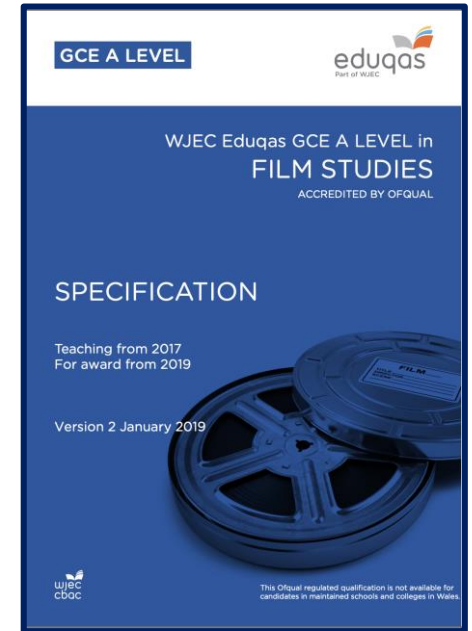


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St Mary's College



FILM STUDIES A LEVEL EDUQAS 603/1147/2
Pre-course reading and guidance





A LEVEL FILM STUDIES

WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE FILM STUDIES?

- › You will be introduced to a wide variety of films in order to broaden your knowledge and understanding of film and the range of responses films can generate. Film Studies will help you understand how films are created and the meanings and messages within them.

WHAT IS THE COURSE STRUCTURE LIKE?

- › The course is a **two year** course. It consists of **two exams** and **one piece of coursework** (NEA). The exams are worth a total of 70%, and the coursework is 30%. All exams will be taken at the end of your second year.



A LEVEL – WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Component 1:

American and British film

You will study six films in Component 1: Classic Hollywood, American film and British Film

Assessed written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes (120 marks) 35% of A-level

Section A: Hollywood 1930-1990 (comparative study)

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to two Hollywood films, one from the Classical Hollywood period (1930-1960) and the other from the New Hollywood period (1961-1990).

Section B: American film since 2005 (two-film study)

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to two American films, one mainstream film and one contemporary independent film.

Section C: British film since 1995 (two-film study)

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to two British films

PRE-READING TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND COMPONENT 1

Casablanca – Frank Miller

The British Cinema book – Robert Murphy



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A LEVEL – WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Component 2:

Global filmmaking perspectives

Assessed written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes 35% of qualification

You will study five films in Component 2 Global Film, Documentary, Silent Cinema and Experimental

Section A: Global film (two-film study)

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to two global films: one European and one produced outside Europe.

Section B: Documentary film

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to one documentary film.

Section C: Film movements – Silent cinema

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to one silent film or group of films.

Section D: Film movements – Experimental film (1960-2000)

One question from a choice of two, requiring reference to one film option.

PRE-READING TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND COMPONENT 1

Auteurs and Authorship: A Film reader – Barry Keith Grant

Pulp Fiction (BFI Film Classic) – Dana Polan



A LEVEL FILM STUDIES (Year 12)

Exam Syllabus for Film Studies

- › <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/sxdcwwck/eduqas-a-level-film-studies-spec-from-2017-e-24-01-2020.pdf>

Film overview for British Cinema:

- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/this-is-england.pdf
- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/fish-tank.pdf

Film overview for Classic Cinema and New Hollywood

- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/casablanca.pdf
- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/bonnie-and-clyde.pdf

Film overview for Global Film

- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/pans-labyrinth.pdf
- › http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-19/_eng/city-of-god.pdf



A LEVEL FILM STUDIES NEA (coursework)

SCREEN: (p l a y)

Non-exam assessment:

Component 3: Production Non – exam assessment 30% of qualification

- › This component assesses one screenplay and its evaluative analysis. Learners produce a screenplay for a short film (1600-1800 words) and a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay. Throughout the first year you will study a range of short films in addition to full length films.
- › These short films will then form the inspiration for the screen play that you will make and evaluative analysis (1250-1500 words).
- › The production brief for the screen play will offer **four** options, from which **one** must be chosen. Options will include: two options based on narrative elements **and** two options based on character-led elements of the short film.
- › The coursework is started in Year 12 and finished in Year 13

<https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rId=1036>



A LEVEL FILM STUDIES NEA (coursework)

If you want to get a head start on your coursework watch the following short films, most are on YouTube.

- › *The Gunfighter* (Kissack, US, 2014) - 09'
- › *Pitch Black Heist* (Maclean, UK, 2012) - 13'
- › *Wasp* (Arnold, UK, 2003) - 24'
- › *About a Girl* (Percival, UK, 2001) - 09'
- › *Stutterer* (Cleary, UK, 2015) - 12' (pay to watch)
- › *High Maintenance* (Van, Germany, 2006) - 09'
- › *Connect* (Abrahams, UK, 2010) - 05'

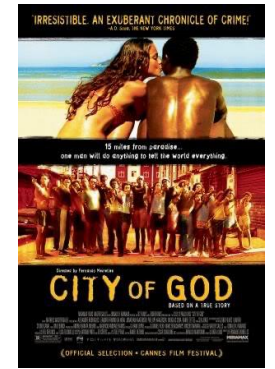


Key elements which underpin Film Studies

- › Film Studies is more than just watching films, it is the understanding of why they have been produced and what the meanings are behind them. Equally, you need to consider what has influenced them, be it what was happening at the time in society or how far the director has influenced the narrative.
- › When analysing films you need to look at the camera work, the location, costumes, props, lighting, sound and editing as well as the performance of the actors.



Global Film – Year 12



- › Within this section you will study 2 films -Pan's Labyrinth (Del Toro, Spain, 2006) and City of God (Mereilles, Brazil, 2002). Pan's Labyrinth has a backdrop of war: *Pan's Labyrinth* mixes elements of surrealism and fantasy in its narrative of civil war in Spain.
- › City of God, is set in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro and contrasts the lives of different young people growing up in a very violent environment.

British Cinema – Year 12



- › In British cinema you will study *This is England* (2006 Shane Meadows) which is a social realist film set in the 1980s about a young teenager who has lost his father in the Falkland's war. It deals with issues of Racism and deals in the context of a Thatcherite Britain.
- › You will also study *Fish Tank* (2009 Andrea Arnold) which again is a social realism film which looks at the life of a teenage girl living on a housing estate with a mother how does not care for her.



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Classic and New Hollywood – Year 12

- › You will study the Hollywood studio system on the 1940s and the classic love story *Casablanca* (Curtiz, 1942). During the 1940s the big studios dominated film making and had lots of control over productions. Most films were made in a huge studio and not on location.
- › The other film you will study is *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn 1967) which broke away from the studios and was filmed on location. We follow two criminals on the run from the law. Penn purposely wanted a film which was on location to get away from the studio's control.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gdc9gfhVLv4>
(Documentary on the studio system)



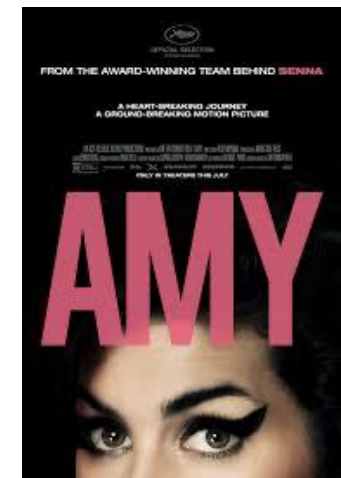


Documentary – Year 13

- › In Year 13 you will study Amy (Kapadia, UK, 2005), which is based on Amy Winehouse.
- › Amy takes a different approach to exploring the life of a singer; the film is composed almost entirely of home video footage, brought together to offer a compelling portrait of its subject.
- › You will look at different film makers theory and cinematic techniques to tell stories

› <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TI7cYf7CAx8>

(Masterclass from Kapadia on Documentary making)



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American film since 2005 - Year 13

- › You will study Hollywood and *No Country for Old Men* (Coen Brothers, 2007) which is set in rural Texas in the early 1980s, it is a powerful, intricately plotted thriller that explores the consequences of the choices individuals make.
- › In contrast to this film, you will also study an independent American film with a smaller budget *Winter's Bone*, (Granik, 2010) which has a female protagonist and is a family drama

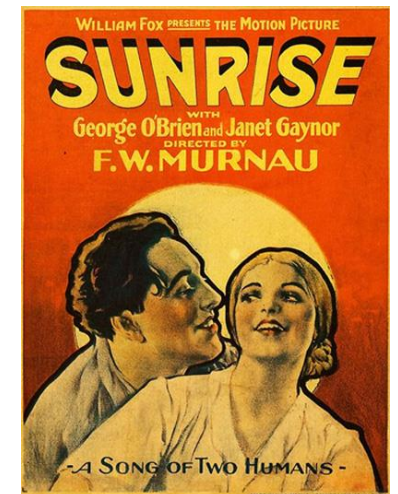


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Silent cinema – Year 13

- › It is important to look at Silent cinema when studying film as it has affected film making throughout the decades and continues to do so. You will study Sunrise (Murnau, US, 1927) which is a German Expressionist film. The narrative is based around a rural farmer who is lured away from his wife by a woman in the city.
- › German Expressionism has influenced lots of styles of films and directors. If you look at Tim Burton Films you will see the use of shadows and dark characters.
- › <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rqsqYaEFaE> (beginners guide to Silent Cinema)

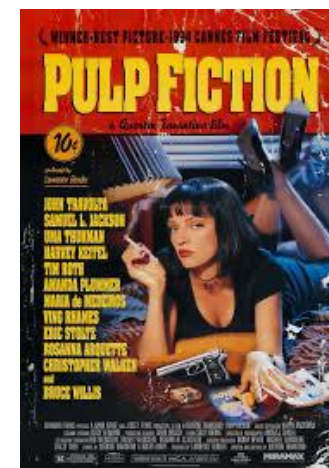




Experimental film – Year 13

- › You will also study Pulp Fiction (Tarantino, US, 1994), a Postmodernist film in the 1990s. Tarantino takes a lot of his techniques from old film movements and recycles ideas with a twist.
- › He is known for his controversial story lines and violence within his film.
- › Pulp Fiction follows different narratives from a day in the life of two hitmen, to a boxer who throws a fight, to one of the hitmen taking the mobster's wife out for the evening.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=141zU1ukPsk&t=1492s> (making of Pulp fiction)



A LEVEL FILM STUDIES (YEAR 12)



Other films we watch to support our main films

- › Deadman Shoes (Shane Meadows)
- › American Honey (Andrea Arnold)
- › Goodfellas (Scorsese)
- › Breathe (Jean Lou Goddard)
- › Mildred Pierce (Crutiz)
- › Senna (Kapadia)

Useful website for exploring Film Studies

<https://www.bfi.org.uk>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/film/>

<http://www.imdb.com>

<https://www.screenstudies.com/home?fbclid=IwAR2Us948jqMkEiQetEiltBOKsDwV3QcTp5Yi23QeZYpt8ZjMeAgjDGtYMK8>

https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/screenwriting?fbclid=IwAR02UBBmoHaiwDnfacpKUzj0-3DDbDpLE8BRILEYO8MPSLkC6PC3Pv_jyOM

https://nofilmschool.com/How-to-write-a-screenplay-week-one?fbclid=IwAR3FIX6c6i3w7S155ti7GvYegpJKy7Iewe3_ovpgLjN6ZCT9n5YCmLFeJ0c

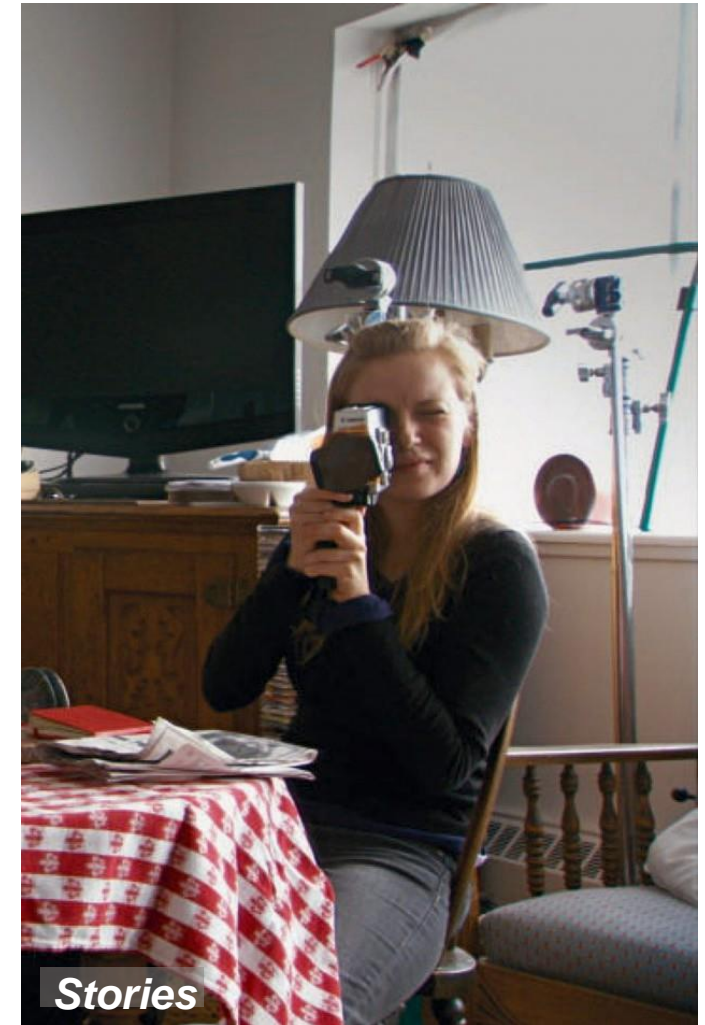


To prepare...

What can you do to be ready?

Watch as many films as possible! Try keeping a record, either in a book or on an online service like letterboxd.com

Research some of the topics and films on the following page. Use YouTube to see if you can find analysis of these topics/films or search the internet for information.



Any further questions?



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We also offer A Level Media and BTEC Creative Media
Production

Please see the relevant pre-reading guidance for further details.