

Film Studies AS/A level

Introduction

Film Studies is an increasingly popular subject at AS and A2 levels. The course explores how films are produced, distributed and exhibited, and teaches you how to 'read' films in the way that you would read a text in English Literature. It is a useful subject to combine with any English course, Business Studies, Media Studies and Photography. You can also join our 'Cult Fiction' Film Club, which offers you the chance to view and discuss films from a range of directors and cultural backgrounds other than mainstream Hollywood.

Year 1

Module 1 is the coursework unit, in which you are taught to study the concepts of Genre (categories of film e.g. Gangster, Western) and Narrative (how stories are told). You will then apply these concepts to produce three pieces of work. The first is a 1000-1500 word general analysis of a British/Irish film text, the second is a 1000-1500 word close analysis of a sequence in relation to formal film elements such as cinematography. The third is a creative piece in the form of a storyboard or screenplay for a scene from an imaginary film of your own.

In Module 2 you will learn about Producers and Audiences, essentially the institutions that make films (i.e. Hollywood) and how they are received by audiences. There will also be two separate units that focus on both British and American Cinema. Here we will be looking at key texts and the contexts in which they were made. This unit will offer both historical and contemporary examples.

Year 2

The A2 course builds on the knowledge and skills you have developed at AS level. The coursework unit is Module 3. For this you will complete two

pieces of work. The first is a 2000 word small scale research project in which you examine one film of your choice, in relation to either its star, director, genre, institution or social context.

The second is a creative application whereby you either design a desktop publication for a season of films or provide a screenplay of 1800 words. Both projects allow for an exploration of your own specified area of interest.

Module 4 is divided into three sections. Firstly, we will study world cinema, exploring a variety of films other than mainstream Hollywood forms, and making a close study of cinematic New Waves such as the French or Chinese.

Documentary film will also be examined, exploring the ways in which documentary filmmakers construct meaning and the ways in which audiences can be manipulated into a certain reading(s).

Lastly, there will be a single close study of an American text in relation to the spectator and critical debates surrounding the text. The film under scrutiny is one that had a significant impact when released.

Assessment

Modules 2, and 4 are examined in the summer. Coursework deadlines are set between December and March.

Specific Entry Criteria

Grade C in English Language.