



# Film Studies Curriculum

## Intent

### Curriculum Vision

#### *The Art of Storytelling*

Film Studies is the art of storytelling that has adapted and evolved throughout history. Students explore the development of visual art and technology, from silent film to its still-emerging digital future. Students develop an understanding of contemporary British films, historical and contemporary mainstream American films, as well as global films, in both English and non-English languages. The breadth of learning experience is broadened to include areas including documentary, experimental and short films.

Students are equipped with the practical skills needed to work independently and collaboratively. They learn to research, plan and create film texts in a diverse range of genres and contexts. Students apply their knowledge and understanding of how films are constructed in their own filmmaking and screenwriting, and are encouraged to appreciate the aesthetic artistry involved in the production of films. Students create their own productions, emulating specific styles and applying, or challenging, conventions of a genre. Students explore film theory, research industrial context and work with media professionals, gaining insight into the film industry.

### Concepts and Skills

#### **Theoretical:**

- A diverse range of film styles and genres
- Key social, historical, cultural and political contexts of films
- Key critical perspectives and movements, e.g. Postmodernism

#### **Analytical:**

- Apply critical approaches to film
- Apply critical analysis of images and meanings in film
- A critical understanding of film as an aesthetic medium
- A critical understanding of the different ways in which spectators respond to film

### **Practical:**

- Apply knowledge and understanding of film through either filmmaking or screenwriting
- Extended written analysis of films
- Exposure to a diverse range of film including documentary, film of the silent era, experimental film and short film
- Editing film using Adobe editing software
- Writing, filming and producing independent film

### **Disciplinary Literacy**

#### **Disciplinary approach**

In Film Studies we support the development of disciplinary vocabulary and the students' ability to read, write and communicate at an academic level so that they master the nuances of the curriculum. Students are equipped with the necessary tools needed to communicate effectively as audiences, critics and producers of film. Students explore and evaluate different styles and genres of film across a range of contexts and platforms, and learn to maintain a consistently perceptive and analytical approach to these, frequently highly challenging, texts. Learners develop a functioning understanding of subject-specific key words, enabling them to express their opinions on films accurately and succinctly.

#### **Interdisciplinary approach**

In order to support the mastery of key concepts in Film Studies, our interdisciplinary approach unites elements of English Language, English Literature, History, IT, Psychology and Sociology. Students develop an understanding of these disciplines in order to deepen their understanding of film and enable them to explore the importance of different critical perspectives.

#### **Intellectual autonomy**

In order to develop intellectual autonomy and confidence, we foster the willingness and ability of students in Film Studies to comprehend challenging texts, assimilate key concepts and synthesise them with prior learning. Students are equipped to think critically and apply strategies independently so that they can form their own cohesive conclusions and be able to express that in writing.

This is facilitated by a directed process of teaching students how to ask the necessary questions when approaching an unknown text. Students develop the stamina and resilience to approach a variety of different, challenging questions and problems that arise from reading film criticism and provocative texts, and develop the skills to write concisely, coherently and in a logical order.

Students are encouraged to engage in additional independent reading to deepen their media understanding. *WJEC Eduqas Film Studies for A Level & AS Student Book* by Lisa Wardle *et al.* (Illuminate Publishing, 2018) is a useful text book that covers core content for the A-level Film Studies course. We also recommend students to follow *britishfilminstitute*, *uk screenskills* and *sightsoundmagazine* Instagram accounts, and to sign up to the academic journal website JSTOR for access to free online academic articles.

#### **Application of Mathematics**

The curriculum recognises the need for students to be able to apply mathematics effectively. In Film Studies students use and develop their knowledge of quantities and measurements in order to logically plot social and historical developments in film via timelines. Students will also need to understand and evaluate statistical data relating to audience viewing demographics and financing implications for both niche and mass-marketed films.

#### **Independent Study**

In Film Studies students undertake both directed and self-directed independent learning activities that support the strengthening of long-term memory and retrieval. Independent study helps our students achieve mastery in Film Studies and prepares students to work at an undergraduate level.

Directed independent learning tasks set in Film Studies can include background reading to build knowledge and deeper connections to the existing frame of learning, or responding to interlocking

questions on a given topic across more than one text source. Self-directed independent study in Film Studies involves retrieval practice which is a crucial component of mastery. As students encounter challenges and learn to wrestle with demanding concepts and texts, they develop not only their knowledge and understanding but also resilience through perseverance.

Instead of revision being perceived as something that is crammed into a few weeks, independent study supports spaced practice throughout the curriculum. By repeatedly returning to content covered, students' knowledge has time to 'rest and be refreshed'.

We recognise that not all students process material at the same rate. Students who need extra support to achieve mastery are supported by targeted intervention in Film Studies, where a staged or 'scaffolded' process is used to enable students to move from being dependent learners to autonomous ones.

All students have access to our Academy library where a wide range of academic texts, journals and other resources are available.

## Implementation

### Overview Statement

The curriculum in Film Studies is sequenced coherently so that knowledge, concepts and skills are rigorously developed over time. This supports all students, including the most disadvantaged, and those with high levels of need, especially SEND. Planning is informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Cognitive Theory which support students in building secure schemas.

Interdisciplinary links and the application of mathematics are explicitly referenced and exploited in order to deepen understanding. Vocabulary is developed in Film Studies using the principles outlined in the Frayer Model and students are equipped to be able to read, write and speak like a film critic.

Through the use of independent study resources in Film Studies, students learn at greater depth so that they can become masters in Film Studies and in the skills required to be intellectually autonomous. This is implemented by encouraging students to be aware of cultural, political, historical and social contexts that are explored in film. In order to flourish in Film Studies, students need to have an independent awareness of current films, influences and technological developments that current filmmakers are exploring.

Regular retrieval-based activities strengthen long-term memory and aid fluency, as do our cumulative mid-term and end-of-year assessments.

Technology is employed as a fundamental aspect to strengthen learning. As part of the course, students will have the opportunity to make their own short film, meaning that they will learn the techniques required to film and edit short films. Students must maintain an awareness of recent developments in technology and explore how film makers have used technology in their craft.

Learning character is developed through exposing students to reflect upon the diversity of film culture. Students will become analytical, inquisitive, resilient and empathetic individuals as they explore other cultures via the medium of film. They will often be confronted with challenging concepts in these films and must approach these topics with maturity and emotional intelligence.

## Impact

The Key Stage 5 curriculum builds upon students' initial understanding, extending their knowledge in the areas of comparative film study, silent cinema and experimental film. Through developing their knowledge of early Hollywood films, modern American film, modern British film, global filmmaking perspectives and film movements they are able to critically analyse and make reference to images and meaning in film. Students also develop an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of their studies and this is supported through explicit cross-curricular links in English Language, English Literature, History, IT, Psychology and Sociology.

Students use their knowledge of cognitive theory to recognise and use the most impactful methods of revision and retrieval practice.

Academic progress in Film Studies is recognised through the A-level Film Studies qualification, which acts as a benchmark of mastery; this provides students with the national currency needed for access to higher education and apprenticeship courses, and prepares them for a career in any workplace.