

CCEA GCSE Moving Image Arts  
Summer Series 2017

# Chief Examiner's Report and Principal Moderator's Report

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arts



## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Moving Image Arts for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



## Contents

Assessment Unit 1	Acquisition of Skills in Moving Image Production (Controlled Assessment)	3
Assessment Unit 2	Planning and Making a Moving Image Product (Controlled Assessment)	6
Assessment Unit 3	Critical Response to Moving Image Products	11
Contact details		15



# GCSE MOVING IMAGE ARTS

## Principal Moderator's Report

This is the second award of the revised specification in GCSE Moving Image Arts. The popularity of GCSE Moving Image Arts continues to increase, with new centres entering in Summer 2017.

This year's controlled assessment work shows that students continue to develop strong practical skills in all aspects of film language through the Component 2 tasks in Year 11 and are responding with creativity and high levels of personal engagement to the challenges of Component 3 in Year 12. This report will highlight aspects of good practice seen in this year's entries and address the main points arising from this year's moderation, including discussion of:

- Positive Outcomes from the 2017 Series
- Suggestions for Improved Teaching and Learning
- Teacher Assessment

### Positive Outcomes from the 2017 Series

The outcomes from the Component 2 Controlled Assessment tasks show that centres are establishing a solid skills base across the various film language areas; the vast majority of candidates achieving marks mainly in Level 3 and 4, as was intended in the conception of the tasks.

The scenarios in Component 3 generated a range of personal and creative responses. The genres of Horror and Crime remain highly popular, as was also the case in previous years. Film work in the higher mark bands was technically accomplished and ambitious, effectively employing a range of camera and editing techniques and often exceeding what could reasonably be expected at GCSE level. It is encouraging to see many candidates shooting their films in interesting locations, away from the school environment. The quality this adds to the overall production value is well worth the students' effort and serves to make films more unique, memorable and individual.

### Suggestions for Improved Teaching and Learning

## Assessment Unit 1      Acquisition of Skills in Moving Image Production (Controlled Assessment)

### Task 1: Storyboarding

The Storyboarding task was well executed by the majority of candidates, with understanding of camera and editing techniques and the conventions of the Horror genre clearly in evidence within the submissions. This element was also marked realistically by the majority of centres.

Candidates demonstrated their understanding of storyboarding conventions and formats through clear numbering and labelling of shots, in most cases. All shots should be numbered, shot size labelled and a brief description of the action given – other details such as consideration of lighting, sound or dialogue may be included as appropriate.

The importance of the storyboard template selected was highlighted again at moderation this year. Some templates prompt students to consider a range of factors such as shot size, camera angles, movement etc. while other formats merely provide a space to draw into.

Considered selection of an appropriate template will be of benefit to students. A small number of candidates used templates from applications such as Comic Life, which do not provide a standardised frame for drawing and therefore hinder consideration of framing. These formats should not be used.

It is worth reminding centres that while artistic ability is not a focus for marking, there is an expectation that storyboards are well-presented. Annotation should be clearly legible and the quality of scanning must be reviewed by teachers before submission – a number of storyboards were difficult to view. A small number of centres had included typed annotation which was useful.

The use of reference images is beneficial to students when drawing their storyboards but should not be too closely adhered to – a number of storyboards used traced images, which also had the effect of limiting the candidates' own personal expression. There is no requirement for storyboards to be coloured in and the short time limit of two and a half hours would be likely to prohibit this in most cases. Some candidates used limited colour to emphasise aspects of the frames, which was effective. Objects need not be labelled within the frame or 'speech bubbles' used – additional written detail should be included within the annotation. Again, very few photographic storyboards were submitted this year and this option should be considered by schools. Photography is also a useful tool to support the drawing of storyboards, particularly the framing of characters. Candidates should be encouraged to think about shot composition as this is an element where they can demonstrate creativity within the task.

The task requires that the script is communicated accurately through visual storytelling. Some candidates altered the script's narrative, or used it as a starting point for their own storyline, and this is not to be encouraged as the focus is to produce a plan for camera and editing in response to a specific scripted narrative.

Storyboards were most successful where genre iconography and a range of shot sizes, camera angles and movement had been considered. Movement of the camera, character, or other elements within the frame should be considered and represented through the use of arrows. A persistent and common error was the mis-labelling of shots – images on the panels should correspond with the written information, e.g. a shot labelled CU should look like a CU, not a medium shot.

Understanding of continuity editing is also assessed and this is evidenced through the sequencing of shots, directional continuity and the inclusion of techniques such as eye-line match, cross-cutting or match-on-action at the higher levels. Again, shot labelling must match the image – there were 'match-on-action' shots which used only one shot rather than two matched shots, for example. It may be useful to remind candidates that one sentence from the script, or one action, can be conveyed over a number of shots.

In conclusion, the key elements for success in this task include the accurate and detailed translation of the script into a plan for camera and editing which showcases the candidates' knowledge of the specified genre and their understanding of visual storytelling techniques. A range of camera and editing techniques, such as composition, variety of shot sizes, use of camera movement and evidence of understanding of continuity editing techniques should be evident.

A good quality of presentation, including clearly legible and accurate numbering and labelling of frames and shot description is important. To achieve the highest level, moderators are looking for consistent consideration of all of these elements and some evidence of creativity.

## Task 2: Camera & Editing

Candidates responded well to the stimulus script, displaying technical skill in both camera and editing and using a range of creative techniques to portray the supernatural qualities of the 'haunted camera'. It was noted by moderators that the quality of cinematography is generally

superior in the outdoor scenes, whereas lighting proves more challenging in indoor scenes. It was encouraging to see less mobile phone footage than in previous years, although this problem persists to a degree.

The assessment criteria focuses on the range and effectiveness of camera and editing techniques used, the degree of technical control evident and the success of the film in achieving its purpose. As in Task 1, it is essential that candidates translate the full content of the script into their film.

In Level 2 submissions, the narrative often tends to be incoherent or disjointed, with parts of the script omitted. *Mise-en-scene* is often not considered at this level and, in most cases, there are significant issues with lighting, framing and focus. With regard to editing, overuse of transitions hindered continuity editing in some films at this level while others had unintentional jump-cuts.

Level 3 submissions tend to be characterised by mainly competent and appropriate use of camera and editing techniques to convey the narrative. Camerawork is mainly steady, suggesting use of a tripod, and recorded shots mainly in focus. There would typically be evidence that *mise-en-scene* had been considered to some extent in this level and the storyline would be mainly clearly conveyed.

Level 4 films demonstrate confident understanding of camera and editing techniques and a more creative approach at the upper end, often through carefully considered *mise-en-scene*, shot selection and composition. Camerawork is controlled and purposeful at this level, with use of more skillful techniques, such as movement and manual focus etc. Editing is well-paced at this level, with continuity techniques such as match-on-action clearly in evidence.

The aspects of this task where technical improvements could be made remain consistent year on year – the variety, composition, focus and steadiness of shots, controlled use of camera movement and more considered and consistent use of continuity editing techniques. Candidates must ensure that a tripod is used in all shots, except those which are intentionally handheld, as this is an effective means of improving the overall production value of the filmed sequence. The issue of shaky camerawork is persistent and negatively impacts outcomes. Students should be encouraged to shoot outside of the school environment, where possible, as this can increase the overall production quality.

A lesser number of submissions were over the specified length this year and centres must ensure that films do not extend beyond a minute in length. This task was generally marked realistically by most centres, with a tendency towards leniency in some cases.

### Task 3: Postproduction Sound

This task is designed to assess candidates' ability to create, select, sync and edit a range of recorded sounds in order to create an appropriate, convincing and atmospheric multi-layered soundtrack. Centres should ensure that students select only twenty seconds of the clip provided, as outlined in the task detail. A significant number of students are creating a soundtrack for the entire provided clip (approximately one minute) and this is an unnecessary level of work.

A large number of centres did not submit a screengrab of the editing interface and the sound log as specified in the task detail. This is an essential element of the submission and enables moderators to accurately evaluate the work undertaken by the candidate. The screengrab of the editing interface should be presented on one page where possible to provide a clear overview of the edited sequence. There is no need for students to provide additional annotation to this or to present their work in Powerpoint form.

The clip from *The Iron Giant* stimulated highly effective work from many candidates, combining music, sound effects and foley with skill. The sound for the footsteps of the Iron Giant proved challenging for some, often sounding too light in quality or as if they were walking across a hard surface. The ability to select or create sound effects which are convincing and believable distinguished the work of the stronger candidates. As the selection of appropriate sounds is a

key element of the task, teachers should discourage students from sharing the sounds they have sourced. Students should be encouraged to create their own foley sounds as this is an essential part of the task.

Level 2 work tends to be characterised by significant lack of sound design in the final composition – on-screen action is not always matched with sound, sound effects/music may be inappropriate, out of synch or jar against each other, resulting in an unconvincing soundtrack. There is usually little or no foley sound created at this level.

In Level 3 work, the application of sound techniques is mainly consistent, with a range of sounds combined to create appropriate atmosphere. Weaknesses tend to be found in the sound editing, for example where the musical score dominates over the sound effects.

In Level 4 submissions, the vast majority of on-screen action is matched with diegetic sounds, which are appropriate, well-synched and obtained from a range of sources. The highest achieving candidates had created a number of original foley sounds and volume levels were adjusted appropriately throughout, creating an effective and believable soundtrack.

Centre marking of this task was the most inconsistent overall. The evidence provided by the sound logs and editing interface is essential to assess the level and detail of the work undertaken by the student. This should be considered alongside the effectiveness of the final product.

## Task 4: Animation

The Animation tasks showed improvement this year, with a marked reduction in the number of students using Lego and opting for jointed models of various kinds, which better facilitate the creation of more smooth, life-like movements.

The selection of an appropriate model is a key factor for success in this task. Wooden art manikins remain a popular choice as they are easily accessible and allow a range of movement. A small number of centres built simple twisted wire models which worked effectively. A few centres are still building models from plasticine, which often tends to result in bulky characters that are difficult to manipulate. There is no requirement for students to create their own characters or sets. The specification suggests that the sequence is filmed against a simple white background to ensure that the focus is on the animated movements. There are no fixed rules on the framing of the sequence; a fixed camera position ensures that the full movement of the figure can be clearly viewed while the use of various shot sizes can add to the overall expressiveness of the character's actions and responses.

The factors for success in this task are the quality of the animated movements and the degree of camera control. The camera should be steady and controlled throughout and shots should be of appropriate duration. This was problematic in lower level work, where too few images had been captured to create the illusion of fluid movement. Students should be encouraged to consider the length of the shots required before they begin to capture the images. In the work of weaker candidates, the camera was frequently uncontrolled, making viewing difficult and the animated movements were minimal, creating a 'stills' effect at times.

In the work of the highest achieving candidates, a good quality walk cycle was evident, indicating a more detailed knowledge of techniques, and the character responded in a fluid and expressive way. There was also evidence that reference footage had been used in some cases.

This task was marked realistically by most centres and is the only task where marking tended towards severity at times.

## Assessment Unit 2      Planning and Making a Moving Image Product (Controlled Assessment)

Component 3 gives students the opportunity to create their own production portfolio, including one genre-based short film and associated creative and organisational preproduction materials. Starting points are provided in the Component 3 task booklet in the form of genre-specific scenarios. The intention here is to ensure that all students can access an initial idea from the outset, preventing the loss of class time to the initial generation of ideas. This appears to be working well with almost all film submissions having a clear narrative. The most popular genres selected by students this year were again the Horror and Crime genres.

Component 3 was marked less consistently by centres than Component 2 in this series. The aspects where most discrepancy was evident were the Research Analysis and Evaluation and the Film.

### Research Analysis & Evaluation (AO3)

The Research Analysis sets out the creative objectives of the final film and how genre conventions and specific film language techniques will be used. The synopsis should be included within this statement and the selected genre and scenario made evident. Overall, some improvement in the quality of work for this element was seen at moderation. There was a marked reduction in plagiarised content and some exemplary pieces of written analysis were seen. There are, however, recurrent issues with the approach to and presentation of the Research Analysis.

The style of this statement varied widely from centre to centre, showing that each teacher had their own interpretation of the specification. The statement should be presented as prose, rather than bullet points, and may take the form of a word document or Keynote/Powerpoint. The statement must be written before the film production process - in a few cases it was evident that it had been written after. The specification denotes a word count of 600-800 words but at Agreement Trial it was agreed that 1000 words would be acceptable. The word count is routinely exceeded by many centres, often as a result of the inclusion of material not relevant to the assessment objectives. This is particularly evident when Keynote presentations are used. Quality of written communication is assessed in this piece of work and candidates should be encouraged to use spellcheck before final submission.

The focus of the Research Analysis is two-fold; analysis and evaluation of the work of others and the establishment of carefully considered personal creative goals. In many cases, the Research Analysis was overly weighted towards either sequence analyses or discussion of the candidate's own goals. In effect, it should be a discussion of how analysis of the work of others has informed the candidate's own goals. The synopsis should be concisely stated. Some candidates spend much of the word count on this and therefore do not include sufficient detail about film language techniques. The synopsis can be presented in greater detail within the later planning.

Many candidates took a broad approach to the genre research aspect of the statement, including a breadth of historical and contextual information that was unnecessary and irrelevant to the assessment objectives. Students' research should be focused on the aspects of the genre which relate to their own ideas – there is no need to research or present knowledge on the genre as a whole.

Sequence analysis is the key element of this statement. The assessment criteria state 'analysis of film language in the work of others is detailed, sustained and well-illustrated' and this means that specific examples of work need to be identified and analysed by candidates.

Students should select a small number of appropriate genre-specific reference sequences to inform the planning for their own production. A narrower range of references allows candidates

to engage in more in-depth analysis. The selection of sequences should be based on the relevance of the film techniques employed, not the storyline. Students should include detailed written analysis of the sequence which clearly identifies, analyses and evaluates the use of film language techniques and considers how these techniques could be used within their own planned sequences. The written analysis should be illustrated with purposefully annotated and relevant images/screengrabs from the selected sequences. Frequently, students analyse single shots rather than a sequence which does not enable them to consider how various techniques combine to produce an emotional response from the audience.

Candidates' creative and technical goals for their own production should be explicitly set out within this statement. Candidates can often set goals which are too general, such as 'the use of varied shot sizes and angles'. This is a key consideration of almost any moving image product and does not reflect personal research into genre conventions and techniques. Goals should be more fully considered, detailed and explicitly linked to the work of others they have analysed. The highest achieving candidates established clear creative and technical goals which reflected the genre conventions and film language techniques they had observed in the work of others in their written analysis. There was a noticeable improvement from last year in candidates' understanding of how to discuss their personal goals and integrate these with their sequence analysis.

The Evaluation is marked alongside the Research Analysis and should reflect on degrees of success achieved in the final film in relation to the goals originally established. Moderators noted a marked increase on last year in candidates discussing test screenings and audience response. Often, Evaluations were of the same quality or better than the Research Analysis, showing the extent to which candidates' understanding had been extended through the filmmaking process. Moderators noted greater consistency in candidates reflecting back on their creative goals and appraising how successful they have been in fulfilling these objectives, which was encouraging.

A number of centres, however, continue to approach the Evaluation as a description of the process of making the film, rather than an appraisal of its creative and technical success. Discussion of factors such as technical failures, unreliable actors etc. is not relevant and should be avoided. Screengrabs are useful in enabling students to focus on specific aspects which were successful or in need of further development. It can also be useful to include screengrabs of the editing stage in order to illustrate the complexity of the work undertaken.

Level 2 work was often characterised by little real analysis and the inclusion of irrelevant information. Links with the work of others tend to be general and superficial, brief discussion or naming of a film, for example. Discussion of the narrative, theme, and mise-en-scene tends to dominate the statement while less understanding of the other areas of film language is evident. The Evaluation may be descriptive, retelling what had been done to make the film.

In Level 3, appropriate filmic references were selected in the form of specific shots or scenes. These were discussed with understanding but without significant depth or detail. Personal goals were outlined in more general terms, again lacking detailed consideration. The Evaluations considered the effectiveness of film language techniques within various aspects of the final film.

Work in the highest level, Level 4, was focused, concise and well written. Relevant sequences were selected and analysed in some detail, with film language terms being used perceptively. This analysis clearly informed the candidates' own goals – e.g. the techniques to be used, effects created etc. Personal goals were discussed in more detail, for example plans for specific shots or sequences. The Evaluations assessed the effectiveness of the film work in relation to the original goals and many aspects of film language were evaluated perceptively, with evidence.

## **Preproduction (Screenplay/Storyboard) (AO2a)**

The Creative Preproduction work was generally of a high standard, with the majority of students submitting thorough preproduction materials in an appropriate format and attaining Level 3 or 4.

As in Task 1, the template selected for the storyboard influenced the level of detail that candidates included. A number of centres used photography as a means to produce highly effective storyboards. This is a useful process for rehearsing the production and considering mise-en-scène more fully. If taking this approach, it is important to stress to candidates that the orientation of their photographs must be landscape rather than portrait in order to fully benefit from compositional practice. It is crucial to note also that photographic storyboards must not be still images taken from the final product, as this does not provide evidence of planning. This applies equally to storyboards which have been traced from the final film, which were seen for the first time this year. These are easy to spot and are a waste of the student's time as they do not constitute planning. It is important also to note that storyboards and corresponding shot lists must closely match one another.

The formatting of scripts emerged as a greater issue this year. Scripts should be correctly formatted and an exemplar is available on the microsite and also within the Component 2 stimulus materials. As one page of correctly formatted script equates to around a minute of screen time, it would be expected that scripts are around two pages in length. Many scripts fell short of this, reflecting underdevelopment of the narrative. As in previous years, scripts which rely heavily on dialogue often translate into less effective final products and students should be encouraged to use visual storytelling techniques. There was a continuing over-reliance on use of mobile phones, texting, etc. as a storytelling device within the scripts and films.

## **Preproduction (Shotlist/Shooting Schedule & Director's Notebook) (AO2b)**

Shotlists and shooting schedules were well executed by the majority of centres. In a few instances, shotlists appeared in the form of 'Shot 1 – CU', which does not communicate the student's intentions. A shot list should include the shot number, shot type and a brief description of the shot itself in order to show sufficient planning. They should also correlate to the storyboards.

The Director's Notebook should be 5-10 pages in length and show visual planning for the production, exploring aspects such as mise-en-scène, setting, costume, etc. Visual planning was evident to some degree in the work of most candidates but there remains room for improvement within this element, with few students including purposeful first-hand research in their work.

Most centres produce this element as a digital document; a Keynote or Powerpoint presentation in which aspects of film language are considered in more depth than is possible within the statement. In the best examples, candidates present purposeful, relevant visual research exploring their selected genre and their own ideas, taking the form of annotated images showing genre iconography, photographs from location scouting or make-up trials, screengrabs of inspirational or influential shots from other films, artistic references, etc. Screengrabs from students' own experimental filming and photography provide evidence of further practical exploration of their ideas allowing them to access the higher mark bands. Having said this, some centres included evidence of workshops carried out in the school – for example, green screen, time lapse, desaturation etc. and, whilst this is encouraging and impressive to see, in most cases it did not connect to the candidates' own intentions or final films. The relevance and purposefulness of the material included is the key consideration – the work of stronger candidates is marked by a clear focus on the final film. For example, where artistic references are included, they are related to the mise-en-scène of the planned production.

A significant number of students continue to include generic images of 'everyday' clothing, rooms and objects such as mobile phones within their notebooks. While this is acceptable to a certain extent, it is generally not indicative of creative and focused preparation for filming. Included images should be annotated and should meaningfully inform the development of ideas.

The planning elements were marked realistically and consistently by centres, in the main.

## Film (AO2a)

The Film element was often the strongest piece of work for many candidates and generally film outcomes indicate ongoing improvement, with fewer low Level 2 films in evidence. There were examples of film work that exceeded what could reasonably be expected at GCSE level. Some candidates had worked very hard with mise-en-scene or gone to considerable effort with locations, which was encouraging to see. Horror and Crime remain the most popular genres with students – zombie, detention and good cop/bad cop films were among the most frequently seen at moderation. Some of the scenarios require that mise-en-scene is creatively considered. Filming outside of the school environment generally yields better results but there were some notable exceptions to this rule, where school buildings had been complemented by props and costumes and became very effective settings. The vast majority of submissions were live action films. Students should be encouraged to consider using animation for Component 3, remembering that techniques other than stop-motion may be used in this component.

Camera and editing is an area of strength within the film submissions, indicating solid teaching and learning in schools. In addition to planning and directing, each student must be the camera operator on all shots within their production. The issue of ‘shaky footage’ remains a weakness in many centres; the use of a tripod is essential for all, except deliberately hand-held, shots. While the hand-held camera technique can be effective, when students make films using only this technique, it is difficult to find evidence of their skill in the use of camera and editing.

Lighting is a consideration within Component 3 and some highly effective examples of ‘noir’ lighting were seen within the Crime genre films.

The Film element requires students to produce a soundtrack which should be multi-layered and use the sound editing skills developed in Task 3. It is useful for students to include screengrabs of the editing interface to ensure that significant work done in this area is fully evidenced and appreciated.

The importance of mise-en-scene in the creation of genre-based films cannot be overstated. Students should be encouraged to take a more ambitious approach to mise-en-scene, by filming outside of the familiar environments of school and home where possible.

In conclusion, the main factors which limit marks continue to be unsteady camera work, poor lighting, single layer soundtrack and underdeveloped consideration of mise-en-scene.

## Full Portfolio (AO1)

The awarding of AO1 marks to the ‘full portfolio’ aims to assess candidates’ knowledge & understanding of film language and of the conventions and techniques appropriate to the chosen genre. This evidence may be written, visual or filmic and may therefore be found in the Research Analysis and Evaluation, in the Preproduction elements or in the final film.

Film language terminology being used accurately and with understanding is a key element to attaining the higher levels at AO1 and the mark should be awarded after all the other elements have been marked. In many cases, the resulting mark for AO1 may be an average of attainment in the other assessment objectives but the criteria should be reviewed before awarding a mark.

## Teacher Assessment

The e-CRS system was used well by all centres. Teacher assessment of Component 2 was mainly accurate and within tolerance for many centres, which is commendable. Where marks fell outside of tolerance, it was usually due to leniency in the marking of the tasks, with the exception of Task 4 Animation, which was sometimes marked with a degree of severity.

In Component 3, significantly more centres fell outside of tolerance. There was most discrepancy in the marking of the Research Analysis, Evaluation and final films, which were

often marked with leniency. As the marks awarded for AO1 reflect the marks for these significant elements, inaccuracy in their marking can be further amplified at AO1 pushing marks outside of tolerance. The marking of the Research Analysis remains the most problematic where, at times, candidates are not fully meeting the assessment objectives but being awarded high marks.

## Submission of Work for Moderation

Controlled assessment work was generally submitted in accordance with the guidelines given in the majority of cases.

In Component 2, some issues persist with the submission of work for Task 1, Storyboarding, and Task 3, Postproduction Sound. Storyboards should be scanned and combined into a single .pdf document and checked to ensure that pages are correctly orientated and legible. The quality of scanning was an issue for a number of storyboards submitted. For Task 3, Postproduction Sound, screengrabs and a sound log must be submitted and a number of centres did not submit these documents. In Component 2 submission of Tasks 2 and 4 was generally unproblematic.

The guidelines for Component 3 submission of work contained in the Instructions to Teachers booklet should also be reviewed before submission to ensure that files are presented correctly within a single folder. Films should be compressed according to the guidance provided on the CCEA Moving Image Arts microsite. While candidates are responsible for the compression and submission of their work, it is essential that teachers check the content of the folders before submission to CCEA to ensure smooth moderation.

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Assessment Unit 3

### Critical Response to Moving Image Products

#### Introduction

The new revised GCSE Moving Image Arts specification is bedding in well. The revised examination has been well received by candidates and they have coped well with the much wider range of knowledge and skills that are now assessed in this new specification. Candidates sitting this exam had to show knowledge and understanding of each of the five film language areas and a range of film genres identified in the specification. They were also required to recall information on industry and technical practices and complete a creative task.

The method of distribution of the exam to centres is much smoother and simpler than previous exams. There were very few technical difficulties and those that did occur were quickly identified by the invigilators and had minimal impact on the candidates sitting the exam. A wide range of ability was presented, from those achieving very high marks and demonstrating an excellent analytical ability which was impressive for their age, to a number of much weaker pupils who found the exam to be quite challenging, especially in those questions that required extended writing and comparative analysis. Most candidates, however, demonstrated a growing ability to critically evaluate moving image products and are adapting well to this new exam. The exam caters well for mixed ability candidates and is both theory and industry focused. The connection of learning through the coursework element of the course is evident and allows for a large number of candidates to display their level of understanding of the filmmaking process.

#### Teaching

As a part of the revision process a considerable number of support documents and training for teachers was produced and offered. These consisted of sample assessment materials, workshops

and fact files on many of the key areas to be covered in the examination. These materials provided a solid foundation for teachers to plan their lessons on and as a result enabled their pupils to perform admirably in most sections of the exam.

There were a few areas, however, where it was evident that pupils were struggling. Knowledge of editing proved to be problematic. Many candidates confused post production techniques and sound design for editing. Many were also unsure in their understanding of the term cross cutting, which led to unfocused responses. Also, the questions that required specific knowledge on the responsibilities of a production designer, the purpose of a shot list and what an eyeline match was, were answered erratically by a significant number of pupils. These areas need to be addressed more specifically in the teaching of this specification and have been supported by the production of the fact files that all pupils should be given access to.

It is clear that some candidates have serious difficulty in expressing themselves clearly in a written format. We would encourage these candidates to write in their own voice and write as if they were talking to their teacher. Breaking down their response under individual headings may also help them focus on the techniques being discussed.

Many candidates also struggled with the compare and contrast question. It is important in the candidate's response to this question that they cover both sequences and offer some points of similarity or contrast between them.

## Exam Technique

The new exam interface has aided candidates in completing all of the questions and effectively managing their time. There were very few instances where it was clear that candidates ran out of time. The structure of the exam placed the higher stakes questions in the middle part of the exam and led candidates into these responses with more basic questions that framed their thought process and built their confidence.

An issue that persists from the old exam is that many candidates do not carefully read the question and then answer accordingly. This year we saw an increased number of candidates from all abilities drifting off the subject of the question to cover other areas of film language that were not asked for. Some candidates are also still covering the low mark questions in too much depth and not answering the higher marks questions in sufficient depth. To gain marks in the upper mark bands, candidates must address all of the elements asked for in sufficient depth and with a clarity of written expression that makes the meaning suitably clear.

## Exam Structure

The new exam is split into three sections. Section 1 covers Film Language, Genre and Representation. Section 2 requires Comparative Analysis of two film sequences and Section 3 addresses Creative Production, Management and Industry Contexts.

The exam structure and question types used throughout allow candidates of all abilities to make a variety of attempts at all questions; usually the low mark questions in sections one and three were those best answered by candidates of all abilities. The longer responses asked for in Question 6(c) and Question 7 call for greater involvement from the candidate. In these questions the candidate must explain or discuss how various elements of film language or genre conventions are used within the sequence. It is within these questions that the most able candidates can bring forth their own insights and judgments. An essay based response is required here. Question 14 is a creative task that requires candidates to create a shot list from a given piece of screenplay. This is a new venture in a Moving Image Arts exam and seeks to examine a candidate's creative decision-making skills. Most candidates coped well in this question.

## Responses

### Section A

- Q1** This question was answered competently, without issue by the majority of candidates.
- Q2** Most candidates could not define what an eyeline match is. This revealed a lack of deeper knowledge of editing techniques in general for many candidates.
- Q3** These were answered successfully by most candidates who used the appropriate terminology for this lighting technique. In Part (b) the atmosphere of awe and wonder was articulated in many forms including shock and confusion. Many candidates demonstrated an adequate ability to describe the fantasy world with reference to how lighting impacted the mise-en-scene.
- Q4** A large number of candidates answered part a correctly with a small number incorrectly listing children's or animation as a genre. Part (b) was addressed well by most candidates and in Part (c) the most confident candidates demonstrated a sound level of understanding of comedy i.e. parody, slapstick etc. The strongest responses discussed the humour of contrast between the protagonist and antagonist. Many candidates across the range of abilities, however, did at some point drift off topic and discuss how the music contributed to the humour of the scene.
- Q5** These representation questions were mostly understood by the candidates. Many connected their response to the screen shot and as a result made a reasonable attempt to discuss male teenage stereotypes. However, some responses were very generic and fell short of the depth that was required for both marks in Parts (a) and (b). In Part (c) there was a significant variation of response. It was often difficult to decipher the responses given, particularly by weaker candidates. Few candidates gave two well-articulated points that would have gained them all six marks (2x3).
- Q6** Parts (a) and (b) of this question were answered competently by most candidates. Part (c) presented a greater challenge. Poor knowledge and understanding of editing techniques was evident. There was a distinct absence of appropriate film terminology, although analysis and sense of purpose was generally good. Many scripts included reference to sound as a distinct part of the editing process, rather than concentrating on identifying specific editing techniques. The camera part of the question was more competently addressed.

### Section B

- Q7** The best responses in this section made solid comparisons throughout, discussing similarities and differences. Some candidates only focused on one area of film language as a point of comparison.

The strongest and most articulate responses compared and contrasted from the outset and throughout. Many of the middle band candidates dealt with one sequence as a standalone and then the next with a short conclusion making connections between the two. The contrasting styles of presenting war on screen was noted by many and articulated well. Some candidates still demonstrated confusion regarding diegetic and non-diegetic sound.

This question allowed stronger candidates to excel and demonstrate a genuine knowledge and awareness of film language and its ability to create mood and atmosphere. Some candidates, however, displayed great fluency in their expression but there was a distinct absence of film terminology. This greatly affected the mark awarded. Some candidates referred to film language areas beyond the two asked in the question. These candidates often commented at length on mise-en-scene. Awareness of purpose and context, was

in the main very strong, but this was not always supported by film language. Reference to terminology specific to use of sound was often poorly executed. Camera terminology was more easily applied albeit key aspects were sometimes overlooked.

## Section C

- Q8** Many candidates struggled to identify two UK or Irish Film Funding Organisations. They listed production companies or movie studios instead.
- Q9** This question on the responsibilities of a production designer was answered with varying degrees of success. There were many responses that were too general, stating things that a production designer might do but which were not explicitly or specifically their responsibility. It is clear that those who studied the fact files were most successful in this question.
- Q10** Many candidates successfully answered this question, however, a surprising number of candidates could not articulate what a shot list is.
- Q11** Many candidates seemed to have either misread this question on health and safety or failed to see the opening statement before Part (a) of the question. This statement gave context to the questions and as a result of missing this, many of the responses were very general and tenuous. It is important that candidates carefully read all parts of the question before responding. Many also listed tripping over things as both of their hazards. Each hazard needs to be distinct.
- Q12** These questions on camera technique were answered well by the majority of candidates. This area of film language seems to have been taught well in all centres.
- Q13** Many candidates struggled with this question. A knowledge of the most common file types used in film production is required. MP3's are not suitable for a variety of reasons. .wav or .aiff was the correct response.
- Q14** There was a slight improvement this year on the quality of shot lists, though candidates should aim to vary the types of shots chosen and avoid repetition of shots. There were few very strong responses, probably due to time constraints, but generally candidates produced competent shot lists. Further consideration of camera angles and movements would improve many responses. Many candidates are still using vague shot choices such as POV or OTS without details of a specific shot size, and doing this for angles and movements too. Candidates should aim to include the shot type, shot size, camera angle and movement where appropriate (e.g. medium, low angle POV).

## Note on the use of support materials and fact files:

The new format exams do not have set texts to study. All sequences and stimulus material are unseen and will test the candidate's understanding of film language elements and genre codes and conventions. The exam also covers industry contexts and management roles. Fact files to frame the teaching of these elements are available on the Moving Image Arts microsite. You will also find many other useful resources there to aid in planning lessons on the prescribed genres and identifying film language elements and analysing these.

Exemplification of exam performance (EEP) will also be available this year. This will aid in teaching exam technique.

## Contact details

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