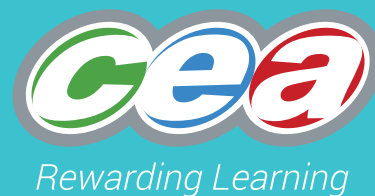


GCSE



**Chief Examiner's and
Principal Moderator's Report
Moving Image Arts**

Summer Series 2022



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2022 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.

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GCSE MOVING IMAGE ARTS

Chief Examiner's Report

Subject Overview

In a culture that is significantly shaped and influenced by audiovisual discourse, this specification promotes candidates' development as individuals and skilled contributors to the creative and cultural industries. It enables candidates to use creative and critical skills in viewing, writing, directing, producing, and editing film. It also promotes the development of creative enterprise, technical, organizational and people management skills. Candidates will develop contextual knowledge and critical skills when researching and applying a variety of historical and contemporary moving image techniques. The course allows candidates to make connections between their own work and that produced in the wider creative industries. It will also provide candidates with the opportunity to progress to higher levels of study, vocational training, and employment. Our GCSE Moving Image Arts is an applied qualification in which candidates develop knowledge, understanding and skills through practical demonstration in a context related to employability.

Component 1 Critical Understanding of Creative and Technical Moving Image Production

Overview

This online examination requires candidates to respond to questions and scenarios relating to:

- Film Language;
- Genre and Representation;
- Creative Production Techniques;
- Production Management; and
- Industry Contexts.

The exam includes a variety of different types of stimulus, including previously unseen film clips, sound clips, film stills and script excerpts.

The exam is split into three sections.

Section 1 covers Film Language, Genre and Representation.

Section 2 requires Comparative Analysis of two film sequences.

Section 3 addresses Creative Production, Management and Industry Contexts.

Summer 2022 saw a full return to the Component 1 exam. Overall the vast majority of candidates fared well and were able to disseminate their knowledge and understanding of the core film language areas and genre theory. Almost all candidates were able to gain marks in the higher value questions and there were very few instances of unanswered questions. This year's exam was accessible for all students and Sections A and C provided opportunities to gain marks for candidates who may have struggled with the longer analytical questions. An issue that persists is that significant numbers of candidates do not carefully read the question and then answer accordingly. Again, this year we saw candidates of 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 then not answering the higher marks questions in sufficient depth. To gain marks in the upper mark bands, candidates must address all the elements asked for in sufficient depth and with a clarity of written expression that makes the meaning suitably clear.

Section A

- Q1** This question was answered competently by most candidates. A common mistake was to list a shot size rather than a camera angle which was an invalid response.
- Q2** Almost all candidates had some understanding of what a genre hybrid is. This was one of the questions where special consideration was given this year. If the response showed some understanding then both marks were awarded.
- Q3 (a) to (c)** These were answered successfully by most candidates who correctly identified the tilt up shot and the mood it created. Many of the responses to Question 3(c) were too basic and did not explain the impact of the movement clearly enough to gain the additional mark.
- Q4 (a) to (c)** Most candidates answered Question 4(a) appropriately, with some referring to natural lighting (this was valid only if some additional explanation was provided). Question 4(b) was addressed well by most candidates, however, a lack of understanding of editing techniques was very evident, even from those of high ability. Many responses cited cross-cutting and jump cuts, which were not evident in the sequence. However, many candidates who provided invalid editing techniques in Question 4(b) were back credited from Question 4(c); here candidates maybe referred to flashbacks, montage, and overlay/superimposition (all valid editing techniques). Overall explanations for Question 4(c) showed sound understanding, enough to gain one or two marks. Few candidates gained all four marks in this question by providing a well-articulated explanation, showing clear understanding.
- Q5 (a) to (c)** Nearly all candidates showed sufficient understanding here. How candidates view the representation of black people in film is very broad. This made the interpretation of what impression the director was trying to give of the characters in Question 5(b) more difficult for some. In Question 5(c) most candidates were able to identify two elements of mise-en-scene and provide some explanation of how they were used to depict the characters.

- Q6 (a) to (c)** Most candidates gave a valid response for Question 6(a) (although some listed animation or family, neither of which are film genres). In Question 6(b) many candidates were too generic with their response, referring to props, location or setting. Specific examples of these were needed. It was common for candidates to have mentioned specific elements in Question 6(c) and were able to be back credited in Question 6(b). In Question 6(c) many candidates made general, rather than specific, comments on how techniques were used in the sequence. It was notable that many candidates failed to reference specific film language terminology in their response. Also, many addressed other film language areas other than mise-en-scene or camera and some responses were very descriptive and lacked the depth required.

Section B

- Q7** The best responses in this section made solid comparisons throughout, discussing similarities and differences. 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 lower ability candidates were able to engage with the mood of the clips but lacked depth in their analysis and specific use of terminology.

There were fewer instances of candidates analysing the wrong film language areas in this question this year. This is clearly something that has been focused on as part of exam technique. Candidates were also more likely to include comparisons and contrasts in their response. Sound was the film language area that tended to be stronger in the responses here. Depth of analysis is still the main element that is limiting candidates moving beyond Level 2. The precise use of terminology is another area that could be improved. There were many instances of candidates using zoom instead of forward tracking, or panning instead of tilting.

It is encouraging to see a growing number of candidates presenting very confident and thorough knowledge and understanding of the question and sound ability to critically compare and contrast the sequences.

Section C

- Q8** Most candidates were able to recall three animation techniques.
- Q9** Almost all candidates had some understanding of what an independent film production is. This was one of the questions where special consideration was given. If the response showed some understanding then both marks were awarded.
- Q10** Very few candidates were able to recall two responsibilities of a screenwriter. It is essential that candidates are made aware of the fact files that will enable them to score better in this section of the exam.
- Q11 (a) & (b)** There were very few instances of candidates not reading the health and safety scenario before giving a response this year. This question was answered consistently well across the board with many lower ability candidates accessing the full range of marks in both parts of the question.
- Q12 (a) to (c)** These questions on camera technique were answered well by the majority of candidates and most got full marks.

Q13 Most candidates knew what third person narration is. There were quite a few, however, that made some interesting guesses. A common misconception was that “it is when the on-screen character is speaking when they are off-screen”.

Q14 There was a slight improvement this year in the quality of shot lists. 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).

Principal Moderator’s Report

Component 2 Acquisition of Skills in Moving Image Production

Overview

In Component 2, candidates complete four controlled assessment tasks from a stimulus booklet released annually by CCEA. The stimulus tasks have remained unchanged since 2019 as a result of the disruption to teaching and learning caused by the pandemic. Component 2 was eligible for omission in 2022 and a significantly reduced number of centres opted to undertake this unit in this series; the work seen this year therefore represents only a small proportion of the GCSE Moving Image 2022 cohort. The controlled assessment tasks are :

- Task 1 Storyboarding;
- Task 2 Camera & Editing;
- Task 3 Sound; and
- Task 4 Animation.

The Component 2 controlled assessment tasks are designed to support the development of practical skills in all of the film language areas and the majority of candidates succeed in attaining marks in Levels 3 and 4. Minor issues persist in the submission of Task 1, Storyboarding, and Task 3, Postproduction Sound. We recommend that storyboards should be scanned and combined into a single pdf document and checked to ensure that pages are fully viewable. Task 3, Postproduction Sound, requires that a screengrab and sound log be submitted in order to accurately assess the work undertaken by candidates. Submission of Tasks 2 and 4 is generally unproblematic.

Task 1: Storyboarding

In Task 1, candidates create a storyboard in response to the genre-specific script provided by CCEA, through which they can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of visual storytelling techniques, camera and editing techniques and genre conventions. The time specified for completion of this task is 2 ½ hours.

The storyboard may be hand-drawn or photographic, or a combination of these techniques and drawing remains the most popular means of production. Drawing skill is not itself a focus for marking, although a reasonable effort to convey action, character and setting is expected. There is no requirement for hand-drawn storyboards to be coloured and the specified time for the task would likely limit this. For those candidates who choose to create photographic storyboards, it is important to remember that genre elements can be drawn in later and so imagination and creativity need not be limited by what is available to be photographed. Examples where software was used to create the storyboards were generally seen to be less effective in conveying a range of shot sizes, angles and creative genre elements and shot composition tended to lack personal creativity.

The selection of an appropriate template can impact student success; the most effective templates encourage consideration of a range of factors such as shot size, camera angles and movement. Moderators noted that prompts to describe editing often led to errors, where a lack of understanding on the part of the candidate then became evident. Understanding of editing techniques can be seen through the sequencing of shots and use of techniques such as directional continuity, eyeline match, cross-cutting or match-on-action in the planned shots. Common errors persist, such as mislabelling of shots, movements and continuity techniques; descriptions need to be predominantly accurate to access the highest level.

This task was completed competently and marked realistically by the majority of centres. Task outcomes should be checked before submission to ensure that they are combined into a single, clearly readable document.

Task 2: Camera & Editing

In Task 2, candidates produce a one minute film in response to the stimulus script issued by CCEA, which provides an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of camera and continuity editing techniques through practical work. In general, candidates responded well to the stimulus script but moderators noted that use of continuity techniques is not seen across all centres and is therefore often indicative of higher level work. Some films are still significantly over the specified length and centres must ensure that films do not greatly extend beyond one minute in length. The task was generally marked realistically by most centres, with a tendency towards leniency at times.

Candidates are assessed on the range and effectiveness of the camera and editing techniques used and the degree of creative success in realising the script narrative. Higher level film work demonstrated confident understanding of techniques, evident through purposeful, controlled use of camera, more considered shot composition and some use of more advanced camera techniques. Lower level films showed less control and purpose in the camerawork and more limited knowledge of continuity editing techniques. Issues such as shaky footage, 'hosepiping', overuse of transitions, unintentional jump-cuts, lighting, framing and focus are frequently evident in the lower levels. The aspects of this task where improvement could be made remain consistent each year – variety, composition, and steadiness of shots recorded, controlled use of camera movement and more considered use of continuity editing techniques.

Task 3: Postproduction Sound

In Task 3, candidates create a multi-layered soundtrack to a twenty second clip selected from a longer clip provided by CCEA. This year's clip was taken from the Pixar short 'Lifted', which provided candidates with the opportunity to create an ambient indoor and outdoor soundtrack, consider the role of non-diegetic sound in creating atmosphere, sync a range of specific diegetic sounds to on-screen actions and consider sound perspective.

Candidates generally responded well to the stimulus material, competently integrating self-generated foley sound effects, sourced sound effects and musical score. A number of candidates do not create self-generated foley sounds and this remains a potential area for improvement. In higher level work, the majority of diegetic sounds were well-synced with appropriate volume levels and candidates had created original foley sounds and integrated these to create a convincing soundtrack. Lower level work was less consistent, with missing or out of sync diegetic sounds and less appropriate effects/music, resulting in a less believable soundtrack overall. Diegetic and non-diegetic sounds should be combined in the soundtrack.

A significant number of centres do not submit a screengrab of the editing interface and sound log, as specified in the task detail. The evidence provided by these documents is essential in assessing the work undertaken by the candidate and must be submitted.

Task 4: Animation

In Task 4, candidates animate a jointed model to create life-like actions in response to voice clips provided in the CCEA stimulus materials. The selection of an appropriate model remains an important factor; wooden manikins and jointed toys are effective as they can be articulated well and are readily accessible. A number of candidates animate Lego or plasticine models which tend to limit the range of movement achievable. The detail and fluidity of the character movements and the degree of camera control in the recording of the sequence are key to successful completion of the task.

In higher level work, animated movements were more detailed, believable, expressive and responsive to the voiceover instructions. In lower level work, the animated movements were less fluid and the camerawork was less controlled with 'jerky' shots often not sustained for the appropriate duration of time. The animation tasks seen this year were generally of a lower quality overall than in previous series, perhaps reflecting the challenges and disruptions faced by students and teachers in the classroom this academic year. There was less evidence this year of centres using reference live action video (LAV) to make the animated movements life-like and convincing, which has been a highly effective approach in previous years.

Component 3 Planning and Making a Moving Image Product

Overview

In Component 3, candidates must create a complete short live action or animated film and a supporting research portfolio based on a genre-specific stimulus scenario provided by CCEA.

The portfolio must include the following:

- A Research Analysis (including a Synopsis) and an Evaluation.
- A Screenplay and Storyboard.
- A Shot List, Shooting Schedule and Director's Notebook with evidence of production research, design development and production management.

Candidates choose from one of the six genres in the Component 3 booklet and create a production portfolio, producing a short film and all supporting creative and organisational preproduction materials. Five new genre-specific scenarios were issued in June 2019 and the outcomes from these were seen at moderation for the first time this year.

The vast majority of centres submitted Component 3 work in line with the Instructions to Teachers issued. Centre marking of Component 3 tends to be less consistent than in Component 2 notably so in the marking of the Research Analysis & Evaluation and the Film elements.

A03 Research Analysis & Evaluation

The Research Analysis element gives candidates the opportunity to show their understanding of the conventions of their selected genre and of film language techniques, and to set out their personal creative and technical goals for the project.

Students should clearly state which of the six specified genres from the CCEA booklet they have chosen to base their work in. Other genres should not be chosen for Component 3. A concise synopsis of the film scenario is useful to set further discussion in context but the word count does not allow for significant narrative detail. The issue of the word count will need to be addressed in the next series as many centres are submitting Research Analysis documents of over 3000 words in length. The specification allows a word count of 600-800 words and this will be formally reviewed by the team with the intention of increasing the wordcount for first teaching September 2023, pending regulatory approval.

Moderators noted that there was little unreferenced content in this year's submissions, which was encouraging. Quality of written communication is assessed at AO3 and candidates should be encouraged to spell check before final submission. AO3 is the least consistently marked element of Component 3, perhaps reflecting the range of approaches taken by centres.

The Research Analysis is assessed against two criteria; analysis and evaluation of the work of others and the establishment of carefully considered personal creative goals. It is vital that candidates' writing remains focused on each of these areas; moderators note each year that candidates find it difficult to address both equally, tending to focus on either sequence analysis or discussion of goals. Other pitfalls commonly seen are written description of a sequence, without identifying or analysing the techniques used, and very broad and general discussion of a genre, movie or a director.

Perceptive analysis of film language techniques underpins candidates' capacity to establish detailed and challenging goals and is a key element of AO3. In choosing sequences to analyse as the basis of their research, students should be encouraged to select films from their chosen genre, rather than from a Netflix series, for example. A smaller number of reference sequences allows candidates to analyse in greater depth. It can be useful to deconstruct and analyse a sequence with clear genre conventions and, in the written analysis, show understanding of how film techniques combine to create a specific atmosphere, meaning, or effect on the audience.

While written analysis should be supported with relevant screenshots from the sequences, there is a growing trend for students to base their written analysis on a single shot rather than on a short sequence. This limits the depth of analysis achievable and often results in quite simplistic comments, such as the naming and purpose of basic shot sizes. In focusing on analysis of a single shot, candidates do not consider how various film language techniques combine to manipulate the emotional response of the audience.

Careful selection of which aspects of film language to analyse is important also; moderators noted that in analysing camera and editing techniques students often had more scope to demonstrate their understanding of the use of film language. Analysis marked in the mid or lower levels tended to focus on basic shot sizes or more obvious techniques, such as high/low key lighting, which candidates were not able to discuss in equivalent depth. Moderators noted that many centres seem to be guiding students to consider all five aspects of film language in the Research Analysis; at GCSE level it is sufficient to focus on a fewer number of areas, selecting those most relevant to intentions.

The Research Analysis is also a statement of the candidate's personal intentions, informed by the understanding of techniques gained through analysis of selected sequences. Therefore, candidates' personal, creative goals should extend beyond an intention to competently apply basic film language techniques (e.g. 'use a variety of shots', 'use continuity editing') which is expected from all students. This approach was evident in a number of submissions. Candidates should instead be encouraged to establish goals which involve the purposeful use of particular film language techniques to create a specific effect on the audience. In higher level written work, personal creative goals were discussed in greater detail, for example, ideas for specific shots or sequences within the film with consideration of how techniques would combine to create the desired effect. A number of centres appear to write the Research Analysis after filming has been completed and we would encourage centres to instead use this document to facilitate the establishment of clear creative technical goals in advance of filming.

The Evaluation is marked alongside the Research Analysis and gives candidates the opportunity to reflect on the effectiveness of the techniques employed in their film, in relation to their original intentions. Moderators noted that in general candidates' understanding and use of film language improved significantly in the Evaluation, showing the learning that had taken place during the filmmaking process. In a number of cases, the Evaluation was approached as a description of the process of making the film, rather than an appraisal of the film's creative and technical success; higher level Evaluations give a critical assessment of the effectiveness of the sequences in relation to the original creative and technical goals set, with evidence provided in the form of screenshots. Often, the inclusion of less relevant material increased the word count while failing to address the assessment objectives, for example discussion of technical issues or the disruptions to filming caused by Covid, etc.

AO2a Preproduction (Screenplay/Storyboard)

The scripts and storyboards seen at moderation were generally of a good standard, with the majority of candidates creating detailed preproduction materials in an appropriate format and attaining Level 3 or 4 for this element.

Scripts which rely heavily on dialogue often result in less effective films and candidates should be encouraged to use visual storytelling techniques. The text message has become a common device for narrative exposition and candidates should be encouraged to look beyond this towards more creative visual storytelling techniques. As one page of correctly formatted script equates to approximately one minute of screen time, scripts should be around two pages in length; many short scripts are seen at moderation. A small number of centres are not formatting scripts correctly and should refer to the exemplar material available on the CCEA website and also within the Component 2 stimulus booklet.

Photography was used to produce storyboards in many centres and this is an effective means for candidates to explore mise-en-scène and framing before shooting their film. Very few candidates now submit screengrabs from their final film as a storyboard but a number of ‘traced’ storyboards were seen, where the storyboard frames had been traced from the completed film. This renders the storyboard invalid as evidence of preproduction planning and this approach should not be taken.

AO2b Preproduction (Shotlist/Shooting Schedule & Director’s Notebook)

AO2b Preproduction work is well executed and presented by the majority of centres and marked realistically. The greatest variation in approach and quality is seen in the Director’s Notebook element of AO2b. The Notebook should be presented in pdf form (not as a Keynote or Powerpoint) of 5-10 pages, in length and show purposeful, predominantly visual, planning for the film production with relevant annotation. At the higher levels, purposeful, primary research such as first-hand photography exploring location, lighting, mise-en-scène, shot ideas or creative experimentation with costume, make-up, etc. is evident. The Director’s Notebook should be completed as preproduction planning and should not include screengrabs from the final film, which are better placed within the Evaluation. Examples of classwork which form part of normal teaching and learning activities should not be presented as these do not directly relate to the candidate’s personal and self-directed planning for their film.

Moderators noted a growing trend for centres to submit experimental films as preproduction. While it is encouraging to see GCSE candidates preparing for their productions and developing practical skills in advance of filming, this is not a requirement for GCSE. We would suggest that these additional video files are not submitted, but rather that annotated screengrabs from these experiments are presented within the pdf of the Director’s Notebook as evidence of the candidate’s personal experimentation.

AO2a Film

AO2a, the final film, allows students to demonstrate their creative and technical skills and combine techniques in all film language areas to achieve their creative purpose. The two minute final film should employ the conventions of their chosen genre, convey a narrative successfully and effectively manipulate audience response.

The Component 3 booklet stimulated a range of personal and creative outcomes in response to the genre scenarios again this year. Horror, Sci-Fi and Crime continue to be popular genres and the zombie horror was also a popular choice.

Camerawork from the majority of centres is very strong, showing that candidates have gained skill and confidence in this area over the course of their GCSE MIA studies. The issue of ‘shaky footage’ remains a characteristic of weaker work across many centres; the use of a tripod is absolutely essential for all shooting, except where deliberately hand-held footage has been planned. This is the single biggest factor reducing attainment in the AO2a Film element. Film work in the highest mark range was creative, ambitious and technically accomplished, employing a range of film language techniques with skill and understanding.

The majority of films submitted were live action but there was a notable increase in the number of animations in this year's moderation, perhaps a result of the challenges posed in recent years to live action filmmaking. The Component 3 animations demonstrated a range of approaches within mainly stop-motion and hand-drawn techniques and some excellent and highly creative work was seen at moderation. In Component 3 all film language areas are assessed within animation and candidates showed good consideration of camera angles, editing, mise-en-scene and sound in creating their animated films. While we would hope that candidates can achieve the same fluidity of movement emphasised in Component 2 Task 4, this is not the sole focus for assessment in Component 3. While live action films tend to be realistically marked by most centres, animated outcomes were less consistently marked, perhaps reflecting the relative lack of exemplars from previous years. This is something CCEA will seek to address in the support programme this year.

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