

## Film Studies at Samuel Whitbread Academy

### Intent

Many consider Film to be the main cultural innovation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and a major art form of the last hundred years. As a medium, Film has the ability to connect audiences on a global scale, inspiring a plethora of responses from the emotional to the reflective. This shared experience of submerging into a diegesis together, encourages empathy and respect, and provides an increased understanding of diversity.

A Level Film Studies consequently makes an important contribution to the curriculum, offering students the opportunity to investigate how film works both as a powerful medium of representation and as an aesthetic medium.

Our course is designed to introduce learners to a wide variety of films, in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of British, American and Global cinema, from the last 100 years, with a focus on social, political, ideological and historical contexts, alongside technological advancements. Our curriculum intends to empower students with the ability to critically analyse and provides them with the opportunity to create meaning for themselves, developing their burgeoning technical and creative skills whilst undertaking culturally rich production- based experiences, in the local community.

### Implementation

A Level Film Studies at Samuel Whitbread Academy is made up of three components, as set out by our examining body; Eduqas. The first two components are both examination topics, exploring varieties of film and filmmaking, alongside global filmmaking perspectives, each worth 35% of the overall A Level. The final component is our NEA, whereby students produce their own short film or screenplay, in accordance to a brief provided by the exam board. Our course is delivered by 3 subject specialists, who each lead on two to three film texts each. Each text is approached by all teachers in the same way, with students learning about the social, political, historical and institutional context surrounding the creation of each film, before delving into the fundamentals of film analysis, and the exploration of the unique specialist study area. Each topic has between two to three assessment points, with previous exam questions used as clear end points for each unit of study. Critical discussion and questioning are key within every lesson, to ensure the development of student ideas and analysis. Students will undertake a variety of questions tasks, both independently and in small groups, to encourage teamwork and ingenuity. At Samuel Whitbread Academy, we also have a key focus on developing student literacy and reading skills. Each lesson will feature a plethora of new subject-specific terms, alongside broader synonyms and antonyms, to enrich our students' vocabulary. We have also developed several acronyms designed to illuminate our students extended writing, with a specific focus on their phraseology. Moreover, lessons are regularly based upon challenging and specific reading tasks to be used as a learning tool. Home learning and remote learning follows this same theme, with all subject material for Film Studies highly accessible for students through Google Classroom. We aim to ensure students get the best possible opportunity to build on their learning inside and outside the classroom, and therefore our department's homework strategy is based on recall, retrieving knowledge already visited, and wider research which enriches their experiences at Sixth Form. This strategy is linked with their timetable, with Week A tasks looking ahead, and Week B tasks looking back.

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Key Stage 5: Year 12</b>	<p>In Year 12 Film Studies, students’ study nine, of the eleven, examination texts. As A Level Film Studies is accessible by students who may not have taken the subject at GCSE, teacher one and teacher two begin with an accelerated refresher course, developing our students understanding of Film form (AO2) which is assessed in each unit of study. In addition to this, students are set a variety of prep time and homework tasks, to ensure that their understanding of Film form is secure, before studying each film text. With teacher one, students’ study four films (<i>Vertigo, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Shaun of the Dead and Trainspotting</i>); with teacher two a further three films (<i>Amy, La La Land and Captain Fantastic</i>); and teacher three a final two films (<i>Pan’s Labyrinth and City of God</i>) are studied in Year 12.</p> <p>Each examination text studied is analysed, with a focus on the fundamentals of film analysis: film form. Moreover, in order for students to understand each set text fully, we explore the societal, historical, institutional and political context surrounding each film; so that students have a culturally rich understanding of each film. In addition to this, each set text has its own specialist study area, with these approaches ranging from spectatorship to auteurship.</p>
	<b>Key Stage 5: Year 13</b>	<p>In Year 13 Film Studies, students’ study the remainder of the examination texts (<i>Pulp Fiction and Buster Keaton’s Shorts</i>) and begin their NEA. During Autumn term, students plan, shoot and edit their own short film or screenplay with a digital storyboard. This NEA work is worth 30% of their overall A Level qualification. Students undertake this coursework in Year 13, so as to utilise their knowledge and understanding of how films create meaning in Year 12, before implementing their own meaning within their own creative projects. In addition to this, throughout Spring term, students revisit each of the examination texts covered in Year 12, with a greater focus on developing the quality their extended writing.</p>

Our Intent and Implementation aim to ensure that all Film Studies students gain knowledge and understanding of how films have the power to bring people together, as well as developing the ability to evaluate and critically analyse film texts.

Students are regularly assessed to check their understanding and progress within each of the units they are taught in Key Stage 5.

Our assessments include:

- Regular assessments which are teacher marked.
- Fortnightly Prep Time work, including exam style questions.
- IPE exams throughout Year 12 and 13.

The Film Studies department consistently and regularly provide feedback to our students through our KS5 folder scrutiny process, assessment-based questions, ensuring that all of our learners make progress.

One of the key ways we measure our success as a department, and for our students, is through the uptake of our subject at GCSE and A-Level, and those progressing to university and apprenticeship schemes in Film and Media related careers. The number of students taking A Film Studies is continuing to grow each year.

At Samuel Whitbread Academy, our success as a Film department relies on the enthusiasm students have for our subject, our lessons, and their voices are vital in our continuing growth.