OCR

Oxford Cambridge and RSA

GCE AS Level

Film Studies

H010

OCR Report to Centres June 2018

About this Examiner Report to Centres

This report on the 2018 Summer assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful

- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection

- points of advice for future examinations

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of results**

- Link to **grade boundaries**

- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our Active Results service and CPD programme

Reviews of results

If any of your students' results are not as expected you may wish to consider one of our reviews of results services. For full information about the options available visit the OCR website. If University places are at stake you may wish to consider priority service 2 reviews of marking which have an earlier deadline to ensure your reviews are processed in time for university applications: http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/stage-5-post-results-services/enquiries-about-results/service-2-priority-service-2-2a-2b/

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other assessments, can be found on Interchange.

Further support from OCR

active results

Active Results offers a unique perspective on results data and greater opportunities to understand students' performance.

It allows you to:

- Review reports on the **performance of individual candidates**, cohorts of students and whole centres

- **Analyse results** at question and/or topic level

- **Compare your centre** with OCR national averages or similar OCR centres.

- Identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle and help **pinpoint strengths and weaknesses** of students and teaching departments.

http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/support-and-tools/active-results/getting-started/

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

H010/01 Elements of Film

1.   General Comments:

This was the first paper of the new generation of reformed AS/A levels in Film Studies to be sat by candidates. As the first live paper, the demands of the questions and the differences in the style and structure of the new AS paper provided a level of challenge to candidates in this session. There were very few rubric errors, which suggests that candidates were sure of what they needed to do in order to complete the paper thoroughly.

There was effective analysis of some of the micro-elements of film form, and it was pleasing to see engagement with the concept of aesthetics. At times candidates were not able to include all the content required to address the different Assessment Objectives assessed in extended response questions.

A general point which is applicable to all questions on this paper is that candidates need to be very focused on the actual question set and frame their response around that – responses do need to be precise and focussed as there is not enough time for candidates to construct loose, general responses which will answer all elements of the set questions. This point is a general one to make about exam preparation, but is more relevant for the reformed qualification.

2.   Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

Question 1

Q1 and Q2 are designed to be short answer questions to enable candidates to feel their way into the paper and build confidence for the remaining questions. Editing continues to be area of film/media textual analysis which candidates find challenging. This question required focused analysis of editing, such as the types of transitions used, the pace between cuts or what motivates the cut from one shot to another. Candidates need to ensure they can distinguish between editing and camerawork – while there is an obvious connection between editing and camerawork, prolonged discussion of shot types were unable to score highly.

An area for development with some candidates is to ensure that they are fully able to write about any of the technical micro-elements independently of each other, thus ensuring they are more roundly prepared for such examination questions, and this will also help to generate better controlled responses for the extended writing questions also.

Question 2

On the whole, this question was answered more successfully by candidates than Q1. Candidates who had studied *Do the Right Thing* were particularly able to construct meaning from the repeated playing of the song *Fight the Power* by Public Enemy in relation to the wider messages of the film. Where such analysis was married to accurate use of subject specific terminology, such responses scored highly.

Question 3

The candidates who attempted this question generally demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of their chosen films, usually mixed with good understanding of the mise-en-scene with some pleasing links to aesthetics (especially given that this concept is new to the reformed specification). In terms of developing the quality of candidates' responses to questions such as this, candidates and centres need to be mindful of the need to be able to focus analysis on specific sets of examples from the films studied – there was a tendency by a number of candidates to describe much of the films' narratives: this must be resisted. Additionally, the need to compare is an explicit part of the question and this feeds into the approach to marking which the examiners take. The skill of being able to draw comparisons and where appropriate reveal points of contrast is a high-level skill which is now essential to success in this subject. Sufficient opportunities to learn and practice this skill should be afforded to learners.

Question 4

The concept of spectatorship is a challenging one, and new to study at AS Level. Candidates needed to demonstrate their understanding of this concept in their response. The above point in regards focus on examples and skill development in comparative analysis are as applicable to this question as with Q3.

Section B

In the general comments earlier, the point was made about ensuring that candidates' responses are focused on the questions set. This point is especially true for responses in this section, where a number of candidates were unable to lessen the focus in their response on the chosen theme and focus more tightly on the elements of the question chosen.

Question 5

Out of the two questions for this Section, this was overwhelmingly the most popular. The best answers selected examples from the chosen films and examined these for their potential power in constructing social attitudes. This was perhaps most successful where some candidates explored the social attitudes towards motherhood and analysed this in relation to the mother character, Amelia, in *The Babadook*.

Question 6

As with the other questions in this section candidates need to ensure they have selected an appropriate range of examples and are able to tailor their responses to the specific focus of the question, rather than discussing the study theme more broadly.

Section C

Generally candidates found this section to be challenging. Given that most candidates opted to write their responses in paper order (starting at Q1 and finishing at Q7 or Q8), it is reasonable to assume that lack of time management has impinged upon the quality of responses that were evident for this section. Given that this section (and Section B) is worth 35 marks out of the 105, it is imperative that candidates dedicate sufficient time to this section to enable them to perform to the best of their potential.

Question 7

The better responses to this question were ones that were able to identify specific narrational devices (in terms of structuring the film; see the specification for the full details of what should be considered on this point). Candidates who misinterpreted the question gave overly descriptive, general summaries of the narratives of the chosen film. Again, the need for candidates to offer focused examples from their chosen film is paramount in developing successful, well-structured and appropriate responses to the question chosen.

Question 8

A more popular choice of question than Q7 and candidates were able to stick with the task of exploring psychological insight well. Many responses were focused on either *The Lives of Others* or *A Prophet* and candidates were, in the main, able to make good connections between their response as the spectator and understanding the interior life of the lead characters in the chosen film.

General Advice to Centres
Section A – ensure candidates are able to write on any of the micro-elements of film form for their chosen films for this section and, to help prepare for questions 3 and 4, ensure that candidates have access to range of studied examples from the chosen films.

Section B – ensure candidates are thoroughly skilled at unpacking examination questions and being able to quickly determine how to structure their responses as well as ensuring that the candidates can focus their responses on examples from the studied films.

Section C – the advice for Section B also applies here, in addition the need for candidates to more effectively manage their time in the exam is especially crucial here.

Centres and candidates are advised to make use of the support materials, which are published on the OCR website in order to learn from best practice and scaffold ways to improve.

H010/02/03 Understanding British Film

1.   General Comments:

General Comments
This was the first submission of NEA for the reformed OCR AS Film Studies specification. The moderators were generally pleased with the work submitted by centres. The mark scheme was generously applied, especially for Production Marking Criteria 2. Application of knowledge and understanding of micro-elements of film form.

Administration
The NEA was submitted in a variety of formats. Some centres produced paper-based portfolios with accompanying DVDs of the filmed sequence or printed screenplays and digital key frames. Some portfolios were presented on an online blog/website. All formats are acceptable. Centres are reminded that work should not be submitted on USB stick/flash drive. Uploading filmed sequences onto YouTube or Vimeo is a particularly effective way of sharing work with the moderator.

The use of the interactive Assessment Summary Form is strongly advocated as this assists in the avoidance of arithmetical error. The Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) is a mandatory requirement and the completed copy should be retained by the Centre not sent to the moderator as required in previous sessions.

2.   Comments on Individual Elements:

Research and Planning

All centres submitted evidence of planning. Some candidates produced exemplary planning materials, including storyboards, draft scripts, shooting schedules and location recces. Although these materials are not assessed, it was pleasing to see that centres saw the importance of purposeful planning to strong production outcomes. Some centres made use of the proformas on the OCR website, and these worked well. The list of planning materials in the specification is indicative, however it is advisable to encourage candidates to produce a storyboard, or detailed shooting script prior to filming or photography. Candidates producing the filmed key sequence should be strongly encouraged to write a screenplay as part of their planning.

Although there was evidence in the production work and evaluations that the set British film(s) had been watched, not all centres submitted their candidates' research notes. Again, this is not an assessed element but is a requirement, as outlined on page 20 of the specification, where it states that 'the NEA portfolio will consist of the following: non-assessed research notes and planning materials'. Some centres used the OCR proformas to make notes on their chosen British film, but some centres did not supply any evidence of research.

Production: Filmed Sequence or Screenplay

Centres are reminded that candidates are required to produce work of a specified length: 2½-3 minute key sequence or a 6-page screenplay with 12 digitally photographed key frames. Any work exceeding the specified length should not be taken into consideration when applying the

marking criteria. Centres judged the productions on each of the two sets of marking criteria and it was common to see candidates being allocated marks in different levels.

Marking Criteria 1: Application of knowledge and understanding of British film and its narrative form.

The majority of centres researched one or two of the British set films outlined in the specification; the film was then used to inform the candidates' production work. In some cases, it was evident that candidates had been guided by the teacher to identify specific themes or stylistic techniques in the set film, such as nature and technology in *Ex Machina*; candidates then used these themes as a basis for their own production work. Although this is an acceptable approach, candidates should also be encouraged to explore their own interpretations. The set film enables candidates to gain an understanding of how narrative can be used in key sequences; once the film has been researched candidates 'should use broad themes of their chosen set film as a starting point'. Some centres chose to research all the set films. This can give candidates a broad knowledge of narrative form, and a range of stylistic techniques, but it is advisable to focus on one or two films. The best responses in this session made clear links between the film they had researched and their own aims and intentions. Centres should, however, encourage candidates to take a broad approach, exploring their own creative ideas whilst using the set film to support their understanding of narrative and character development.

Ex Machina and *Attack the Block* were the most popular set films chosen for research. *Under the Skin* was also explored by centres. *Gone Too Far*, *The Double* and *The Hallow* were less popular choices. There were a number of examples of urban dramas, influenced by the characters, settings and themes in *Attack the Block*. The themes in *Ex Machina* also provided fruitful inspiration for production work. Centres are advised to spend time exploring dialogue, character development and narrative structure in the set films to enhance the candidates' screenwriting skills; candidates would also benefit from analysing the screenplays of the set films, most of which can be accessed free online. This again, will help improve outcomes for the screenplay element of the production work. As mentioned above, it is advisable for candidates producing the filmed sequence to write a draft script as part of their planning.

Marking Criteria 2: Application of knowledge and understanding of micro elements of film form.

Screenplay with key frames
This was the more popular option in this session. The screenplay sequences were generally of a higher standard than the digitally photographed storyboards, with the best demonstrating an understanding of the narrative techniques of British film and character development. The screenplays often showed awareness of narrative conventions and the best work clearly demonstrated knowledge and understanding of British film and its narrative form. There was some well-handled dialogue. Some candidates did not follow cinematic conventions when formatting their screenplays and centres are reminded that this is a requirement of the assessment. Candidates are permitted to use software such as Celtx (available for free online), Adobe Story or Final Draft to produce and format their work.

Candidates need to demonstrate careful consideration of framing, lighting and mise en scene in their digitally photographed key frames. There should be sufficient opportunities for candidates to practice the skills required for the production task. Some candidates submitted key frames in sizes and proportions that were not appropriate, with some images produced in portrait rather than landscape format. The key frames should replicate the principal photography for a filmed

sequence and should therefore be produced in landscape format to reflect the aspect ratio of cinema. If submitting the stills in print format, it is advisable that no more than two key frames are presented on an A4 document; this makes composition, cinematography and mise en scene much clearer to assess. Candidates should also be encouraged to make greater use of post-production editing; software, such as Photoshop, or similar free online apps, will help candidates demonstrate their cinematographic choices, such as colour and lighting. Framing and composition, in particular, could be much improved for future sessions. Candidates should also be encouraged to use the full range of shot types in their key frames. The digitally photographed storyboard illustrates how the screenplay would be realised and centres are advised to encourage candidates to annotate their digital storyboard with reference to their screenplay and intentions.

Filmed sequence
A pleasing number of centres submitted filmed sequences for their NEA. Generally the filmed sequences were more successful than the non-filmed production work achieving marks in the higher levels. The best work demonstrated purposeful use of camera to convey meaning and use of the full range of shot types and movements to create effects. There was some clear use of post-production techniques and generally editing was well-handled. Sound design was a particular strength in the best work and it was pleasing to see candidates adding their own soundtrack and Foley sound to improve their work. As with the non-filmed production work, however, it is important that candidates are given adequate skills preparation before embarking on their own individual projects.

Evaluation
All the evaluations were submitted in essay format. Some candidates used print screens from the set film and their own production work to illustrate their comments and this approach should be encouraged. The evaluation element was mostly handled well by the candidates in this session. The best responses made clear reference to the set British film demonstrating a developed understanding of how the candidates' own productions related to the film. Less successful responses were more descriptive, lacking detailed reference to creative outcomes.

About OCR

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As a not-for-profit organisation, OCR's core purpose is to develop and deliver general and vocational qualifications which equip learners with the knowledge and skills they need for their future, helping them achieve their full potential.

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