

# Film Studies

## A Level

**Head of department:** Becky Voller

**Email:** bvoller@esher.ac.uk

**Exam Board:** WJEC



### What is the course about?

Film Studies is the academic study of film and is designed to deepen your understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of film, the major art form of the twentieth century. Please note that this is predominantly an essay based course, with practical elements.

### For the AS level you will study:

During the AS year, you will examine film in terms of both audience and industry. You will study a range of case-studies exploring Hollywood and British Film studios and their relationship with different audiences. The British Identity and American Film units examine various political and social representations through in depth textual analysis of independent and mainstream cinema. The coursework offers an opportunity to devise your own feature film and you will learn how to incorporate this into an industry format.

### For the A2 level you will study:

In the A2 year, the coursework provides the opportunity to construct a screenplay or short-film. Independent learning becomes even more central, with the Small-Scale Project giving you the opportunity to investigate and construct a presentation script regarding an issue within film that excites you. The exam material is focused on world cinema and you will study areas such as Brazilian Cinema, documentary and the director Pedro Almodovar. These topics are explored through a range of texts and assessment is through a synoptic examination.

### How is the course assessed?

Over the two years, practical coursework is worth 45% and written examinations are worth 55%.

### What skills will I need and develop in this course?

You will be encouraged to engage with a wide range of different kinds of films, developing skills of observation, critical analysis and personal reflection, as well as developing your creativity and practical skills, in both scriptwriting and essay writing.

### Subject combination advice:

Film Studies is a subject that by its nature requires candidates to consider individual, moral, ethical, social, cultural and contemporary issues. Therefore Film Studies combines well with any humanities subject, for example History, English, Politics and Sociology. However, we strongly advise against students combining Film Studies with Media Studies as they are too closely related in terms of content and skill set.

### **What can the course lead to in terms of higher education and future careers?**

With regards to progression, this course does not guarantee a career in the film industry, but many students do go on to read film and/or media at university. It also provides a good analytical A level which would support other subjects for university entry. Students who have studied either AS or A level Film Studies have gone on to study a wide variety of subjects at university.

### **What are the formal entry requirements for this course?**

Aside from the general entry criteria which the College requires, you will also need a grade C in GCSE English Language.

### **What extra support / enrichment activities are on offer?**

The department usually offers a residential trip to a film festival and we have strong links with the British Film Institute (BFI) and the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). Students attend film screenings and Q & A's with cast and crew (where possible) at London cinemas. We also have guest speakers throughout the year who come in to talk to students, and we run workshops during Wider Skills Week to broaden practical skills. At the end of the A2 year we celebrate student achievement with the Esher Oscars and a post-Oscars party.

### **What is the difference between Film Studies and Media Studies?**

Film Studies is in many ways similar to English Literature, but with films as the texts. Film Studies focuses purely on the study of film and is more essay based than Media Studies in the AS year. Media Studies is more practical and technically challenging with all students producing a video portfolio in the A2 year. The practical work in Film Studies is concerned with developing ideas for new films, but may not necessarily involve the actual production of a final piece. Film Studies students must have a genuine interest in a wide range of films and not just Hollywood based products.



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Weston Green Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0JB  
Tel: 020 8398 0291 Fax: 020 8339 0207  
Email: [eshercollege@esher.ac.uk](mailto:eshercollege@esher.ac.uk)

