

creative media production

BTEC National Subsidiary Diploma

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Exam board: Pearson Edexcel



What is this subject about?

The BTEC Subsidiary Diploma in Creative Media Production is designed for creative, independent and proactive students who want to develop their technical skills in TV and Film production and knowledge and understanding of industry trends and practices. This is achieved through the continual assessment of practical coursework assignments. The Subsidiary Diploma is equivalent to one A Level and involves the completion of seven units over two years.

What will I study over the two years?

In the first year you will study 'Pre-Production Techniques'. You will be taught skills to convey your creative ideas using industry-standard practices. You will also plan the logistics of a short film including casting, scheduling, budgeting and legal considerations.

You will also study 'Communication Skills' where you will learn how to present your ideas in a variety of formats, including writing succinctly in short reports, illustrated PowerPoints and an oral pitch.

Another unit you will study is 'Writing for TV and Film'. You learn about narrative and genre in the context of working as a screenwriter. Over the unit you will develop your own screenplay using industry-standard style and formatting techniques.

The final unit in the first year is 'Single Camera Production'. You will develop an understanding of the micro-elements of cinematography, lighting, mise-en-scene and sound, and illustrate these in the production of a short film that you will plan, film and edit.

In the second year you will take a 'Research Techniques' unit, developing important academic skills that will help prepare you for further or higher study. On this unit you will learn about primary and secondary research techniques and quantitative and qualitative data, supporting your arguments with evidence and accurate referencing.

You will also develop the practical skills you attained in your first year by taking practical units 'Factual Programme Production' and 'Music Video Production'.

Through the 'Factual Programme Production' unit you will analyse how documentary filmmakers construct arguments and illustrate your understanding in your own short documentary on a topic of your interest.

The 'Music Video Production' unit follows a detailed exploration of music video genres, formats, styles and techniques. You will film and edit a music video for a song of your choice.

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed throughout the two years by a number of coursework assignments. These coursework assignments are centre-assessed and then externally moderated by the exam board.

Skills developed and areas of study

You will gain practical production and academic skills. You will be taught practical skills for filmmaking including cinematography, lighting, sound, editing and some animation work. You will be taught how to critically analyse the media and learn about the practices and functions of the media industry. You will learn how to research information effectively, developing your independent learning skills.

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

Progression to further qualifications, such as degrees in media production-related subjects, is a likely route. Alternatively, this qualification enables candidates to enter employment at a trainee level.

What are the formal entry requirements for this course?

Aside from the general entry requirements that the College requires, you need to achieve at a minimum of:

- Grade 4 in GCSE English Language.
- Grade 4 in GCSE Media Studies (if taken)

You will also benefit from having a good level of creativity as there is a strong creative component, and an interest in using filmmaking technology and software.

What extra support/enrichment activities are on offer?

The department has strong links with Southampton Solent University and University for the Creative Arts and other educational providers. We regularly seek guidance on how best to advise our students about progression opportunities. We also offer support and enrichment workshops, invite in guest speakers and enable students to build more of a practical portfolio during Wider Skills Week. At the end of the second year we celebrate student achievement with our own Esher Oscars.

Subject combination advice:

Studying another creative subject such as Photography or an essay based related subject such as Film Studies, would be complementary. We would not necessarily advise taking BTEC Media with Media Studies A Level unless the student has a firm commitment to pursuing a media related degree or employment.

What are the main differences between the BTEC Media courses, Media A Level and Film Studies A Level?

The focus in Creative Media Production for the learner is the acquisition of professional media skills which are theoretically underpinned and this is a 'hands on', practical course. The dominant learning paradigm is to 'learn by doing'. The sharpest contrast between the two courses lies in the assessment of work. In Creative Media Production there are no exams as learner assessment is exclusively by coursework.

A Level Media Studies looks at a range of media texts including music videos, radio, TV programmes, webpages, advertising etc. Film Studies only looks at films and requires a passion for watching a range of texts including black and white, independent and foreign language films.