

GCSE



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

Summer Series 2018





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Moving Image Arts for this 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](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE MOVING IMAGE ARTS

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Component 1

### Critical Understanding of Creative and Technical Moving Image Production

#### Introduction

The current GCSE examination format has been well received by both candidates and teachers. The examination addresses a much wider range of knowledge and skills than the legacy exams. As a result, it is much more engaging for pupils at the teaching and learning stage. This increased engagement can be seen in the depth of the candidate's responses and in the extremely low number of unanswered questions in the examination series.

The method of distribution of the exam to centres is now a well-established and robust process. There were very few technical difficulties and those that did occur were quickly identified by the invigilators and had minimal impact on the candidates sitting the exam. A wide range of ability was again presented, from those achieving very high marks and demonstrating an excellent analytical ability, which was impressive for their age, to a number of weaker pupils who found the exam to be quite challenging, especially in those questions that required extended writing and comparative analysis. Most candidates, however, demonstrated a growing ability to critically evaluate moving image products and have clearly adapting well to this new exam format. The exam continues to cater well for mixed ability candidates and is both theory and industry focused. The connection of learning through the coursework element of the course continues to be evident and allows for a large number of candidates to display their level of understanding of the filmmaking process.

#### Teaching

The support documents and training for teachers have continued to be well received. These consist of sample assessment materials, workshops and fact files on many of the key areas that feature in the examination. These materials help provide a solid foundation for teachers to plan their lessons and, as a result, have continued to enable pupils to perform admirably in most sections of the exam.

A few areas of concern remain. Knowledge of editing proved to be problematic this year. Many candidates have continued to confuse post production techniques and sound design for editing. Many are also unsure in their understanding of specific terms like 'pulling focus'. A more comprehensive list of terminology may be required. Also, the question that required specific knowledge on the responsibilities of the director was not answered as assuredly as we would expect. Recall areas again need to be addressed more specifically in the teaching of this specification and have been supported by the production of the fact files that all students should be given access to.

Many candidates struggled again with the compare and contrast question. It is important in the candidate's response to this question that they cover both sequences in their answer and offer some points of similarity or contrast between them. This would enable them to produce a more balanced response.

## Exam Technique

The exam interface continues to aid candidates in completing all of the questions and effectively managing their time. There were very few instances of candidates running out of time. The structure of the exam places the higher stakes questions in the middle part of the exam, preceded by more basic questions that frame their thought processes and help build their confidence.

An issue that continues to persist from the old exam is that many candidates do not carefully read the question and then answer accordingly. Again this year we saw an increased number of candidates from all abilities drifting off the subject of the question to cover other areas of film language that were not asked for. Some candidates were also still covering the low mark questions in too much depth and not answering the higher marks questions in sufficient depth. To gain marks in the upper mark bands, candidates must address all of the elements asked for in sufficient depth and with a clarity of written expression that makes the meaning suitably clear.

## Exam Structure

The exam is split into three sections. Section 1 covers Film Language, Genre and Representation. Section 2 requires Comparative Analysis of two film sequences and Section 3 addresses Creative Production, Management and Industry Contexts.

The exam structure and question types used throughout allow candidates of all abilities to make a variety of attempts at all questions; usually the low mark questions in sections one and three were those best answered by candidates of all abilities. The longer responses asked for in Question 6 (c) and Question 7 call for greater involvement from the candidate. In these questions the candidate must explain or discuss how various elements of film language or genre conventions are used within the sequence. It is within these questions that the most able candidates can bring forth their own insights and judgments. An essay based response is required here. Question 14 is a creative task that requires candidates to create a shot list from a given piece of screenplay. Most candidates coped well with this question, however candidates should be reminded that they should use a wide range of shot types, camera angles and camera movements.

## Responses

### Section A

- Q1** This question was answered competently, without issue by the majority of candidates.
- Q2** The term ‘pulling focus’ seemed to be lost on many candidates. There was a lack of understanding evident in a number of responses and candidates often confused this with a dolly zoom.
- Q3** All three question parts were answered successfully by most candidates who correctly identified the POV shot and its purpose in the sequence. Many of the responses to Question 3 (c) were too basic and lacked the insight required to gain both marks.
- Q4** A large number of candidates answered Part (a) correctly with a small number incorrectly listing animation as a genre. Part (b) was addressed well by most candidates, however, some candidates listed mise-en-scene elements i.e. setting, props, costume rather than specific examples of these from the sequence. In Part (c), the most confident candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of horror iconography and how this created a spooky atmosphere. Many candidates across the range of abilities, however, did at some point drift off topic and discuss how sound or other film language elements contributed to the mood of the sequence.

- Q5** These representation questions were mostly understood by the candidates. Many connected their response to the screen shot and as a result made a reasonable attempt to discuss representations of old people. In Part (c) there was a significant variation of response. It was often difficult to decipher the responses given, particularly by weaker candidates. Few candidates gave two well-articulated points that would have gained them all four marks (2x2).
- Q6** Parts (a) and (b) of this question were answered competently by most candidates. Part (c) again presented a greater challenge. As in the previous series, poor knowledge and understanding of editing techniques was evident. There was a distinct absence of appropriate film terminology, although analysis and sense of purpose was generally good. Camera technique was commented on and analysed quite well across the board but not many candidates were able to identify enough editing techniques to balance out their response. Many scripts inaccurately included reference to sound as part of the editing process.

## Section B

- Q7** The best responses in this section made solid comparisons throughout, discussing similarities and differences. Some candidates only focused on one area of film language as a point of comparison.

As in previous series, 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. There were numerous examples of sound and editing techniques to compare in the two sequences provided and a clear difference of mood that could be commented on. The lower ability candidates were able to address the mood defining aspect of the question but lacked depth in analysis and specific use of terminology. Very few candidates attained full marks in this answer and it was surprising how many did not identify the contrasting montage and continuity editing techniques by name. The question did allow stronger candidates to excel and demonstrate a genuine knowledge and awareness of film language and its ability to create mood and atmosphere. Some candidates, however, displayed great fluency in their expression but there was a distinct absence of film terminology. In these instances, this greatly affected the mark awarded. Some candidates are still referring to film language areas beyond the two asked for in the question.

## Section C

- Q8** Most candidates successfully identified two online film streaming services. Where illegal streaming services were mentioned, the mark was withheld.
- Q9** This question on the responsibilities of a director was answered with varying degrees of success. There were many responses that were too general, stating things that a director might do but is not explicitly or specifically their responsibility. It is clear that those who studied the fact files were most successful in this question.
- Q10** The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- Q11** Many candidates seemed to have either misread this question on health and safety or failed to see the opening statement before Part (a) of the question. This statement gives context to the questions and as a result of missing this, many of the responses were very general and tenuous. It is important that candidates carefully read all parts of the question before responding.

- Q12** These questions on camera technique were answered well by the majority of candidates. This area of film language seems to be the most well taught in centres.
- Q13** Most candidates correctly identified a still image format. Some common inaccurate formats listed were PDF and Freeze Frame.
- Q14** There was a slight improvement this year on the quality of shot lists, though candidates should aim to vary the types of shots chosen and avoid repetition of shots. 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 continue to use 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).

Note on the use of support materials and fact files:

These exams do not have set texts to study. All sequences and stimulus material are unseen and will test the candidate's understanding of film language elements and genre conventions. The exam also covers industry contexts and management roles. Fact files to frame the teaching of these elements are available on the Moving Image Arts microsite. You will also find many other useful resources there to aid in planning lessons on the prescribed genres and identifying film language elements and analysing these.

Exemplification of exam performance (EEP) and past papers are also available. This will aid in teaching exam technique.

## Principal Moderator's Report

This is the third award of the revised specification in GCSE Moving Image Arts. The number of entries for GCSE Moving Image Arts continues to increase with new centres entering again in 2018.

The controlled assessment work submitted in this year's series provides evidence that schools are consolidating practical expertise across all aspects of film language through the Component 2 tasks undertaken in Year 11. In Year 12, students are responding with personal ideas, creativity and skill to the increased challenges of Component 3.

This report will highlight the good practice seen in this year's submissions and address the main points arising from moderation, including discussion of:

- Positive Outcomes from the 2018 Series
- Suggestions for Improved Teaching and Learning
- Teacher Assessment

### Positive Outcomes from the 2018 Series

Centre submissions for the Component 2 controlled assessment tasks show that a solid skills base has been established across the film language areas. As was evident in previous series, the majority of candidates attain marks mainly in Level 3 and 4, showing competent acquisition of skills.

The Component 3 booklet stimulated a range of personal and creative outcomes in response to the genre scenarios. As ever, Horror and Crime remain highly popular genres, with the zombie and cursed object scenarios proving popular choices with students. Sci-Fi was also an increasingly popular choice for this year. Film work in the highest mark range was creative, ambitious and technically accomplished, employing a range of film language techniques with skill and understanding. Moderators noted a more consistent approach to the Research Analysis element of the Component 3 portfolios in this year's submissions.

## Suggestions for Improved Teaching and Learning

### Component 2: Acquisition of Skills in Moving Image Production

#### Task 1: Storyboarding

The Storyboarding task requires students to create a storyboard based on a script provided by CCEA. The task offers the opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the specified genre and their understanding of a range of visual storytelling techniques.

A range of camera and editing techniques, such as composition, different shot sizes, use of camera movement and continuity editing techniques should be clearly evident in work at the higher levels. Understanding of continuity editing is assessed through the storyboard, evidenced through the sequencing of shots, directional continuity and the inclusion of techniques such as eyeline match, cross-cutting or match-on-action seen at the higher levels.

Again, shot labelling must match the image - for example, there were a number of ‘match-on-action’ shots seen at moderation which used only one shot rather than two matched shots which does not show sound understanding of this technique. Candidates should be encouraged to consider shot composition, as this aspect is where they can most clearly demonstrate creativity within the task, accessing the highest mark range. It may be useful to remind candidates that one sentence from the script, or one action, can be conveyed over a number of shots.

Understanding of storyboarding conventions and formats was shown through clear and consistent numbering and labelling of shots, in most cases. A brief description of the action should be given, while other details such as consideration of lighting, sound or dialogue may be included as appropriate.

This year, a number of centres opted to use software to create digital storyboards. In the majority of these examples seen at moderation, this approach was not effective in conveying a range of shot types, angles or genre elements. Shot composition tended to be quite limited and lacking in creativity; shots were also more frequently mis-labelled which may indicate that students were unable to accurately create the shots they had envisaged through the software. In contrast, the hand-drawn storyboards allowed students to plan more creative and personal compositions and we would recommend this approach over the use of software.

It is worth reiterating that artistic ability is not a focus for marking and students are not penalised for the artistic merit of their drawings. There is no requirement for storyboards to be coloured in and the short time limit of two and a half hours would likely prohibit this in most cases. Some candidates used limited colour to emphasise aspects of the frames, which was often effective.

There is, of course, an expectation that storyboards are well-presented, e.g. that annotation is legible and that the quality of scanning enables clear viewing at moderation.

The most common issues which limited attainment in this task were the choice of storyboard template, incorrect labelling of shots and a limited range of camera and editing techniques being used. The most effective storyboard templates seen at moderation encouraged students to consider a range of factors such as shot size, camera angles, movement, etc, while simpler formats merely provided a frame for students to draw into. Some common errors persist in work seen at the lower level, e.g. the labelling of objects within the frame, the use of ‘speech bubbles’, etc. Very few photographic storyboards were seen at moderation this year.

The task was completed competently by the vast majority of candidates, with understanding of camera and editing techniques and the conventions of genre evident in the planned shots.

This task was also marked realistically by the majority of centres.

## Task 2: Camera & Editing

In this task, candidates are required to shoot a short film in response to a script provided by CCEA. The assessment criteria address the range and effectiveness of the camera and editing techniques employed in the filmed sequence, the degree of technical control evident and the success of the film in achieving its purpose.

Therefore, as in Task 1, it is essential that candidates translate the full content of the script into their film. A greater number of submissions were significantly over the specified length this year, perhaps due to the nature of the scenario, and centres must ensure that films do not greatly extend beyond a minute in length.

Candidates responded well to this year's stimulus script, with many students making effective use of their school environment as the setting of the interview. Films at the upper end of the mark range demonstrated confident understanding of camera and editing techniques and a more creative approach to their filming, evident through carefully considered mise-en-scene, shot selection and composition. Camerawork was controlled and purposeful at this level, with consistent use of a tripod and more advanced techniques in evidence, such as camera movement, manual focus, etc. Editing was well-paced at this level, with continuity techniques such as match-on-action being used.

In the lower level submissions, the narrative was less coherently conveyed, often with parts of the script omitted. Camerawork also tended to be less controlled, often without a tripod being used to ensure steady footage and with recurrent issues with lighting, framing and focus in evidence. Mise-en-scene was usually not considered at all at this level, with little effort being made to source even the most common props. Lower level films tended to show limited knowledge of continuity editing techniques and suffer from issues such as 'hosepiping', overuse of transitions and unintentional jumpcuts. Overly long films tended to suffer from a weakness in editing.

The aspects of the Camera & Editing task where improvement could be made remain consistent year on year - variety, composition, focus and steadiness of shots recorded, controlled use of camera movement and more considered and consistent use of continuity editing techniques.

This task was generally marked realistically by most centres, with a tendency towards leniency in some cases.

## Task 3: Postproduction Sound

In this task, candidates are required to create a soundtrack for a film clip provided by CCEA. This year's sound task featured a range and density of sound layers to work with in the combat sequence taken from Kung Fu Panda. Candidates responded well to the stimulus and many highly impressive pieces of sound design were observed at moderation.

This task is designed to assess candidates' ability to create, select, sync and edit a range of sounds in order to create an appropriate, convincing and atmospheric multi-layered soundtrack. This soundtrack should include a number of foley sounds that have been created and recorded by the student, as well as effects sourced from online sites, etc. A significant number of candidates do not create self-generated foley sounds for their soundtracks and this is an aspect for improvement in some centres.

The evidence provided by the sound logs and editing interface is considered alongside the effectiveness of the final product and this evidence is essential in assessing the work undertaken by the student. A large number of centres do not submit a screengrab of the editing interface and the sound log as specified in the task detail. The screengrab of the editing interface should be presented on one page, where possible, to provide a clear overview of the edited sequence. There is no need for students to provide additional annotation to this or to present their work in Powerpoint form.

In the higher level submissions, the vast majority of on-screen action was matched with diegetic sounds which are appropriately selected, well-synced and obtained from a range of sources, included self-generated foley. The highest achieving candidates had created a number of original foley sounds and volume levels were adjusted appropriately throughout, creating an effective and believable soundtrack. The ability to select or create sound effects, which were convincing and believable, distinguished the work of the stronger candidates. As the selection of appropriate sounds is a key element, teachers should discourage students from sharing sounds they have sourced amongst the class.

Lower level work tended to be less consistent, with weaknesses in the sound editing, such as the dominance of musical score over sound effects, or on-screen action unmatched with diegetic sound. Selected effects/music were often inappropriate to the sequence, out of sync or jarring against one another, resulting in a less convincing soundtrack.

Centre marking of this task was realistic and accurate overall in the majority of centres.

## **Task 4: Animation**

The Animation task requires candidates to animate a jointed figure in response to a series of voice clips provided by CCEA. The main factors influencing success in the Animation task are the quality and fluidity of the character movements created and the degree of camera control. The tasks seen at moderation this year were generally completed to a good standard and moderators commented on a noticeable improvement in camera control within the submissions, leading to an improvement in overall effectiveness.

The selection of an appropriate model is essential for the creation of effective character movements. Wooden art manikins remain a popular choice as they are readily accessible and allow a range of movements to be portrayed. A number of centres built simple twisted wire models which also worked effectively. A few centres are still using Lego models or building models from plasticine, often resulting in a more limited range of character movements. There is no requirement for students to create their own characters or sets - the specification suggests that the sequence is filmed against a simple white background to ensure that the focus is on the animated movements.

The camera must be steady throughout and shots must be planned to be of appropriate duration. Students should be encouraged to consider the length of the shots required before they begin to capture the images.

In the higher level work, character movements were more convincing and expressive, often with an effective walk cycle incorporated into the sequence, indicating a more detailed knowledge of animation techniques. The character appeared to respond to the voice clips in a fluid and expressive way. There was evidence that reference footage had been used in some cases to make the animated movements more life-like and convincing.

In lower level work, the camera was often uncontrolled, making viewing more difficult and the animated movements were less fluid, creating a jerky effect at times.

This task was marked realistically by most centres, occasionally with a degree of severity.

## Component 3: Planning and Making a Moving Image Product

Component 3 gives students the opportunity to create their own production portfolio within a selected genre, including a short film of two minutes in length, and supporting creative and organisational preproduction materials. The most popular genres selected by students this year were the Horror and Sci-fi genres, perhaps reflecting the influence of a number of popular television series. The 'Visitors' scenario was a popular choice in this year's submissions.

A range of stimuli are provided in the Component 3 task booklet in the form of genre-based scenarios - this approach ensures that all students can successfully form an initial idea at the beginning of the course. Teachers report that this has been a successful measure in reducing the amount of class time spent on the initial generation of ideas.

Component 3 is often marked less consistently by centres than Component 2 and the aspects where most discrepancy is evident tend to be the Research Analysis & Evaluation and the Film.

### Research Analysis & Evaluation (AO3)

In the written Research Analysis, candidates set out the creative objectives for their film - it is in essence a statement of intention, clearly related to their analysis of the film work of others.

A short synopsis of the film should be included within this statement and the chosen genre and scenario clearly given. Candidates should discuss how the conventions of their chosen genre and specific film language techniques they have analysed from this genre will be used within their own film. The format and structure of the Research Analysis varies between centres but there are a number of recurrent issues with this element each year.

The specification states a word count of 600-800 words. Even though a margin of excess has been accepted by the moderation team in past series, word count is routinely and increasingly exceeded by many centres, particularly so when Keynote presentations are used, as it is harder to track the word count. The included synopsis should be concisely stated and can be presented in greater detail within subsequent planning. Often the inclusion of material not relevant to the assessment objectives results in the word count being exceeded and it is important that the writing remains focused on the assessment objectives. The team intend to conduct a formal review of word counts and the consequences for exceeding them, applicable from first teaching September 2019.

The Research Analysis & Evaluation document should be in written prose and may be presented as a word document or Keynote/Powerpoint exported as a pdf. There is no need for students to include compressed clips. The Research Analysis must be written **before** the film's production - in a few cases it was evident that it had been written after.

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. Often, candidates focus on **either** sequence analyses **or** discussion of their own goals, rather than integrating these two aspects in their discussion. The Research Analysis should explain how their analysis of the film work of others has informed their own creative and technical goals.

Sequence analysis is a key element and students should select a small number of appropriate genre-specific reference sequences to analyse and to inform the planning for their own film. It is worth noting that the discussion of film language techniques should extend beyond the naming and purpose of basic shot sizes in order to attain the higher levels. A narrower range of references allows candidates to discuss the use of film language techniques in greater depth within the word count. Frequently, students' analysis is of a single shot rather than a sequence, which does not enable them to consider how various film language techniques work in concert to produce an emotional response from the audience. The written analysis should be illustrated with purposefully annotated and relevant images/screengrabs from the selected sequences.

Candidates should be discouraged from setting personal, creative or technical goals which are overly general, such as ‘the use of varied shot sizes and angles’. As this is key to any moving image product, it does not reflect personal research into the conventions and techniques of the selected genre - goals should be more detailed and linked to the sequences analysed.

The Evaluation is marked alongside the Research Analysis and should reflect on the success of the final film in achieving the creative and technical goals originally established.

Often, the Evaluations are more detailed and show greater understanding of the use of film language techniques than the Research Analysis, showing the learning that has taken place through the filmmaking process. A number of centres continue to approach the Evaluation as a description of the process of making the film, rather than an appraisal of the film’s creative and technical success. Discussion of factors such as technical failures, unreliable actors etc. is not relevant and should be avoided. Like the Research Analysis, the Evaluation should be illustrated with screengrabs from the final film or from post-production.

In the Research Analysis & Evaluation, Level 2 work is often characterised by content that is less relevant to the assessment objectives, such as excessive narrative detail, or biographical information on chosen directors. Links with the work of others may be superficial, with limited analysis and little understanding of the use of film language techniques being demonstrated. Discussion of personal goals may focus on narrative, theme, and mise-en-scene with less evidence of candidates’ understanding of the other areas of film language. The Evaluation may be descriptive, retelling the film-making process and discussing issues such as the availability of actors, etc.

In Level 3, appropriate filmic references were selected and discussed with understanding but without significant depth or detail. Still images in isolation are often used as references, possibly sourced online and with little in the written analysis to indicate that the film sequence has been viewed or studied. The framing, lighting and mise-en-scene that can be seen in a still image tends to be the focus of discussion, and candidates do not consider how techniques combine to create atmosphere or elicit emotional response. Personal goals are outlined in more general terms, but again lacking detailed consideration. The Evaluations consider the effectiveness of film language techniques within aspects of the final film.

Work in the highest level, Level 4, tends to be focused on the study of genre-specific techniques relevant to candidates’ own goals, and is clearly and concisely written. Higher level analysis tends to be of sequences rather than shots; with students evaluating the effect of a range of film language techniques working together in concert. Film language terms are used perceptively and with understanding and this detailed analysis clearly informed the candidates’ own goals. Personal creative goals were discussed in greater detail, for example, ideas for specific shots or sequences within the film. The higher level Evaluations give an honest assessment of the effectiveness of the completed film work in relation to the original creative and technical goals set. A number of film language techniques used in their own sequences are evaluated perceptively, with evidence provided in the form of screenshots from the final film.

At moderation, improvement in the quality of work for the Research Analysis was noted, with a marked reduction in plagiarised content and fewer candidates taking a broad-based approach to genre research. There was an improvement also in candidates’ understanding of how to integrate sequence analysis with their own personal goals. A number of centres continue to write the Research Analysis after filming has been completed which should be discouraged; analysis of the work of others and the establishment of resulting technical goals in advance of filming can only have a positive impact on outcomes. Quality of written communication is assessed in this piece of work and candidates should be encouraged to use spellcheck before final submission.

Teacher marking of this element is often less consistent, reflecting the range of approaches evident at moderation.

**Preproduction (Screenplay/Storyboard) (AO2a)**

Creative Preproduction submitted is generally of a good standard, with the majority of students creating detailed preproduction materials in an appropriate format and attaining Level 3 or 4.

A number of centres use photography to produce storyboards and this is an effective means for students to trial their film production and consider mise-en-scène and framing. Photographic storyboards must not be still images taken from the final film, as this does not show evidence of planning. It was positive to note that the tendency to do this was less evident in this year's submissions. Also, very few centres presented photographic storyboards in portrait orientation this year, which was another improvement. As in Task 1, the template used for the storyboard influences the level of detail that candidates include in their final film. Storyboards and corresponding shot lists should closely match one another.

The formatting of scripts remained an issue this year. Scripts should be correctly formatted. An exemplar is available on the microsite and also within the Component 2 stimulus materials. As one page of correctly formatted script equates to around a minute of screen time, it is expected that scripts are around two pages in length. When scripts fall short of this, it usually reflects underdevelopment of the narrative and impacts the quality of the final film. As in previous years, scripts which rely heavily on dialogue are often less effective and students should be encouraged to use visual storytelling techniques.

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

Shotlists and shooting schedules are also well presented by the majority of centres, usually detailed and correlating well to the storyboards.

The Director's Notebook should be 5-10 pages in length and show purposeful visual planning for the film production. Most centres present this document as an exported Keynote or Powerpoint presentation, exploring aspects such as mise-en-scène, setting, costume, etc. through relevant secondary and primary visual research. Personal photography and practical experimentation are key elements of this planning and students should be encouraged to gather location photography and experiment with make-up, lighting, etc. Many students continue to include images of 'everyday' clothing, rooms and objects such as mobile phones within their notebooks. While this is acceptable to an extent, it is not indicative of creative preparation for filming. Images included in the Director's Notebook should meaningfully inform the development of ideas. Annotation is useful to expand on ideas but it is worth reinforcing that this document is primarily for the purpose of visual planning.

Some centres include evidence of workshops and techniques carried out in school - for example, greenscreen, time lapse, desaturation, etc. Whilst this is encouraging and impressive to see, in many cases it does not connect to the candidates' own intentions for their final film and is therefore not relevant to their personal preproduction - the work of the strongest candidates is marked by a clear focus on research to support their final film. A few centres seem to be reverting to using the Director's Notebook as a way to document the film production process, rather than to present preproduction processes, planning and experimentation.

The planning elements were marked realistically and consistently by centres, in the main.

**Film (AO2a)**

Film outcomes indicate ongoing improvement in centres' approach to film making and the teaching of film language techniques. The vast majority of submissions were live action films and students should be encouraged to consider using animation for Component 3, remembering that techniques other than stop-motion may be used within this component. Horror and Crime remain the most popular genre choices for students but this year there was a marked increase in students opting for Sci-Fi, reflecting the popularity of series such as Netflix's 'Stranger Things'.

As ever, there were examples of film work that exceed what could reasonably be expected at GCSE level. The importance of mise-en-scene in the creation of genre-based films cannot be overstated and students should be encouraged to take a more ambitious approach to mise-en-scene, by filming outside of the familiar environments of school and home where possible. Many candidates invest significant effort into mise-en-scene and moderators also noted an increase in students exploring the effects of lighting in their work, particularly within the Sci-Fi scenarios. Camera and editing remains an area of strength for the majority of centres, indicating thorough teaching and learning of this aspect in class. The issue of ‘shaky footage’ remains a weakness in some centres; the use of a tripod is absolutely essential for all shooting, except where hand-held footage has been planned. The Film element requires students also to produce a soundtrack which should be multi-layered, utilising the sound editing skills developed in Task 3. This is done well by many centres, but the single-layer music soundtrack is still greatly overused.

In conclusion, the main factors which limit marks continue to be unsteady camera work, poor lighting, single layer soundtrack and underdeveloped consideration of mise-en-scene.

### **Full Portfolio (AO1)**

The awarding of AO1 marks to the ‘full portfolio’ aims to assess candidates’ knowledge & understanding of film language and of the conventions and techniques appropriate to the chosen genre. This evidence may be written, visual or filmic and may therefore be found in the Research Analysis and Evaluation, in the Preproduction elements or in the final film.

Film language terminology being used accurately and with understanding is a key element to attaining the higher levels at AO1 and the mark should be awarded after all the other elements have been marked. In many cases, the resulting mark for AO1 may be close to an average of attainment in the other Assessment Objectives but the criteria should be reviewed before awarding a mark.

## **Teacher Assessment**

The e-CRS system was used well by all centres. Teacher assessment of Component 2 was mainly accurate and within tolerance for the majority of centres, which shows ongoing improvement in centres’ approach to the controlled assessment tasks. Where marks fell outside of tolerance, it was usually due to slight leniency in the marking of the tasks. Task 4, Animation was, at times, marked with a degree of severity by some centres.

In comparison to Component 2, in Component 3, a greater number of centres fell outside of tolerance, as has been the case in previous series. The number of centres marking outside of tolerance this year for Component 3 was less than in previous years, however, reflecting greater understanding of the application of the assessment objectives. Marks outside of tolerance often reflected deviations in the approach to and the marking of the Research Analysis & Evaluation. Marking deviation also occurred when there was leniency in the marking of the final films. As marks awarded for AO1 correlate with the marks for these more significant elements, inaccuracy in the marking of the Research Analysis & final films was often also reflected in the marks awarded to AO1 pushing overall centre marks outside of tolerance.

Overall, the reduced number of centres falling outside of tolerance across both units was encouraging to see and reflects centres’ increased confidence in the approach to and marking of the various assessed elements.

## Submission of Work for Moderation

Controlled assessment work was generally submitted in accordance with the guidelines given, in the majority of cases.

In Component 2, some issues persist with the submission of work for Task 1, Storyboarding, and Task 3, Postproduction Sound. Storyboards should be scanned and combined into a single .pdf document and checked to ensure that pages are correctly orientated and legible. The quality of scanning was an issue for a number of storyboards submitted. For Task 3, Postproduction Sound, a screengrab and sound log must be submitted and a number of centres did not submit these documents. In Component 2 submission of Tasks 2 and 4 was generally unproblematic.

The guidelines for Component 3 submission of work contained in the Instructions to Teachers booklet should also be reviewed before submission to ensure that files are presented correctly within a single folder. Films should be compressed according to the guidance provided on the CCEA Moving Image Arts microsite. While candidates are responsible for the compression and submission of their work, it is essential that teachers check the content of the folders before submission to CCEA for moderation.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

- Specification Support Officer: Nola Fitzsimons  
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- Officer with Subject Responsibility: Ingrid Arthurs  
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