



Module Descriptor

Title	Advanced Documentary Film Practice		
Session	2025/26	Status	
Code	FILM11001	SCQF Level	11
Credit Points	40	ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)	20
School	Business and Creative Industries		
Module Co-ordinator	Prof Nick Higgins		
Summary of Module			
This module will develop students’ ability in advanced creative film production across the full range of nonfiction genres (documentary, essay and experimental), and encourage them to experiment with new forms and new working methods. Key content includes: Immersive hands-on workshop experience led by practising non-fiction filmmaker(s); Multidimensional analysis of prominent non-fiction films from both the historical canon and recent international production; Small group support and one-on-one mentoring through an individual non-fiction film project, from initial conception to fine cut.			

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus¹ ☒		Hybrid² ☐		Online³ ☐		Work -Based Learning⁴ ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☒ Ayr ☐ Dumfries		☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley		☐ Online / Distance Learning ☒ Other (specify) Film City		
Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐	

¹ Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

² The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

³ Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

⁴ Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐
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Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of theory and practice of non-fiction cinema and be able to construct and present analytical arguments using appropriate academic conventions
L2	Demonstrate originality in devising and making a creative output, in a context of professional supervision;
L3	Apply a range of technical and interpersonal skills in creating a collaborative creative output;
L4	Demonstrate capacity for critical reflection and reflective understanding of ones own creative outputs and those of others in a collaborative context;
L5	Demonstrate openness to professional mentoring, advice and supervision

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	SCQF 11 A critical understanding of specialised creative processes and mechanisms in the field of non-fiction film production, including the concepts and principles that underpin them;
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF 11 Demonstrating creativity and/or originality in non-fiction filmmaking; operating in a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts; Planning and executing a significant non-fiction film project.
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF 11 Applying critical and creative thinking to issues at the forefront of contemporary non-fiction film practice; Developing original and creative responses to problems and issues arising during practice.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF 11 Communicating using written, oral, visual and acoustic forms at a professional level to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge and expertise; Communicating with peers, more senior colleagues and specialists
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	SCQF 11 Working in a peer relationship with professional practitioners; Demonstrating leadership and/or initiative; Practising in ways that draw on critical reflection on both one own and other's work; Managing complex ethical and professional issues for which there may be no clear precedent

Prerequisites	Module Code	Module Title
	Other	
Co-requisites	Module Code	Module Title

Learning and Teaching

In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

The focus of the teaching and learning methodology will be to deliver a blended learning experience, using a combination of group seminars and workshops, online mentoring, individual tutorials, and practical hands-on experience of collaborating in the production of a professional-level non-fiction film project.

Both core staff and guest lecturers are actively involved in the film industry in various roles, and their approach to teaching is informed by their own practice and/or research.

Throughout, students are encouraged to take a problem-solving approach to the aesthetic and pragmatic decisions involved in filmmaking, and to learn from their mistakes as well as their successes, in line with the principles of inquiry-based learning.

Students are encouraged to reflect on the way in which their own experience of practical filmmaking relates to different historical traditions, and to position their work in relation to contemporary national, European and international film practice.

Group-based work will lead to the development and production of a number of short films. Production records and student statements will provide the basis for evaluating individual contributions to the film shoot, while placing a high value on teamwork and cooperation.

Extensive formative feedback will occur throughout the module, and students will receive peer, industry and tutorial review of their work regularly throughout the trimester.

The module will exploit E-Learning through the use of our VLE, Moodle, using Online channels wherever possible in order to free up contact time for creative work and collaboration.

Learning Activities

During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:

Student Learning Hours

(Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)

Lecture / Core Content Delivery

24

Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity

24

Laboratory / Practical Demonstration / Workshop

30

Personal Development Plan

18

Asynchronous Class Activity

24

Independent Study

280

TOTAL

400

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Coles, R (1998), Doing Documentary Work. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Corrigan, T (2011), The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Kahana, J (2016) The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

MacDougall, D (1998), Transcultural Cinema. Selected essays. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the [Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure](#), Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: [UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code](#).

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	Arts Media
Overall Assessment Results	☐ Pass / Fail ☒ Graded
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ Yes ☒ No If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.
School Assessment Board	Arts & Media
Moderator	Paul Wright
External Examiner	Prof Neil Fox
Accreditation Details	Screenskills Select
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ Yes ☒ No
Changes / Version Number	

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

Assessment 1

Critical essay on non-fiction cinema (25%);

Choose two cinematic creative documentary films that tackle a similar subject matter or theme and critically compare and contrast the filmmakers distinctive approach to filmmaking. Essays must refer not only to the appropriate critical literature in documentary studies but must also include critical responses from film critics and audiences, and most importantly, the viewpoints of the filmmakers themselves (2000 words).

Assessment 2

A short creative documentary film (50%)

A short documentary of between 5 and 10 minutes duration, made as part of a group in which the student plays a clearly defined and significant role. The film project is subject to green-lighting by tutors in advance of production. (50%)

Assessment 3

Reflective report and auto-critique (25%):

During the making of the film for assessment element 2, the student is asked to keep a log documenting their experience of making the work and any problems encountered en route. This log should form the basis of their reflective report and it should make the nature of the student's personal contribution clear. More importantly, this report should include a self-critique reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of the final film as it relates to their contribution, and the lessons they have learned from the project following its completion. This report will be complimented with an in-person auto-critique alongside the students production collaborators in a facilitated discussion with the tutors.

(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.

(ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Essay	☒	☐	☐	☒	☒	25	24

Component 2

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Creative Film/ Short Film	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	50	48

Component 3

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Reflective Report	☐	☒	☐	☒	☒	25	24
Combined total for all components						100%	96 hours

Change Control

What	When	Who