Department of Film and Screen Media

University College Cork

MA FILM AND SCREEN MEDIA

NFQ Level 9, Major Award

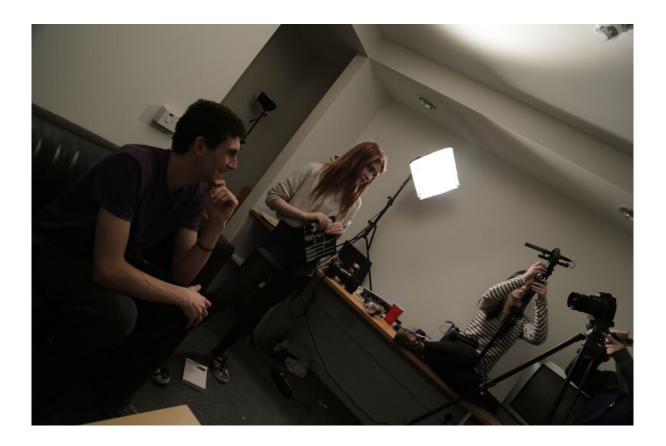# ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MARKS AND STANDARDS

TIME

Marks for all taught modules including those wholly assessed by Continuous Assessment will be presented to the Summer Examination Board. For students failing to achieve the pass standard in the taught modules, there will be a Supplemental Examination in Autumn with an Autumn Examination Board.

The Dissertation/Project should be submitted to the School/Department on a date specified by the School/Department. The Dissertation/Project will be considered at the Winter Board. For students failing to achieve the pass standard in the Dissertation/Project, or for students who fail to submit, there will be one opportunity to repeat the dissertation/project in a subsequent year.

MARKS MAXIMA

100 per five credit module; 200 per ten credit module, 400 per twenty credit module, 600 per thirty credit module, 800 per forty credit module.

Part I: 1000 marks; Part II: 800 marks; Total marks 1800.

PASS STANDARD (MODULE LEVEL)

Part I and Part II must be passed separately. All modules in Part I must be passed prior to submitting the dissertation/project in Part II. Candidates failing Part 1 modules at the Autumn supplemental must withdraw from the programme.

On the recommendation of the responsible School/Department an Examination Board may decide that a dissertation/project is a borderline pass/fail and may agree to permit the student to make minor corrections to achieve the pass standard for the Dissertation/Project within six weeks of the publication of examination results.

PASS STANDARD (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

The pass standard for each module is 40%. Special Requirements for individual modules, if any, are detailed in the Book of Modules (www.ucc.ie/modules/).

HONOURS

Honours will be awarded on aggregate as follows:

  ➢ **First Class Honours**: an aggregate of not less than 1260/1800 marks (i.e. 70% and above)
    Second Class Honours Grade 1: an aggregate of not less than 1080/1800 marks (i.e. 60% and above but less than 70%)
  ➢ **Second Class Honours Grade 2**: an aggregate of not less than 900/1800 marks (i.e. 50% and above but less than 60%)

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN FILM AND SCREEN MEDIA

Candidates who pass at least 30 credits of taught modules may opt to exit the programme and be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Film and Screen Media.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

MA IN FILM AND SCREEN MEDIA (NFQ LEVEL 9, MAJOR AWARD)

On successful completion of this programme, students should be able to:

- Develop their knowledge to an advanced level in the study of 20th and 21st century film;
- Understand connections between theoretical, aesthetic, social and cultural contexts in the study of films;
- Develop independent critical and research methods and scholarly research, writing and debate;
- Introduce key concepts in film studies.

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN FILM AND SCREEN MEDIA (NFQ LEVEL 9, MINOR AWARD)

On successful completion of this programme, students should be able to:

- Develop their knowledge to an advanced level in the study of 20th and 21st century film;
- Understand connections between theoretical, aesthetic, social and cultural contexts in the study of films;
- Develop independent critical and research methods and scholarly research, writing and debate;
- Introduce key concepts in film studies.

MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Individual module learning outcomes are available from the UCC Book of Modules.

ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT RATIONALE

Assessment on the MA in Film and Screen Media is planned to encourage as well as test your **acquisition of key skills,** in conjunction with subject-specific knowledge; its main purposes are:

- ➢ To offer you an opportunity to verify and demonstrate the level to which you have achieved the learning outcomes of the course/module;
- ➢ To further enhance your learning—the process of undertaking assessment is a learning process; you read, you research, acquire skills, develop projects and, thus, acquire knowledge.

The Department of Film and Screen Media aims to **encourage learning** through diverse and innovative forms of assessment. We also aim to **provide critical and constructive feedback** according to established criteria.

The assessment processes are subject to regular review through the discipline's internal boards, feedback from Student/Staff committees, External Examiners' reports, and Quality Assurance audits.

The types of assessment used include essays, exams, oral presentations, video essays, creative films (production and postproduction), creative writing (screenplays), web-based exercises, blogs, and portfolios. Film modules incorporating practice also apply aspects of group work and group assessment.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Important note: The criteria below must always be integrated with any module-specific criteria, as directed by the Lecturer.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN WORK

We consider three main elements when marking your written work (essays, tests, written examinations); your assignments must address all three areas to be successful:

Argument and analysis: Your work should contain a coherent and accurate main thesis/argument. Your work should perform thorough and considered analysis and/or close reading of texts, and produce a reflective, clear and in-depth discussion of the topic.

Knowledge and research: Your work should be based, where appropriate, on wide and critical reading of relevant secondary sources; it should demonstrate excellent and thorough comprehension of any texts that you discuss, and of their relevant historical, intellectual, and/or artistic contexts.

Writing and presentation: Your work should be well structured and organised and should be written in a clear and persuasive manner. Your referencing should accurately and consistently follow scholarly conventions, as should your formatting and presentation. Your essay should also avoid mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

When assessing written work staff consider the following points:

- Depth of understanding of basic concepts and issues
- Relevance to the assignment title or question
- Logical organisation and coherent linking of ideas
- Personal evaluation of issues under discussion
- Analysis, including originality of examples used
- Knowledge of the relevant contexts
- Evidence of adequate and appropriate background reading and critical use of relevant secondary material
- Evidence of systematic thought and argument
- Clarity of expression
- Accuracy of grammar and punctuation
- Systematic and standardised in-text and bibliographical references (n/a to exams)
- Final copy presentation and layout (n/a to exams)
- Observation of length requirements

- Evidence of having fulfilled requirements and expectations as detailed by the module leader in relation to assessment prerequisites

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

We consider three main elements when marking your oral work; your oral assignments must address all three areas to be successful:

Argument and analysis: Your presentation should contain a coherent and accurate main thesis/argument. Your work should perform thorough and considered analysis and/or close reading of texts, and produce a reflective, clear and in-depth discussion of the topic.

Knowledge and research: Your presentation should be based, where appropriate, on wide and critical reading of relevant secondary sources; it should demonstrate excellent and thorough comprehension of any texts that you discuss, and of their relevant historical, intellectual, and/or artistic contexts.

Presentation and organisation: Your work should be well structured and organised and should be presented in a clear and persuasive manner, engaging the audience and using any technical supports (PowerPoint, video, etc.) in an effective and professional way.

When assessing oral presentations staff consider the following points:

- Depth of understanding of basic concepts and issues
- Relevance to the assignment title or question
- Logical organisation and coherent linking of ideas
- Personal evaluation of issues under discussion
- Analysis, including originality of examples used
- Knowledge of the relevant contexts
- Evidence of adequate and appropriate background reading
- Evidence of systematic thought and argument
- Clarity of expression
- Engagement of audience
- Use of appropriate supporting materials/technology (Slides, PowerPoint, handouts, audio, video etc.)
- References for use of secondary material (e.g. on PowerPoint or handouts)
- Time-keeping
- In case of group presentations, group cohesion and appropriate distribution of roles
- Evidence of having fulfilled requirements and expectations as detailed by the module leader in relation to assessment prerequisites

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PRACTICAL WORK (CREATIVE)

We consider three main elements when marking your creative practical work (creative films and projects); your assignments must address all three areas to be successful:

Research and planning abilities: Your work should demonstrate ability to identify a range of technical skills, equipment expertise, and practices for filmmaking. It should also demonstrate ability to work

independently and collaboratively in a small crew, using a range of strategies and technical skills to contribute to the planning, execution, and production of a sequence/film.

Production skills: Your work should demonstrate evidence of applied technical ability, grasp of fundamental film grammar, appreciation of narrative structural dynamics, and effective use of cinematic devices and techniques.

Originality and creativity: Your work should demonstrate screen storytelling ability, inventiveness, creativity, and innovation.

When assessing creative practical work staff consider the following points:

- Quality of practical and creative ideas behind the work and your research, particularly as they respond to (and achieve) the brief, the quality of imagination at work, innovation and taking artistic risks.
- Quality of the technical production (such as image quality, exposure, focus, smoothness of camera movement, clarity of sound, etc.)
- Understanding and implementation of screen aesthetics / grasp of fundamental film grammar
- Practical considerations in the project (such as correct use of space, location, lighting etc.)
- Practical skills, as appropriate to the project, including skills in management and time management
- Coherence, clarity of communication, organisation and structuring of the work
- In the case of group projects, an understanding and demonstration of a designated role and the independent initiative to research and implement the associated responsibilities
- Understanding and critical awareness as shown in the work. Depending on the particular project, this may include: an intellectual understanding of the work; an understanding of social, historical, cultural, aesthetic context; awareness of relevant practitioners and their work and/or theorists and theories
- Observation of rules regarding copyright and original work by other collaborators (actors, musicians, artists, locations, etc.)
- Observation of length requirements
- Evidence of having fulfilled requirements and expectations as detailed by the module leader in relation to assessment prerequisites

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PRACTICAL WORK (CRITICAL/CREATIVE)

We consider three main elements when marking your critical practical work that includes a creative component (video essays and projects, including web-based exercises, blogs, portfolios); your assignments must address all three areas to be successful:

Argument and analysis: Your work should contain a coherent and accurate main thesis/argument. Your work should perform thorough and considered analysis and/or close reading of texts, and/or produce a reflective, clear and in-depth discussion of the topic and its contexts.

Knowledge and research: Your work should be based, where appropriate, on wide and critical reading of relevant secondary sources; it should demonstrate excellent and thorough comprehension of any texts that you discuss, and of their relevant historical, intellectual, and/or artistic contexts. Your work should also demonstrate technical and formal knowledge of the medium you use to convey the results of your research.

Presentation, organisation and creativity: Your work should be well structured and presented, and it should demonstrate evidence of the ability to make the best use and, when relevant, creative use, of the medium to convey your ideas.

When assessing critical/creative practical work staff consider the following points:

- Evidence of adequate and appropriate background reading
- Relevance of the discussion
- Soundness of planning and organisation
- Evidence of systematic thought and argument
- Observation of conventions of academic discourse when citing sources
- Observation of length requirements and technical instructions
- Careful presentation (e.g. accurate presentation of information and ideas; accurate editing and transitions, when relevant; accurate proofreading of written elements, when relevant)
- Clarity and effectiveness of communication through audiovisual and/or web-based means
- Quality of the technical production (such as image quality, clarity of sound, etc.)
- Understanding and critical awareness as shown in the work—depending on the particular project, this may include: an intellectual understanding of the work; an understanding of social, historical, cultural, aesthetic context; awareness of relevant practitioners and their work and/or theorists and theories
- Evidence of having fulfilled requirements and expectations as detailed by the module leader in relation to assessment prerequisites
- In the case of web-based projects, students' technical grasp of website construction, management and maintenance will be evaluated, including:
- General website construction and adherence to course instructions
- Web design and aesthetics
- Navigation and accessibility (linearity of the site, ease of usage)
- Presentation of information and ideas (web menus, web pages, posts/findings—where applicable)
- Technical functionality (hyperlinks, embedded files, downloads, interactive elements [surveys, widgets, etc.]—where applicable)
- Integration of media (image files, videos, sound files, social media activity, etc.)

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN CREATIVE WORK (SCREENPLAYS)

We consider four main elements when marking your creative written work (screenplays); your assignments must address all four areas to be successful:

Originality and creativity: You have a story to tell. You must show that you understand how to tell it for the screen. It should be clear that this is not a story better told in a novel, on radio, or in the theatre. Inventiveness, creativity, and innovation are most welcome.

Character work: It is important the script shows serious consideration of character and the interaction of character with story/plot. Quality of dialogue, relevant action, physical detail, relationships between characters, the presentation of the world of the character will all be important.

Structure: Evidence of clear thinking about structure. Have you thought about the different ways to tell your story and made intelligent choices, especially in relation to Point of View, Timeframe, Tone, the visual world of the film. Remember the story is yours to tell, but you are responsible for finding the most dramatically satisfying way to do it.

Presentation and organisation: Screenplays must adhere to the required format, and be free from misspellings and grammatical errors.

When assessing creative written work staff consider the following points:

- Evidence of planning and organisation and consciousness of task
- Consistency and strength of story structure, characterisation and character development
- Effectiveness of narrative elements
- Use of form and language appropriate to context
- Correct formatting of script
- Ability to incorporate critical feedback, revise and edit
- Ability to communicate visually
- Ability to create atmosphere / story world
- Evidence of having fulfilled requirements and expectations as detailed by the module leader in relation to assessment prerequisites

GROUP PROJECTS AND ASSESSMENT

In the case of group projects and group presentations, you will usually be evaluated both on your individual contribution and on the overall, collective achievement of the team. A written piece – which can take any number of forms – will often be required to accompany the practical contribution to the group project. The precise details of (a) what you are expected to do in fulfillment of work on a group project; and (b) how this work will be assessed will both be explained by lecturers of separate modules. Please ensure that you are familiar with these regulations and the variations in assessment of group work across different modules.

SPECIAL CRITERIA

The points given above will apply to most of the assignments that you are set. In some cases, however, a particular module or task will require its own set of criteria, and these will be communicated to you when you are given the assignment.

If you are unsure of the criteria by which a piece of work is going to be assessed, or you do not understand the criteria you have been given, then you should ask your Lecturer.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

FIRST CLASS

80–100

In **written/oral/practical critical assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded for outstanding work that surpasses what can normally be expected of an undergraduate student, generates novel approaches, and has impressive scope and theoretical sophistication. Work is highly ambitious and original and is presented in an exemplary fashion.

In **practice-based creative assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded for outstanding work that surpasses what can normally be expected of an undergraduate student, generates novel approaches, and demonstrates professional-standard ability and achievement. Work is highly ambitious and creative and is presented in an exemplary fashion.

70–79

In **written/oral/practical critical assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded when candidates show evidence of extensive relevant reading and a confident ability to tackle complex issues, using a range of different skills and knowledge. Work is focused and cogent, showing clarity of thought, sophisticated reasoning, and excellent analytical ability; it is logically structured, using correct grammar and spelling and/or audiovisual formats, and excellent referencing and bibliography.

In **practice-based creative assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded to work of outstanding overall quality. It will consist of an original and ambitious project that has achieved its goals with high level of technical/formal competence. It will be informed by the strength of its original ideas and by an appropriate and distinctive structure, and will be presented in an excellent way.

UPPER SECOND CLASS (2.1)

60–69

In **written/oral/practical critical assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded to very good work that displays a confident use of a range of skills, evidence of learning from a range of relevant sources, a solid grasp of and, when relevant, an individual perspective on the material and themes explored. The work will present the results of those explorations with clarity and cogency; it will be well structured, using correct grammar and spelling and comprehensive and accurate referencing and bibliography.

In **practice-based creative assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded for very good work that has achieved the majority of its goals and demonstrates a significant degree of originality and ambition. It will be based on an original idea and will be well structured. It will show significant evidence of research and planning, and demonstrate a critical awareness of the medium/and a good level of technical competence.

LOWER SECOND CLASS (2.2)

50–59

In **written/oral/practical critical assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded when there is evidence of knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts. Work will be of an overall satisfactory standard but there may be limited depth of reasoning and/or an inability to remain consistently focussed in use of arguments or evidence. The work may not be precise in execution and may be generally lacking in originality; may present mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation; and have clearly identifiable areas for improvement.

In **practice-based creative assessment**, a mark in this category is awarded to work of an overall satisfactory standard showing degrees of originality and ambition and the achievement of its primary goal(s). Technically it will be competent in quality with a recognisable and successful overall structure. It will be based on a degree of research/planning and exhibit some critical awareness of the medium but with marked variations in the effectiveness of the use of formal elements and have clearly identifiable areas for improvement.

CANVAS

Film and Screen Media uses Canvas (canvas.ucc.ie), a virtual learning environment. On Canvas you will find copies of course outlines, assessment questions, and links to Turnitin (for submission of your essays, see below). Your lecturers will also post announcements and send class emails through the Canvas system. More on UCC Canvas is available at: https://www.ucc.ie/en/canvas/moreaboutcanvas/

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT

Students must submit all their written assignments (in msword format, **not** pdf/rtf/odt etc.) through Turnitin, using the link provided on Canvas. Please ensure you retain your Turnitin receipt of submission.

Media assignments, such as video projects and website portfolios, can also be submitted using the links provided on Canvas

Instructions on how to submit assignments for modules not administered by Film and Screen Media will be made available by individual module coordinators.

TURNITIN

Turnitin is software device that scans a typed document, then finds and highlights material in it that has been taken from another source. This material includes quotations (whether or not they have been placed in quotation marks) and all work previously submitted to the Turnitin database. It provides an "originality report" showing the percentage of such material in an essay. If, for example, one quarter of the essay is quotation from another source, the report for that essay will be 25%.

Both students and teaching staff are given a password that allows them to access the Canvas site (canvas.ucc.ie). When you have done so, on the left frame you will see an "assignment" link: click on this (or other link as instructed by the Lecturer), and you will find a list of assignments to choose from. Once you have chosen the appropriate assignment, you can upload your essay — exactly as with any other email attachment — and it is sent to the lecturer's prescribed Turnitin assignment page. Film and Screen Media staff use Turnitin as a tool to check assignments for plagiarism.

STYLE AND REFERENCING

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that appropriate assignment guidelines and requirements (including the length of submissions) have been fulfilled. Furthermore:

  ➢ Give your name, the course, the name of your lecturer, the title of your assignment, and the due date of the work on a title page.
  ➢ Use a simple, easily read type-face such as Times New Roman font size 12, use generous margins, and double-space your work. Pages should be numbered.
  ➢ Your written assignments must conform to the writing and referencing conventions of the MLA style, which are set out in the ***MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8th ed. New York: Mod. Lang. Assn., 2016.**

You are advised to buy your own copy of this book. Copies are also available in the library on Q+3. The website of the www.mla.org provides some free instructions under the "MLA Style" option. An excellent

free online guide to MLA style is the Purdue OWL (Purdue University Writing Lab), which is available here: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

POLICY ON EXTENSIONS

A student seeking an extension must submit a completed extension form. This form is available from the Student Area of the Film and Screen Media website and from the Film and Screen Media Office (please email Linda Murphy), and contains detailed instructions for submission. Please note the following points:

➢ Applications should be made ahead of the submission date.
➢ Extensions that do not incur loss of marks will normally only be allowed where there is a relevant medical certificate or written evidence of other significant difficulties that have interrupted work (computer problems, such as failure of printer and inability to access shared facilities, will not constitute a reason for the granting of an extension).

An initial request, if agreed, will generally amount to a one-week extension. On a discretionary basis, a further extension may be sanctioned. In such cases, students will be required to present further evidence of a compelling reason for late submission. Again, the extension must be agreed to in writing.

If an extension is sanctioned, the late work, on submission, must be accompanied by the supporting documentation (medical certificate, etc.).

Where an extension has not been agreed to in advance, or where a student submits an essay after agreed extensions have expired, the appropriate penalties for late submission will be imposed. Penalties for late submission of work to be assessed are as follows:

➢ **Where work is submitted up to and including 7 days late**, 10% of the total marks available will be deducted from the mark achieved.
➢ **Where work is submitted up to and including 14 days late**, 20% of the total marks available will be deducted from the mark achieved.
➢ **Work submitted 15 days late or more** will be assigned a mark of zero.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Film and Screen Media operates a **strict anti-plagiarism policy**, in accordance with University guidelines. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and for ensuring that you have not plagiarised. Ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse. With a view to making sure that your work has been done in accordance with this policy, you will be required to sign a plagiarism statement when submitting it.

Plagiarism is presenting another person's words or ideas as your own work. If you draw on someone else's words and do not put quotation marks around them and give the writer or speaker credit by revealing the source in a citation, then you are plagiarising. If you revise or paraphrase the words of someone else or just use their ideas, and do not give the author credit in a note you are also plagiarising.

Plagiarism includes the following:

➢ Copying phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or lines without acknowledgement, from another source (print or electronic)
➢ Presenting phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or lines, with only slight changes, from the printed, electronic or manuscript material of others as your own work

- Presenting someone else's arguments as if they were your own
- Buying material from another source, and presenting it as your own work
- Paying someone else to modify your assignment
- Memorising someone else's material and reproducing it from memory without acknowledging the original source
- Jointly writing an individual assignment is known as collusion and it is also not acceptable. If you allow someone to copy your work, this is also collusion and both parties will be penalised
- Submitting work for assessment that you have already submitted, partially or in full, to fulfil the requirements of another course or examination, is also unacceptable

Part of your work as a student is to read and engage with the critical discussions written by others and published in books, articles, and on the Internet. When you come to write your own essays, however, it is essential that you distinguish between your own ideas and insights, and those of others. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must carefully acknowledge all sources. If you don't, intentionally or not, it is plagiarism.

Work that contains plagiarised material (or commits another offence as listed above) will carry an **adequate penalty** according to University Policy. The severity of the penalty will depend on the level of plagiarism but will not exceed a mark of zero for the particular examination/assessment concerned.

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with University College Cork's plagiarism policy and official procedures for dealing with plagiarism. The UCC Plagiarism Policy is online here:

https://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/

When plagiarism is detected, the Department will apply the University Policy.