

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Media and Film Studies are popular and highly successful subjects at this college with approx 450 students studying for A levels in these subjects (EDUQAS exam specifications). The subjects are taught by a team of six teachers with a background in Media, Film or Cultural Studies (F/T and P/T). One member of the team is the Principal Examiner for Eduqas A level Component 2 Media studies and is co-author of the Media studies course textbook and the Head of Media Studies is the Assistant Principal for Eduqas Component 1, another member of the team is an examiner for Film studies. Other members of the team offer activities such as film-making and deliver a range of practical and support subject workshops. In both subjects the team works together on the development of shared google classroom resources, each colleague taking responsibility for one or more A level case study, which is updated throughout the year and supported by guidance notes made available to the whole team. Practical production, which is worth 30% of both qualifications, takes place in a dedicated DTP room (23 PCs) and edit suite (24 PCs).

Practical work within both departments is supported by a team of three Media Instructors who provide camera and editing training for all students and staff. The TV studio, green screen & gallery in Freeman is used by students in a variety of ways to enhance production work. Training and provision of the 'green screen' has enhanced student's creative processes in coursework and specialist training is delivered throughout the year to support students in production and post-production techniques. Equipment in the department (DSLRs, tripods, rigs, LED lights, sliders etc) is rotated between Media A level, Film A level, Level 2 Media and Level 3 Digital Media - there is a large practical component to all six courses each of which work to a very tight 'coursework carousel' managed via google calendar and the *itemit* booking system. This year the department has invested in more DSLR cameras and specialist lenses to ensure that the training our students receive remains industry relevant and produces the highest quality outcomes. Every year the best student production work is celebrated at the Media and Film Oscars evening and some work is entered into and often wins local film festivals.

In Media Studies Year 1, students are introduced to some of the main critical approaches in the subject, developing an understanding of how media texts convey their messages and meanings, as well as considering debates regarding media representations and audience response. They do this through the analysis of a wide range of media forms including video games, film trailers, TV, magazines, newspapers, radio and music videos. In Year 2, students study a broader range of texts, including examples produced outside of the commercial mainstream such as *Huck* magazine and *RipTide* by Vance Joy, as well as looking at more advanced critical theories such as Postmodernism, Post-colonialism and Feminism. Students also apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework and digital convergence to the planning and production of a cross-media production (music video and music magazine). In order to prepare them for this, our students have extensive DSLR camera, studio and editing training where they learn advanced camera and post-production techniques.

In Film studies, students develop their skills of analysis through the study of film form, representation and film contexts along with the subject specialist areas specified by the board such as ideology, narrative and spectatorship. We value teaching a wide range of films, some more accessible American and British films like *La La Land* and *This is England* but also more challenging cinema like *We Need to Talk about Kevin*, *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* and *Fallen Angels* which our cohort deals with in a sophisticated and confident way. All Film students produce a short

film for NEA showing their ability to make meaning through the language of cinema after the study of 80 minutes worth of short films. Film students have won local and national competitions for their short films and are able to show their understanding of how film can be used to make meaning in their highly creative work.

Jennifer Barfield
Head of Media Studies
Amy Charlewood
Head of Film Studies