International Baccalaureate®
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FILM

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 13	14 – 29	30 – 42	43 – 54	55 – 67	68 – 79	80 – 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 13	14 – 28	29 – 40	41 – 53	54 – 67	68 – 80	81 – 100

Production portfolio

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 7	8 – 15	16 – 23	24 – 29	30 – 34	35 – 40	41 – 50

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 7	8 – 14	15 – 21	22 – 28	29 – 34	35 – 41	42 – 50

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In general, work at standard level is somewhat weaker than work at higher level. Presumably, this is partially due to lower contact hours.

At higher level, the major problem seems to be the written commentary. Frequently, there is no supporting pictorial or graphic evidence included in the body of the commentary. Although the Film Guide indicates that no appendix should be included, some centres continue to include them. Another frequent problem is a candidate who neglects to discuss the trailer in the guide.

SL candidates tended to submit weaker work than the candidates at HL. In some ways, creating a satisfying and complete film in five minutes (two minutes shorter than the HL candidates) is a difficult project which is very demanding, especially in the area of editing skills. Nevertheless, the very best work here was entertaining and engaging, showing real imagination. As well, for the most part, the work was suitable. Instructions in the Film Guide as to the content have been followed for the most part, and problems experienced in previous years regarding copywritten material by other artists has mostly been replaced with materials that have been generated by the candidate.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual areas

The biggest problem is the lack of an appropriate commentary. Failing to provide graphic and pictorial evidence of the production process and the role, or a failure to address the creation of the trailer, are the two most problematic parts of the assessment for candidates. The films themselves run the gamut from very derivative approaches to genre films to work that speaks with a unique and individual candidate voice.

Many HL candidates deal poorly with the added responsibility of the individual trailer. This element should be stressed in all HL classes. The most common problem is the failure to discuss the trailer's creation in the written commentary, despite clear indications in the marking criteria that this must be done.

Finally, a continuing problem for SL candidates is work from centres where the contact hours are met, but the course is delivered over one year. This means that from start to finish, the course runs 8 months. This seriously limits the amount of time that can be spent on developing the skills of textual analysis, Film research into theory and history, and familiarity and experience with the five major roles while making films. More significantly, even though the contact hours are met, there is a process of maturation into the subject that occurs when the course is conducted over 2 years. At SL, this is the single factor that most affects the quality of the work.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

For all candidates, at both HL and SL, the biggest problem continues to be teacher familiarity with the guide. For candidates to do well in the course, the teacher really must be familiar with each of the three parts of the course, with the developing skills which will allow the candidate to show mastery of each part of the course in the framework of the assessment, and with the details of assessment. As noted, sharing the guide and particularly the assessment criteria with the candidates can help generate an ongoing dialogue about course expectations.

Watching many short films and examples of trailers would greatly help candidates with the production portfolio assessment. Too often, a candidate is trying to create a feature film in a seven minute format, or is unfamiliar with any trailer structures except the most modern response to this task.

In terms of the development of technical competence, nothing is more helpful for the candidates than having many opportunities to create short films. The more chance that the

candidates have to practice the five major roles that can be evaluated, the more it is likely that the candidate will make a good choice of role when completing their final film.

Having many opportunities in class to speak and practice textual analysis, both formally and informally, will help with both the presentation and the independent study.

Independent study

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 10	11 – 13	14 – 17	18 – 20	21 – 25

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 10	11 – 13	14 – 17	18 – 20	21 – 25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There are a lot of common topics - Film Noir, Disney v. Miyazaki, Nouvelle Vague that have proved quite serviceable to many candidates because of the availability of material. Most of these projects were usually done very capably.

The most sophisticated projects revealed an individual passion of the candidate on many unusual topics and were rooted in a rich understanding of film theory and an engaging use of the AV format.

The less able projects were descriptive instead of analytical in approach, took a fan/enthusiast, or worse ignorant generalist treatment of films in tackling topics that were ill defined.

For SL, there is an over-reliance on comparing originals with remakes with little unveiling of theory or history, and certainly only focusing on two films does limit the scope and insight available to SL candidates. Having said that, a good number of candidates manage to score in the upper mark bands through the level of research, insight and enthusiasm many bring to this project.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual areas

Examining films "unfamiliar to their culture" remains a challenge for many candidates, especially those who consider any cinema non-American, yet still English speaking, as a foreign culture. Yet those who stretch outside this comfort zone are rewarded with insights into, and appreciation of, the variety of expression evident in world cinema.

Engaging with a topic of film theory or history is also a challenge, particularly for those candidates who focus on a social or political issue, but then don't examine it through the lens of cinematic theory or history. This is where anchoring the rationale in cinematic language will give the necessary film focus for this task.

The discussion of film theory and film history must be modelled in the classroom so that candidates are comfortable with the field of discourse. The guide has many sections that imply the use of 'Auteur Theory' - questions about Director's intent are focused on this theory, so it should be dealt with in detail in class. There should be some discussion of both formalistic and ideological theory as well.

Most candidates seem to be at home in finding a candidate voice for the narrator and pitching it towards the target audience. The same can't be said for the visual aspect of the AV format. Candidates seem to have difficulty in both describing shots in sufficient detail and working the material as part of an editing process to juxtapose shots and scenes to convey comparisons that unpacked their various topics.

Research, or lack thereof, remains an issue. There is an over-reliance on superficial Internet or DVD extras resources. In particular this year, some candidates gave the impression of not having watched films, but just quoted excerpts from websites such as YouTube. Annotated bibliographies were few and far between, but the best candidates in this category were very good at analysing the relevance and authority of sources consulted.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

As this task is really the culmination of the theoretical aspect of the course, it is strongly recommended in the first year of the course that teachers invest in a rigorous and comprehensive program of teaching film theory and exposing candidates to a wide range of "unfamiliar" cinema to whet appetites and prepare them for the requirements of this task.

Candidates should also be given ample opportunity to familiarise themselves with the unusual format of this task so they truly get used to writing "a documentary on paper". So a list of short preparatory exercises is strongly recommended.

Film presentation

Component grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 16	17 – 19	20 – 25

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 16	17 – 19	20 – 25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a significant increase in the number of candidates for this session and within these numbers only a very limited improvement in the upper mark bands and a lowering of standards in the middle range. A worrying number of candidates appear to have been ill prepared for this assessment. Too much time was wasted at the outset by listing director, actors, production date and simply listing nominations for awards and awards won as an integral part of analysis or a substitute for discussing the socio-cultural context.

It was quite common for weaker candidates to attribute critical responses to "some people" or "some critics" without proper referencing or simply to quote from one or two critics without questioning the opinions presented. Whilst stronger candidates undertook careful and appropriate research, weaker candidates relied far too heavily upon one or two websites such as IMDB and Wikipedia. Plot summaries are too frequently presented as a substitute for detailed analysis and candidates frequently do not fulfil the requirements of the presentation. Many of the presentations became descriptions of themes and character studies without analyzing how these are explored in filmic terms.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual areas

A significant number of the candidates failed to focus their presentation on an interpretation of the chosen extract and found problems with analysing and interpreting meaning. There was a tendency for some candidates to use the entire presentation to describe or discuss the whole film and ignore the requirement for a specific section to be discussed. In some cases this was a common fault of all candidates from the same centre. The better candidates coped competently with how film creates meaning and discussed this in appropriate film language. However, weaker candidates made general observations about film language, for example shot type, framing, lighting or editing without discussing the intended effects of specific choices made by the director or cinematographer. Some candidates seem to be challenged by the requirement to provide a "detailed, evaluative interpretation" of the extract. Some of the offered analysis tended to be simplistic, for example, stating that shadows equalled evil, white represented purity, high angles represent power and so on. Most candidates tended to offer some very detailed descriptions of camera work and/or editing processes but without any development or explanation of what the intended meaning or meanings could be. Too many presentations also contained traditional literary analysis of characters and theme. While this contributes to the overall understanding of the film it does not show an understanding of how meaning is constructed. Candidates should be encouraged to use film language at all times when discussing film in class.

A number of candidates ignored specific sections entirely, for instance in making no references to socio-cultural context or at HL references to "responses from audiences and reviewers, critics or scholars at the time of [the film's] original release and/or subsequently." The timing of the presentations has become more of a problem with too many candidates not using their full time allowed effectively. Many HL candidates are offering presentations at fewer than ten minutes and at SL fewer than six. The timing of the Presentation commences after the candidate has given the centre and candidate numbers and has identified the film

that they are going to address. Some candidates select scenes that do not offer sufficient scope for analysis.

Whilst a significant number of candidates had difficulties, an encouraging number of candidates have a genuine sense of engagement with the films chosen. Many are clearly well prepared in the use of basic film language and terminology although still too few were able to use this knowledge as part of an in-depth analysis. With some candidates the presentation can become a mere listing of shot types and very simple reference to what they might suggest. Some of the better candidates were able to understand and explore theoretical approaches to their analysis in an impressive manner and showed good awareness of their film's place in cinema history and were generally articulate and organised. In places, the actual understanding of how film communicates through the different micro-elements was inconsistent.

Candidates often did well when describing and analysing mise-en-scene and competently addressed cinematography but did less well when analysing editing and/or sound.

Many candidates still limit their socio-cultural context and "responses" to lists of awards and box office receipts.

The significant strength of many of the candidates was their precise understanding of the underlying themes of the films that they had studied. Many had clearly handled their research well and had spent time in careful preparation for the recording of their presentation. The principal weakness was candidates ignoring significant sections that they are required to cover such as the socio-cultural context. All too often this was either ignored entirely or given the most perfunctory of treatments. However, far too many of the candidates are coming to their recording of their presentation ill-prepared.

Although it is possible to follow the extract through shot by shot this is rarely the most efficient or effective method. It is better to identify key elements in the extract and explore how meaning is constructed. Even if they do not simply describe the extract shot by shot too many candidates show lack of planning and preparation by jumping from thought to unrelated thought. Occasionally this may be as a result of nerves but more commonly because their presentation has not been fully prepared. At their best, however, candidates are able to coherently integrate a thorough and perceptive insight into the themes, issues and socio-cultural contexts of their films with a close, detailed analysis of their chosen extract.

Some candidates fail to offer a persuasive rationale for selecting their sequence. Many simply stated that it was "a turning point" and moved on.

The best candidates offered presentations that reflected genuine personal engagement supported by clear knowledge and understanding.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- The current Film Guide must be read fully and carefully.

- Candidates should be shown the criteria, the subject reports and the current guide so that they are fully aware of what is required of them.

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- It should be made clear to candidates that they must make best use of their time allotted. Ten minutes at SL and fifteen minutes at HL.

- Candidates must be given ample opportunities to practice textual analysis before embarking upon their examination piece. Many candidates appear to be undertaking this task for the very first time in the actual assessment.

- Candidates should be given opportunities to rehearse recording presentations on films other than those set for the assessment. Such practice will enable candidates to plan and organise their examination pieces effectively and eliminate issues regarding the timing of their presentations.

- Teachers must check that sound levels on the CDs to be sent to the examiner are sufficient to be heard. Some presentations for this session were inaudible. All recordings must be able to be played on a domestic CD player. Presentations on files such as Mpeg or Quick Time are not acceptable.

- Once recordings have started they must not be paused or stopped and restarted. Should a candidate wish to watch the extract through before the presentation, this must be done before recording begins.

- Teachers must not allow candidates to read their presentations. Brief notes are acceptable but teachers should check these before commencing recording. Should it be suspected that a candidate is reading their presentation this will be considered to be a possible case of malpractice.

- Recordings must be made in a private, quiet place. Make sure, as far as possible that the candidates will not be interrupted by outside noise such as loud tannoy announcements.

- Teachers must not intervene during the candidates' presentations. Teachers may not prompt candidates. Anything said in response to an inappropriate intervention by the teacher will not be rewarded.

- In regard to film selections at a centre level, teachers should be encouraged to choose both well-known and lesser-known films from the list. In addition, candidates should be encouraged to choose a variety of different extracts from the chosen film.