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

Overall, many issues from past years have been successfully dealt with. There were no films identified this year in violation of the rules about content and treatment presented on page 36 of the subject guide.

There is less violation of the rules about copyright and creativity (page 37 of the subject guide) than there has been in the past but there continue to be some problems. The guiding principle is that "students will be the original creators of, or have a significant role in the creation of any audio or visual material that they use in their work", as noted on page 19 of the subject guide.   The most common violation is the use of unaltered loops of music from music creation programs such as Garage Band. At the higher level of achievement, many of

the best films created everything from news shows to faux-films to be used as inserts on television monitors, and found very creative solutions to the use of music and sound effects.

Over the last two years at higher level, there have been some issues with the presentation of the trailer. The most serious has been the failure to include a trailer. For reasons of consistency, the absence of a trailer means a candidate will lose 15% of their final mark.

Even when a trailer is present, there continues to be a problem with candidates who do not discuss the creation of their trailer in their written commentary. Since this discussion is required by those criteria that described the written commentary, failure to deal with the trailer adequately means a significant loss of marks as well.

Ultimately, many candidates present trailers, and films, of high quality. When a trailer is good, or exceptional, it provides solid evidence of a candidate's global achievement in the course, and supports marks in a higher markband than might have been achieved by the film alone.

Finally, at both higher level and standard level, it is troubling to see evidence in the commentary that many candidates begin work on this significant assessment with very little time to plan, shoot, edit, and polish the final work. Often, there are indications that the work may have been done in only a few weeks. Pre-production work and planning can clearly begin early in the second year. There is no reason why the Production Portfolio should be accomplished in a rush at the end of the two-year program.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A - While very few appendices were seen, weaker candidates persist in submitting material with no pictorial or graphic evidence to support the production process. Often, this results in work being capped at 4 for this criterion as there is no evidence of adequate planning. Another frequent problem is that higher level candidates fail to describe their work on their trailer - another reason why criteria A and B might be limited in terms of marks.

Criterion B - Often a candidate will only discuss logistic problems, and not artistic problems. While most candidates do present a fairly good overview of their work in their role, they sometimes focus too much on production process and not enough on their own work.

Criteria C and D - A major factor here is the amount of time candidates have had to become familiar with their technical equipment and their role. Sometimes candidates indicate that they have never edited before, but they have chosen editor as the role to be evaluated. The trailer is important here, as it often indicates and serves as evidence to support the level of ability indicated by the rest of the project.

Criterion E - Most candidates are competent with narrative, but visual creativity varies a lot. Often, it is clear from written commentaries that not enough time was spent on the work for this very important assessment.

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Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates at both higher level and standard level must have experience making films in many roles. Over the two years of the course, candidates should attempt each role at least once, before settling on a role for assessment. And of course, this also implies they should make many practice films so that they build up their skill set before coming to this final assessment. Candidates should have some practice doing assignments where they are required to produce evidence for their role. Hopefully, by the time they produce their final film, taking set photos, reproducing diagrams, and saving storyboards will be second nature. Candidates should always ask themselves why they are including something and how it will help develop the written commentary. Watching short films during class hours is important as the language of the short film is not the language of the feature film.

Further comments

It is important that teachers are familiar with deadline dates for submitting work.   It is also important that the teacher strive to be as consistent as possible when marking. Both teachers and candidates should be familiar with the criteria descriptors. While it is not required by the guide, a word-count is a commonly expected courtesy on a document such as the commentary.

Frequently a rationale is forgotten, or in the case of higher level candidates there is a rationale for the film but not a rationale for the trailer. In addition candidates may only choose *one* production role. While it is fine for a candidate to choose to make the film on their own, it is important that the candidate understand that they are being graded for the one indicated production role. "Extra" marks cannot be awarded to an editor because the editor was also the director. When choosing how they will be evaluated, the candidate should carefully consider where their best work is on view.

Where higher level and standard level candidates are working together, it is not advisable to work on the same film.

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

This assessment is challenging because it requires both academic rigor and expression in a mode that is uncommon (though which should be familiar for film candidates through the course). Nevertheless, the practical nature of the exercise - script writing - and the focus on film theory and history makes this an important assessment for the candidates. There continue to be problems with formal elements, especially the annotated bibliography (again, an important and useful part of the task). To some degree, this is because candidates do not always understand this as a research assignment. Many of the weaker candidates treat this as an exploration of film language only, like the Presentation, and cite nothing but the films. The major problem that candidates and teachers have is with understanding that the script must be based on a "film theory or film history" topic. Many papers show no evidence that the candidate understands what this means, and so the script meanders from topic to topic without a focus.

Many topics are now very familiar which indicates that teachers are not varying the exposure of candidates to different theories, movements, genres and ideas. The staples are horror, animation (usually Disney v Miyazaki), action movies and romance, all of which derive from a mostly Western background. Better candidates either found different movies within these topics or took a different approach.

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. It was evident that these candidates viewed this project as a summary of all that had been learnt about film history and theory in their past two years.

The less able projects were ill-defined in topic/rationale, descriptive of plot and generalised in approach and research.

At standard level, there is still 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 standard level 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

Engaging with a topic of film theory or history is a challenge. Many candidates have a very broad approach to these areas and need to be reminded that the basis is cinema, not social or cultural history. This is where anchoring the rationale in cinematic language will give the necessary film focus for this task.

Candidates this year have had trouble with the narrator. In many cases, the narrator is a celebrity or "star of the show" instead of a voice of analysis. The narrator also tended to dominate the visual column which is intended to show more visual support and clips from the chosen films. Candidates struggled with providing this interesting visual support. For a number of projects, the visual column was quite barren. Candidates seem to have difficulty in selecting and describing shots in sufficient detail to help illuminate their chosen topic. URLs for YouTube clips were increasingly common, which is disappointing.

Regarding research, there is an over-reliance on superficial internet or DVD extras resources. 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.

The Independent Study should be seen as the culmination of two years of informed and critical study in key areas of film history and theory from which candidates have drawn some interest and passion. This was most apparent in the submissions from top band candidates. These candidates "spoke" in a lively and engaged fashion and fully embraced both the creative and critical opportunities afforded by this task.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The best independent studies are written when the candidate is clearly engaged with the task. All too often, it seems that the candidate has simply read a description of their film or viewed a portion of it on YouTube. Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of their film and have made a thorough attempt at finding relevant research. All too often, the only critic every cited is Roger Ebert. Frequently it is reviewers, and not academic analysis, that the work is based on.

Candidates also need to understand and work more with the idea that the Independent Study is a documentary film "on paper". Therefore one may cut to another shot mid-sentence or overlay a voice over visual. Too many candidates took the notion that the Independent Study was an essay with bits of "visual wallpaper". Again, it's a task that needs to be scaffolded so that candidates can master each element of assessment.

Teachers need to ensure that a candidate has put together a rationale that opens out an investigation that is firmly rooted in film theory and history. An Independent Study that has a poor rationale but turns into an outstanding script has yet to be seen. From the number of poor quality scripts that were put forward this year, it would seem that some teachers did not read or correct at least a draft of the Independent Study. Even though the teacher does not mark this component, it is essential that candidates are given detailed feedback which is based on the markbands.

Annotated bibliographies are the bête noire of this component. This becomes an important indicator that a candidate has assessed the quality of his/her own research in relation to the argument being developed. Far too many candidates regard this as something of a shopping list of resources, which again, only highlights the often subjective and unsubstantiated opinions that populate many papers purporting as academic research. Again, it is incumbent on teachers to give the same importance to the teaching of this as they would to an extended essay.

Film presentation

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

This session's candidates showed improvement in many areas. Whilst some candidates are still reciting lists of awards to indicate how films were received, many more are, at HL incorporating brief quotations form critics or scholars.

More candidates are organising their Presentations effectively and are preparing more fully. Although it is clear that candidates are using well prepared notes as aides memoire it must be emphasised that candidates are not allowed to read their Presentation verbatim form a prepared script. *Candidates who do read their Presentations risk their Presentations being put forward as possible examples of malpractice.* It would be better if teachers prevented candidates from commencing their presentation if a prepared script is about to be used.

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

Although there seemed to be some overall improvement over previous sessions there are areas where more improvement is essential. The principal elements of the Presentation, to analyse a specific film extract still appears difficult for some candidates. Many concentrated on analysing the whole film, making only brief references to the extract. Candidates frequently concentrated on character analysis or literary elements rather than how meaning is constructed in filmic terms.

There were fewer instances where candidates describe their extract rather than analyse it but this remains an issue. Whilst many descriptions are detailed this only constitutes describing what they see or hear rather than how or why specific techniques are used to represent elements such as major themes, ideas and character.

Another issue regards basic preparation and organisation. Too many candidates are not achieving their full potential as they are finishing their presentation significantly well short of the time allowed. At SL some candidates are finishing in less than six minutes whilst at HL some are finishing in less than ten minutes. The timing of the Presentation itself commences after the candidate has given School and Candidate numbers. Too much time is also often wasted by candidates providing unnecessary detail such as lists of characters and actors or a summary of the plot.

Although it is possible to follow the extract through shot by shot this is not the most efficient or effective method. It is better to identify key elements in the extract and explore how the meaning is constructed. Many candidates, even if they do not follow shot by shot simply jump from thought to unrelated thought. Occasionally this is a result of nerves but more commonly because their notes are not coherently organised.
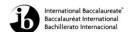
Some candidates find it difficult to meet the challenge of finding complex meanings in their chosen extracts. There is a tendency to rely too heavily on simple analysis such as "black shadows signify something bad" or "high angle camera shows power".

Of more concern is that a small but significant number of candidates are not fulfilling the requirements as set out in the Programme. Some candidates present a detailed analysis of the extract but nothing more. At SL Candidates must address the film's genre, the place of the extract within the film as a whole, its place in a broader socio-cultural context and perceived directorial intent. In addition at HL candidates must refer to responses from audiences, reviewers, critics and scholars at the time of release and/or subsequently.

In spite of the issues elaborated above, more candidates are trying to integrate a detailed analysis of the extract in relation to the film as a whole as opposed to presenting a shot by shot description. It is clear that most candidates are engaging enthusiastically with their chosen film. At their best candidates were able to fully 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.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- The subject guide should be read fully and carefully before setting out to prepare candidates for the Presentation – and indeed all components.

- Too few candidates create truly coherent Presentations. Candidates must therefore be given ample opportunities to practice textual analysis before embarking upon their examination pieces.

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- Candidates should be given ample opportunity to rehearse practice Presentations from films other than those set for assessment

- Teachers should help their candidates be selective in what they say so that they can work effectively within the time frame to present all elements of the Presentation.

- Candidates must be given practice in timing for their presentations. Too many are either too long or too short.

- Teachers must check the sound levels before commencing recording and also the sound levels of the Presentations sent to be examined. Some Presentations have been inaudible.

- Once recordings have been 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 the recording of the Presentation begins.

- All recordings on CD must be able to be accessed with a conventional domestic CD player. Presentations on files such as Mpeg, Quick Time or Media Player are not acceptable.

- Teachers must not allow candidates to read their presentations. Brief notes are acceptable. Teachers should check a candidate's notes before commencing the recording.

- Recordings must be made in a private, quiet place: not, for instance in an open classroom. Make sure, as far as possible that the candidate will not be interrupted by outside noise. Some candidates were disturbed by loud school announcements on a tannoy system.

- Teachers must not intervene during the candidate's presentation apart from stating, "You have X minutes left. Do you have anything more to say?" Teachers may not prompt candidates by referring to specific areas that they think that the candidate has not fully explored. Anything that is said in response to an inappropriate intervention by the teacher cannot be rewarded.

- To avoid any confusion regarding the timing of each Presentation it is recommend that the teacher introduces each candidate with the following script:
  "This is the Film Presentation for xxxxxxxx School/College. The Candidate's number is xxx. The Presentation will be on the film xxxxxx. The scene chosen is [*identify the scene as on the cover sheet."* Then say to the candidate: "You may begin your Presentation."
  This makes it clear when the examiner is to begin timing the candidate.