Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at: https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Assessment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The paper this year was successful in allowing candidates, of a wide range of abilities, to demonstrate and apply what they had learned. Candidates were able to demonstrate successfully macro and micro analysis, industry awareness and creativity - the three main elements being assessed in this paper.

Question 1
This remains an accessible and effective opening question, which enabled candidates to respond successfully.

Question 1(a): Although most candidates did identify an example of a camera shot, such as close up, low angle or tracking shot, centres are again reminded that the trigger word ‘identify’ should signpost the need for a specific example from the extract. A simple reference to ‘close up’ as an answer is not sufficient and candidates should be prepared to identify a specific example from the extract. A popular and appropriate answer was ‘low angle shot of Loki’.

Question 1(b): Candidates engaged well with the idea of ‘suggest’ to equate it with making meaning. Most were able to explain how a camera shot impacted on the audience. The guidance for this kind of question should always be to keep the effect on the audience uppermost in any answer, even if explained from the perspective of the director’s intention.

Question 1(c): The quality of response remains good for this question. The use of the descriptor ‘create meaning’ opened up a range of effective responses from the candidates. Most responded effectively in terms of the meaning of their chosen aspects - sound and mise-en-scène being popular choices. Centres are reminded that candidates should be advised to respond directly to the question as it is asked. Candidates should cover only two micro features if they are to access the full mark range. Most answers addressed the use of visual or special effects, sound and mise-en-scène very confidently but editing was less well handled. Centres should remind candidates that style of transition and the pace of cutting are the two central components to discuss here. Guidance on time management for (c) should still be stressed as answers on the second micro feature were often weaker (and were occasionally omitted entirely).

Question 2
Question two did seem to be slightly more problematic than in previous years. Some candidates seemed ill prepared for the topic of themes and issues.

Question 2(a): Candidates who identified a clear theme or issue set themselves up well for parts (b) and (c). Some candidates were vague and could only be rewarded for a thematic treatment of what initially seemed very general. However, some candidates answered with unsuitable suggestions that related to costume or character (aspects tested in this question in previous years). Centres should remind candidates that, at least initially, question two is still linked to the question 1 extract. A clear example in response to this year’s question could be 'good versus evil' in the form of The Avengers versus Loki and its parallels to 'Allies' versus Nazis referenced in the sequence.
**Question 2(b):** The best candidates discussed specific themes well in terms of their typicality. The more vague answers referred simply to ‘all Superhero Movies use...’ Most candidates were able successfully to interpret the term ‘typicality’ within the context of genre codes and conventions. The best answers were those that were able to give specific points of common usage that form the basis of the chosen theme/issue’s typicality.

**Question 2(c):** Successful answers, in common with part (a), were those which nominated a clear theme or issue. Some answers veered into ‘typical narratives’. These answers were partly rewardable where they discussed typical narratives in a thematic way. The best candidates for this question were able to draw on analysis and knowledge of a broad range films they had studied. The minimum should be two films to compare and contrast. Answers ranged from the basic response of describing where the chosen theme or issue appears through similar usages whereas the better answers dealt with both different and similar usages of the chosen theme or issue. The very best answers looked at how the theme or issue reflected a wider context, such as the theme of the outsider, which would provide a clear point of identification with the teenage section of the audience. Again, answers that consisted of lists of descriptions could not access the higher marks.

**Question 3**

Responses to question three, which attempts to assess knowledge of aspects of the industry elements of Hollywood filmmaking, seem now to be handled more confidently by candidates. Most discuss how the examples concerned engage with the film and encourage people to go and see it. This year, the question emphasised more directly issues of marketing and promotion. The main theme of successful answers was how, even years in advance of release, studios and distributors sought to build up anticipation, ‘hype’ or ‘buzz’ through a range of increasingly internet-based activities. Responses fell into three broad categories: the lower mark responses typically described features from the items in the resource materials with non-existent or a very basic awareness of how they functioned to generate interest. Those in the middle ranges were able to take one or more examples from the resource material and discuss how this would engage or excite both fan and general audiences. The higher order responses demonstrated an understanding of how many of these could work together in a continual build-up of ‘pressure’ towards the release date. Indeed some more sophisticated responses discussed well how the interactive nature of social media methods instigated some sections of the audience to do a significant amount of promotion themselves through viral participation and so forth.

It should be remembered that this question is the main focus of what the candidates have studied in regard to the mainstream film industry and its commercial nature. Their answers are expected to reflect this knowledge and understanding. Marketing (as a major and essential feature of distribution) should always be a central focus. Other supporting concepts are also important - such as the nature of modern communication techniques and commercial franchising which serves to support and expand the marketing function.

Candidates should be clear on the requirements of this question. Whereas more media-style textual analysis of connotation and denotation (much less prevalent this year) may be useful, this is not the main aim of this question. Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the commercial (marketing and promotion) role of the resource material and their own examples. They should aim to identify and discuss features which are designed to generate interest and engage audiences and be able to understand associated concepts such as how marketing creates ‘hype’ and/or ‘buzz’.
Question 4
Question four was answered reasonably well this year. There were few instances of candidates who did not complete it. Candidates should be reminded of two main issues in regard to question four. Firstly, they should leave sufficient time to complete the question and secondly, they need to recognise that a major part of the question is being creative – they are required to come up with their own ideas!

Question 4(a) & (b): This was completed by virtually all candidates, although some seemed to lack a clear grasp of the concept of casting. (A common example of this was the naming of Superhero characters to play either heroes or villains.) The candidates who seemed to do best here were those who cast actors from outside the Superhero genre, which prompted candidates to give much clearer and detailed justification for their choices.

Question 4(c): The quality of answers tended to reflect how much attention had been paid to the bullet point advice as to form and content. Some candidates failed to distinguish between a teaser and a non-teaser poster both in terms of format and Superhero conventions. Candidates need to recognise that a six mark question will require them to respond in reasonable depth and thus shape the style of their response appropriately. The best answers reflected Superhero codes and conventions within the format of a teaser poster that is more reliant on image over text than a normal poster. Candidates should be reminded that the resource material tends to contain an example of the required format if issues of form need clarification. Annotation again proved a limiting factor for some candidates. They should be reminded that it is their opportunity (particularly for the less artistic) to explain and clarify their design choices; without it, the higher marks cannot be accessed. Candidates should also be encouraged to use colour here as it can be a very useful reflection of Superhero movie codes and conventions.

Question 4(d): Inevitably, time seemed to be a factor with this question. Although most candidates were able to come up with varied ideas for promoting the film, many lacked the detail necessary for the full four marks. The best answers demonstrated a clear knowledge of how their idea would engage with a potential audience and came up with good ideas for a previously unknown Superhero.

Question 4(e): This year, only a few candidates seemed to miss out the final part of the last question. Most made good attempts to explain how one of their ideas would increase interest in the film and engage with specific audiences. Some did elect to explain both ideas and should be reminded that examiners can only award marks for one answer (the better of the two) where only one element has been requested.

Summary
Overall, the response to the paper and its questions was wide and well-informed. Both candidates and their teachers should be commended on the good work that the majority of centres have completed over their course of study. Thank you.
The range and variety of responses this year was very strong. There appeared to be more variety in the choice of films studied this year and it was pleasing to see centres tackling films that are perhaps more challenging and complex. The most popular films continue to be *Tsotsi*, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and *The Devil's Backbone* and these also remain some of the most successful. The stepped question approach, as with paper 1, continues to be successful, allowing candidates across the ability range to access marks.

Candidates are now generally well prepared to answer most questions and are aware of the expectations of the paper. Most candidates can discuss their chosen film in terms of place, character, themes and issues. However, it appears that some centres prepare their candidates in a limited way by teaching only one key scene and one key character to the exclusion of other aspects of the film. This approach was also evident in question three this year, where some candidates within a centre produced what seemed formulaic answers. As suggested last year, this is not recommended as it limits candidates’ ability to engage with the film and hinders their ability to answer different kinds of question. As in previous years, the best candidates had clearly studied their chosen films in real depth.

Although there are still some issues with a minority of candidates misunderstanding questions or not recognising key terms, many showed a good understanding of elements such as ‘representation’. One issue that was noted, however, was the lack of film language apparent in some candidates’ responses. Although questions may not always specify that film language should be used, candidates should be encouraged to analyse films using film language wherever possible in order to support the answers given.

**Question 1**

Most candidates answered question one well and were able to choose an appropriate and important male character in their chosen film. Some failed to identify their character by name or named him incorrectly, which was reflected in the marks awarded.

In part (b), the best answers discussed the importance of their chosen character’s role in terms of their effect on other characters, themes/issues and on the narrative itself. Less successful answers usually identified the protagonist but were more descriptive and less developed.

Almost all candidates attempted part (c) of question one, which was pleasing to see as representation questions can be more challenging for some candidates. Some candidates chose to discuss how both genders were represented, despite the question asking for the focus to be on one either male or female. This often resulted in answers that lacked specific detail. Similarly, although the question asked candidates to use film language in their answer, many did not and this weakened their response. If no film language was used to support candidates’ findings, higher level marks could not be awarded.
**Question 2**

As last year, it was encouraging to see that most candidates attempted all sections of question two, giving them every opportunity to gain marks. Almost all candidates identified a setting within their chosen film. Those who identified a specific and relevant setting were awarded full marks in part (a), whereas those who had given a more generalised setting (such as the country the film was set in) were awarded less marks and tended to struggle with the latter parts of the question. It is therefore advisable for candidates to read all parts of a question before attempting an answer.

Most candidates were able to describe their setting effectively and the best answers were detailed, often giving evidence of sights, sounds and even smells. Part (c), which asked candidates to explain how their chosen setting relates to one theme or issue, was less straightforward. Whilst many candidates were able to reference a key theme or issue in more general terms, some struggled to link them to the setting. Similar to question 1 (c), candidates who attempted to cover more than the required single area of focus struggled to gain access to higher level marks as their answers were understandably less detailed.

Part (d) allowed candidates to engage fully with the question and to show their knowledge and understanding of their chosen film through exploring any theme or issue of their choice. The most able candidates referred to key sequences (as required by the question) and analysed the film language used within these sequences in order to show how the theme or issue was communicated.

**Question 3**

Most centres appear to be comfortable with the lengthier and more challenging question three and many answers given were very strong. However, responses do continue to be varied and this year it seemed that some candidates had been overly prepared for this question, giving answers that seemed formulaic. This resulted in work that often limited candidates’ engagement with the question set. Although centres will understandably want to prepare their candidates for potential questions, they are reminded that the best answers are those which demonstrate real engagement with the question, allowing candidates to draw upon their knowledge of the film studied. Higher level answers often did this by following the suggested indicators in the question and using key sequences/film language to showcase their understanding of how meaning was created. Less successful answers tended to be more generalised and attempted to use personal response to disguise a lack of knowledge.

**Reminders for centres**

- The best examination responses demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the whole film rather than one key character, setting or theme.
- Candidates should be encouraged to apply what they know in their answer to question three rather than rely on rehearsed responses.
- Film language/reference to key sequences should be encouraged wherever possible and not just where specified.
- Candidates should be encouraged to read all parts of a question before answering.
- Candidates should take note of the words in **bold** within the questions to ensure they are not writing about more than they need to. This will help to focus their answers.
2016 was another successful year for the controlled assessment component and some fantastic work was seen across the different options. The availability of exemplar material through the WJEC secure site continues to help centres to develop a thorough understanding of what is required and the number of centres who misinterpret the tasks has again decreased. The best centres make use of the moderator's report and utilise this to make refinements to their approach and help maximise the performance of their candidates.

**Film exploration**

Candidates embrace the film exploration task and it is clear that most centres have a very good understanding of what is expected. This task has become a barometer of the cinematic tastes of young people and the variety of films chosen is impressive.

As I have stated in previous reports, candidates benefit from some foundation study of film industries before they attempt the research task. It is clear where the centre has taught candidates about the operation of the contemporary film industry as they are able to discuss why their findings are significant and to make an informed decision whether to include certain information.

There remains a significant minority of centres who clearly complete this component very early in the course and the work does not demonstrate a sufficient level of knowledge or understanding about the film industry. These responses tend to become too focused on the specific film rather than its broader context and what the film reveals about the industry as a whole.

The level of engagement with the findings is what distinguishes level 3 and 4 candidates from those of more modest ability. A key question that candidates should have in their mind as they select each fact to include is ‘what does this tell us about the film or the film industry?’ Level 1 and 2 candidates may be able to find that the film was written by J.J. Abrams, but level 3 and 4 candidates would be able to highlight that he is one of the highest grossing screenwriters of all time and is seen as a ‘safe pair of hands’ when it comes to guaranteeing box office success – as one candidate did.

The ‘micro analysis’ is handled very well by most centres. I would recommend a discussion with candidates before they embark on this component as the choice of film is key and candidates may need guidance. The best examples are based on short sequences and provide a detailed analysis of how creative decisions affect how audiences (including candidates themselves) interpret and respond. Terminology is often used with confidence and teachers are clearly making use of the abundance of resources on film language that are available to equip candidates with terms to articulate their ideas in an effective way.

In a small number of cases, centres appear to be using a ‘set’ film for the whole class which is taught. This is not permitted and can lead to a reduction in centre marks.
**Pitch**

There were some fantastic ideas for new films pitched and this component – which improves every year – provides candidates with an opportunity to demonstrate creativity as well as business acumen; they pitch ideas that you could easily imagine being given the ‘green light’. In a small number of cases, candidates miss out essential information and it is worth referring back to the specification for the list of areas they need to include.

**Pre-production**

The screenplay continues to be the most popular pre-production option. Most follow the industry format for this task. A clear emphasis on visual storytelling is encouraged as it gets candidates to focus on what needs to be included and the kind of things that can be left out. There are plenty of examples available on the internet and it is worth getting candidates to familiarise themselves with these before they begin their own. The task is primarily an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of film language and this is best done through effective scene description. The best examples emphasise the visual aspects – in fact there was some fantastic work which contained only 2 or 3 lines of dialogue.

Storyboards are slowly becoming less popular, which may be in response to the guidance given in previous years. The emphasis here is on film language and the best examples show clear understanding of how the different aspects of film language come together to create meaning, not just the drawings/photographs which really only indicate the mise-en-scène. Whilst candidates who are less artistically able often struggle to create a convincing sense of mise-en-scène, this doesn’t mean that only brilliant artists should attempt this option. The annotation of visual and sound detail, referring to all aspects of film language, is vital if they are to demonstrate their understanding of film storytelling devices. Screenshots from already filmed productions do not demonstrate planning and visualisation and should therefore not be used.

The marketing campaign and magazine cover continue to be less popular options. Unlike the screenplay and storyboard, the emphasis with these options is much more on industry and the best work is produced where there has clearly been some good learning in relation to this aspect of the course.

Candidates who wish to produce magazines must undertake some study of contemporary film magazines and attempt to replicate what they see. Too many examples suggest that candidates have only a vague idea of what a film magazine should look like or contain. The significance of the candidate’s film is also important in this task as they are attempting to demonstrate their understating of how their film would be positioned in the marketplace.

There were fewer marketing campaigns seen this year, but this can be a great way of demonstrating knowledge of the film industry through creative products if done well. The most successful examples are accompanied by detailed annotation which reveals the rationale behind these items and shows a genuine understanding of target audience and how they are likely to engage with the film.
**Final Production**

The quality of filmed productions continues to improve and the moderation team continue to be amazed at what can be achieved by GCSE candidates. The assessment of this can be a little more problematic, with some centres still allocating ‘group’ marks rather than assessing the contribution of the individual candidate in relation to one area of responsibility: camera, sound or editing. The centre administration of this is sometimes problematic and too few candidates or teachers actually indicate the candidate’s role on the FL/1 form. Candidates can of course choose to work alone – and many do – which means that they can take full credit for all aspects (as well as retaining a sense of authorship).

The popularity of posters is increasing and the best work is indistinguishable from professional output with excellent attention to detail. The best examples demonstrate artistic ability and convey ideas about genre, narrative and industry effectively. Weaker examples do not really demonstrate any understanding of contemporary film posters or offer very limited variation across the 3-4 examples produced. Too many centres, however, allow candidates to submit work without original images and the marking does not always reflect this. Original images are required and must be a significant component of the work produced. This is a key area which has led to some centres having their marks adjusted by the moderation team each year.

Magazine features remain popular and some excellent work is seen which effectively replicates professional output. It is important that candidates do not lose sight of the purpose of the task, which is to demonstrate their learning on the course. The best examples are stylistically successful but also use the task as a platform to demonstrate their knowledge of the film industry and the way that new films and new talent is promoted to audiences.

The press pack is less popular but was done very well by a number of centres who clearly like the range of tasks that can be completed and the different skills and knowledge this allows candidates to showcase. The best examples seemed to come from centres where there had been some strong teaching in relation to industry issues and where candidates were keen to use the task as an opportunity to show what they had learned.

**Evaluative analysis**

Too many candidates still evaluate the whole process, approaching the task as a piece of self-reflection which is not the purpose of this task. Only the final production should be analysed and the discussion should centre on how successfully the finished production used genre and/or other features of film language to communicate with the audience. The task most closely related to this is the micro analysis, and the best centres took a similar approach with candidates identifying significant features from their production, showing how they reflected organisation issues and discussing how an audience might respond to these features.