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.

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Introduction
Again this year 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 was an effective question, which enabled candidates to respond successfully.

Q1(a): Although most candidates did identify an example of mise-en-scène, such as the costume or props, centres are again reminded that the trigger word ‘identify’ should signpost the need for a specific example from the extract. A simple reference to ‘costume’ as an answer is not sufficient and candidates should be prepared to identify a specific example from the extract, for example, ‘Batman’s costume’.

Q1(b): Candidates engaged well with the concept of ‘use’ to equate it with making meaning. Most were able to explain how the mise-en-scène would have impacted upon 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 director’s intention.

Q1(c): The quality remains good for this question and continues to improve. The use of the descriptor ‘suspense’ did prove problematic in a few cases, with candidates falling back on more general interpretations of film language. Most did respond effectively in terms of ‘suspense’ and centres are reminded that candidates should be advised to respond directly to the question as it is asked. As usual candidates should cover two micro features if they are to access the full mark range. Many answers addressed the use of camerawork and sound in the extract and there is a good degree of confidence among candidates with regards to their use of terminology. Guidance on time management for (c) should still be stressed as answers on the second micro feature was often the weaker of the two (and was occasionally omitted entirely).

Question 2
Q2(a): Virtually all candidates were able to identify a typical character in the extract apart from the superhero, although in a few rare cases some candidates interpreted ‘other than Batman’ to mean another film. Centres should remind candidates that, at least initially, question 2 is still linked to the question 1 extract.

Q2(b): 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 character’s typicality.

Q2(c): The best candidates for this question were able to draw on analysis and knowledge of a broad range films they had studied. Answers ranged from the very basic response of describing where the chosen character appeared, through similar usages, and the better
answers dealt with both different and similar usages of the chosen characters. The very best answers looked at how the characters served the narrative and how, for example, the street level criminal led up to and contrasted with the 'super-villain'. Again, answers that consisted of lists of descriptions could not access the higher marks.

**Question 3**
Responses to question three, which assesses knowledge of aspects of the industry elements of Hollywood filmmaking, continue to develop. In previous years, the emphasis has been more directly on issues of marketing and promotion. Although they remained a strong presence in successful answers, the concept of franchising was used to broaden the industry context this year. Centres should ensure that candidates are aware of the links between 'sequel', 'prequel' and the wider 'film universe' concepts that govern the production of this currently dominant mainstream genre.

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 within an overall franchise. Those in the middle ranges did rely on a more marketing and promotional analysis, discussing how these worked as marketing methods, mentioning audience and the creation of anticipation, interest and ‘buzz’. The higher order responses discussed both the marketing and promotional aspects of franchising as well as how the linking of films through either prequel/sequel or shared universe increased financial returns and mitigated the risk involved with such high budget movies.

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 but other supporting concepts such as the nature of modern commercial franchising serve to support and explain the marketing function.

Candidates should also be clear on the requirements of this question. Whereas more media-style textual analysis of connotation and denotation 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 those features which are designed to market and promote films and be able to understand associated concepts such as the movie franchise.

**Question 4**
Question four was answered well this year. There were very few instances of candidates who did not complete it.

Candidates should be reminded of two main things 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!

**Q4(a):** This was completed by virtually all candidates and in most cases reflected good knowledge of mainstream and/or Superhero movies. There were a few instances where the candidates had misunderstood the question and chose not to use the material given in the short brief. Most did come up with a suitable title and tagline, although there were still some instances where tagline was confused with logline. Candidates should be reminded to read and think carefully before answering any question, particularly questions at the end of an examination paper.
Q4(b): The quality of answers here tended to reflect how much attention had been paid to the bullet point advice as to form and content. Candidates need to recognise that an 8 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 billboard. Candidates should be reminded that the resource material contains 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.

Q4(c): Candidates were able to come up with many and varied ideas for expanding the franchise here, although some marks were lost through insufficient description. The best answers demonstrated a clear knowledge of franchising and gave good ideas such as spin-off TV shows targeting specific audiences.

Q4(d): This year very few candidates missed out the final part of the last question. Most made good attempts to explain the commercial or audience impact of their chosen idea. Some did elect to explain both ideas and should be reminded examiners can only award the best single answer of the two where only one has been requested.
Many centres are now comfortable with the expectations of Paper 2 and although there appeared to be less variety of texts chosen this year, a number of candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of the more popular films particularly *Tsotsi*, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and *The Devil's Backbone*. Films such as *Bend it Like Beckham* often did not gain the best responses as candidates found it difficult to discuss cultural and political issues in any depth. Centres should carefully consider the films they choose to study and ensure it offers suitable challenge for their candidates. Although *Bend it Like Beckham* may appear to be a simpler film, its complexities are not always recognised by candidates whereas films such as *Tsotsi*, offer a more obvious challenge, whilst at the same time offering a narrative which is accessible.

Candidates are now generally well prepared to answer most questions and can discuss key scenes, places and characters in terms of film language. It appears that some centres have prepared their candidates by teaching one key scene and one key character in detail as some candidates within a centre produced very similar answers. This is not recommended as it limits the candidates’ ability to engage with the film and hinders their ability to answer more varied or wider questions, thus limiting their achievable marks. The best examination papers 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’ and demonstrated this through a confident use of subject-specific language.

**Question 1:** Most candidates answered question 1 well and were able to choose an appropriate and important sequence. The best answers discussed the importance of their chosen sequence in terms of its effect on both characters and narrative. Not all candidates could link the themes or issues to the sequence identified, however could reference a number of themes related to the text in more general terms. Many candidates failed to refer to elements of film language during question 1c, which impacted on their achievable grade. As mentioned in the introduction, it was clear some centres had ‘prepped’ their candidates with a key scene, resulting in answers that tended to the formulaic. Although this often resulted in a reasonably detailed discussion of micro elements, it did not allow for true engagement from candidates, which is disappointing.

**Question 2:** Most candidates attempted all sections of question 2, which was pleasing to see as it gave candidates every opportunity to gain marks. Some candidates did not identify a key character by name, or named characters incorrectly, which was reflected in the marks awarded, but did go on to discuss quite well how their first impression of this character was created. The most able candidates referred to aspects of film language in depth and showed a good understanding of how meaning is created for audiences. When analysing why their chosen character was important to the film’s narrative, the best answers discussed the character’s narrative journey, as well as their impact on other characters, themes and issues. Answers to question 2d were more varied. Some candidates did not attempt this
section which was disappointing as representation is such a key aspect of study for this paper. Others discussed two appropriate characters but often did not choose key scenes that contained both people and although they tried to analyse film language in their answers, often ended up discussing themes rather than representation. Some candidates’ responses to (d) were excellent, discussing how the characters were represented through the film language rather than simply focusing on narrative.

Akin to question 1, it seemed that some centres had prepared candidates with a detailed analysis of a key character. Again this often resulted in very similar answers across a centre and although they included a good discussion of film language (for question 2b), they did not allow candidates to engage with the film and they therefore struggled to answer the latter sections of this question. Occasionally for question 2, candidates chose a character who was difficult to discuss in the other sections (David Beckham in *Bend it Like Beckham* for example), so candidates should always be advised to read all the questions through before answering them.

**Question 3:** Responses to question 3 were varied this year. Although it is clear many candidates are increasingly confident with this question and what is expected, other answers were disappointing and often quite superficial and generalised, focusing on personal response and vague responses to issues and sequences rather than showing their in depth knowledge of the film. Some candidates still misinterpreted ‘film language’ and discussed vocabulary or subtitles instead and although many used the guidance provided, these tended to skim over what they had learned and focused on how good they thought the film was. What they should be doing is taking the opportunity to show how well they have studied their focus film. The best answers showed real engagement with the film and used specific references or detailed analysis of scenes and/or characters to show their knowledge.
Introduction
2015 was another successful year for the controlled assessment component and the quality of the very best work continues to impress the moderation team. The availability of exemplar material through the WJEC secure site has helped centres to develop a good understanding of what is required with each component and the number of centres who misinterpret the tasks was very low.

Film exploration
Candidates embrace the film exploration task and it is clear that most centres have a very good understanding of what is expected.

Most candidates approach the film research component with enthusiasm and are genuinely interested in what their research findings reveal about their chosen film. 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. Unfortunately, too many approach this as an exercise in how much you can find out about the film, with little consideration of the relevance of information, its broader context and what their chosen film reveals about the industry as a whole. This also equips candidates with the terminology needed effectively to articulate their knowledge and understanding.

It would appear that the most successful candidates choose films made in the last few years as material on the film is more readily available. It is certainly the case that films made since the advent of the internet leave a greater footprint and quality information is more readily available. That said, a number of candidates successfully worked on films made before the advent of the internet and there is certainly no recommended time frame. The whole purpose of the film exploration component is to get the candidates to explore a film which they are already familiar with – if that happens to be something from the 1940’s, then they should be encouraged.

As I stated in last year’s report, 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 performed particularly well in Canada, but level 3 and 4 candidates would be able to highlight that this may be because the main star had previously been a very popular character in a Canadian sitcom.

The ‘micro analyses’ presented very few problems and the overall standard of work is very good. The choice of film is the key and candidates may need guidance when selecting an appropriate film. I would recommend a discussion with candidates before they embark on this component. The use of their chosen aspects of film language and the suitability of the film for effective analysis can then be discussed. The number of candidates attempting to analyse more than two aspects of film language has dropped considerably and it is clear that
teachers are becoming more ambitious in their teaching of this, encouraging their candidates to move beyond simpler semiotic analysis. The best examples are based on short sequences (sometimes even under a minute) and a thorough analysis of how creative decisions affect the spectators’ understanding. Candidates should aim to uncover how their chosen two micro features interact to suggest ideas to spectators. 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 setting films which the whole cohort research and analyse. The specification asks for candidates to work on a film of their own choice and requires the film exploration and its outcome to be individual (see pages 11, 14 and 15). A small number of centres have continued to do this despite clear instructions through a previous moderator’s report. I must reiterate the importance of the advice that moderators provide in helping centres get the best from their candidates.

**Production: Pitch**
This year’s submission suggests that centres are becoming more comfortable with the pitch and the majority of these are now ‘sales pitches’ for films that require funding rather than brief overviews of films which the candidates discuss as though they have already been made.

This is a challenging task because candidates need to include a number of things in a relatively limited number of words and too many candidates miss out essential information. The list of areas they need to include is clearly indicated in the specification. Working in an established genre often helps, and it is clear where centres have used genre study as preparation for the task.

**Pre-production: screenplay**
The screenplay was the most popular pre-production option and the quality of these was in many cases high. Most follow the industry format for this task which is encouraged as there is a clear emphasis on visual storytelling and it gets candidates to focus on what needs to be included and the kind of things that can be left out. The task is primarily an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of film language and this is best done through effective scene description. Candidates who produce work which is dominated by dialogue struggle to do this as successfully.

**Pre-production: storyboard**
Like the screenplay option, 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. There is no denying that candidates who are less artistically able struggle to create a convincing sense of mise-en-scène, but the annotation referring to all aspects of film language is vital if they are to demonstrate their understanding of film storytelling devices. Whilst digital storyboards have been encouraged in the past, screenshots from already filmed productions do not demonstrate planning and visualisation and should therefore not be used.

**Pre-production: magazine and marketing campaign**
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 and appear to launch into the task with little consideration of what is required. 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.

A small number of centres still interpret the marketing campaign as a merchandising exercise and candidates simply submit a number of generic items (t-shirts, mugs, iPhone covers etc.) which have the film’s logo on. 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: film sequence**
The quality of filmed productions seems to improve year-on-year. There were a variety of different genres and some highly ambitious work which transcends what might be expected at GCSE. Zombie films seem to have become the most popular genre, although the success of these was variable. A number of candidates continue to outline their role as ‘director’ which does not always make their contribution to the production clear. As I have recommended in previous years the major roles should be camera, sound and editing.

The centre administration of this is a little problematic and too few candidates or teachers actually indicate the candidate’s role on the FL/1 form. This is essential as the marks should be for their individual contribution in their specified area.

**Final production: poster campaign**
The popularity of posters is increasing and the best work is indistinguishable from professional output with excellent attention to detail. 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 was a key area which led to some centres having their marks adjusted by the moderation team.

When done well, candidates demonstrate artistic ability and convey ideas about genre, narrative and industry effectively. It is clear where the candidates have studied posters as part of the course and have considered how they will use the three different posters to highlight different aspects of the film. The weakest examples don’t really demonstrate any understanding of the format of contemporary film posters or offer very limited variation across the 3-4 examples produced. It is also worth noting that candidates who do not have access to digital imaging software struggle to convey their ideas effectively and may be better advised to consider one of the other options.

**Final production: magazine feature and press pack**
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. The best examples seemed to come from centres where there had been excellent 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

For the evaluative analysis 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. A number had chosen to include images from their production which helped them to illustrate their analytical observations. As there are only a limited number of words for this analysis, teachers should encourage their candidates to base their evaluative analysis on two or three key features of their work.

Reminders to centres

- The film industry research and analysis of micro elements must be on the same film
- Centres should avoid teaching, or setting, the same extract for a whole class.
- The pitch, pre-production and production must all be linked. The pre-production and production are thus based on the ideas for the ‘pitched’ film. The exception to this is the filmed sequence where only one group member’s idea should be developed into a sequence. In these instances, it is expected that all group members will have pitched different ideas (not three pitches of the same film) and worked on separate pre-productions.
- ‘Original images’ are a requirement for some of the options and should be photographs taken specifically for the production. A range of appropriate locations should be encouraged if candidates are effectively to demonstrate the knowledge and understanding developed on the course.
- The evaluative analysis should focus only on the final production.