International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

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

At higher level there was a wide range of work submitted, the very best of which was close to professional in conception and execution. Nevertheless, some work continues to be submitted which is close to home video in quality, and which seems to indicate that candidates have not had time to develop technical production skills over the length of the course. Written commentaries also ranged from work that presented a clear picture of production process and role, fully supported by graphic and pictorial evidence, to work that seemed to be little more than excerpts of production journals with little or no reflection on the candidate's role. Often

the rationales for film and trailer were actually a synopsis of the work and not a rationale at all. Still, most candidates made good choices concerning their written commentary, creating work that was organized and easy to follow, including excerpts from shot lists, schedules, photos (with captions explaining their significance), storyboards, scripts, etc. Many candidates wrote thoughtful reflections, complete with reasoned analysis and explanation. These candidates also managed to examine all of the production stages through their specific chosen role. The most common problem with the commentary at higher level was probably the failure to adequately address the creation of the individual trailer, which is clearly a requirement of criterion A and B. A number of candidates also failed to take advantage of the word limit (ie. commentary hundreds of words below the maximum); wrote little more than a summary of what happened and when, or worse, discussed how much better the video would have been if they could have made a longer film or if they could have included violence and adult language/themes. Obviously these candidates are unclear on the purpose of the commentary, but it is distressing that their classes have not spent more time on the requirements of this part of the assessment, and the value of reflecting on their own work. Finally, despite clear instruction in the guide that candidates should be involved in the creation of any materials necessary for their film, there were still some candidates presenting work with copyright materials used. Overall though, most candidates are rising to the creative challenge of creating their own foley and music, their own video inserts, and even their own original animation for the production portfolio.

At standard level there was a wide range of work submitted, from unpolished and rushed work, to work where both technical and artistic elements seemed almost professional. A major factor determining the success of candidate work seemed to be the amount of experience practical production candidates had over the years of the course. It was alarming to find candidates reporting that they had not worked with equipment before, and also to find candidates who could not use the appropriate technical language to describe the work in their role. The five minute limit for films submitted at standard level does represent a challenge to the candidates. Building a working narrative within the framework is particularly hard for those candidates who have not been exposed to short films in various genres and styles. With a smaller word count in the commentary it is even more important for standard level candidates than for higher level candidates to do a good job finding pictorial and graphic evidence to support their work in their chosen role. Frequently this requirement for evidence is ignored, or evidence is presented haphazardly as an appendix (which is counter to the instructions of the guide and which results in mark penalties as moderators do not read materials presented this way). At the shorter word length it is even more important that candidates have proficiency in the technical language of film so that they can detail the production process and the work in their role clearly and concisely. Just as at higher level, despite clear instruction in the guide

that candidates should be involved in the creation of any materials necessary for their film, some candidates present work where copyright audio or video is used. In general, though, this situation is continuing to improve and most candidates are creating their own original materials.

Candidate performance against each criterion

At higher level, one of the factors affecting achievement in criteria A and B is the failure to provide adequate material on the trailer's creation. Since the trailer is mentioned in the descriptors for both criteria A and B, this results in many candidates achieving a band or more lower than they otherwise would have. The next most common problem, as at standard level also, is producing a commentary that fails to provide adequate supporting evidence. It is common to find a written commentary without any graphic or pictorial evidence, and to find commentaries that are in the form of a production journal which fails to cover either the planning and production process (criterion A) or the individual's work in their chosen role (criterion B). It is important that candidates realize there needs to be a balance struck between what is needed to satisfy criterion A and criterion B.

For criterion B, frequently there is no critical evaluation of the project as a whole, or the misunderstanding that the 'project' is the entire process of the film's production and not the film itself.

For criteria C and D, the biggest determiner of success seems to be how much experience of practical production the candidate has, and also how much preparation time they have devoted to this significant final assessment. It is quite startling to find groups that have apparently devoted only a few weeks to an evaluation that is worth 50% of the marks in the course.

For criterion E, in addition to the problems mentioned for C and D, there are some groups that have used images or sound which they were not involved in the creation of. Sometimes this also involves copyright violation, but not always. Royalty free music or loops from music creation programs also represent a problem area.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- For SL candidates, short films should be viewed along with features in class so that candidates get a feeling for the different narrative requirements of the short film. For HL, it is important that candidates see both short films and trailers as examples over the time in the course.

- For HL, candidates must understand that the trailer must be discussed at length, both in terms of planning and production, and in terms of the activities that the candidate undertook to create it.

- For HL, there should be multiple experiences creating soundtracks during the course of studies in order to help candidates understand that they are capable of creating their own sound environments as well as music, without using copyright material, looped music or canned sound effects.

- The film class should provide many opportunities for the candidates to make (very) short films so they are comfortable with equipment and production process. The teacher and candidates should use the assessment criteria to mark these films.

- Teachers should stress 3 important sections of the guide: **Health and safety** on **page 16**, **Content and treatment** on **page 36**, and **Copyright statement** on **page 37**. These sections should be read to the class and discussed.

- It is important that candidates understand that **graphic** and **pictorial** evidence is **required** to be worked into the body of the commentary. This can include excerpts of written production materials such as the script or call sheets, story-boards or other previz materials, photos taken of production work (lighting set-ups, camera set-ups, etc), screen grabs of work, and any other supporting materials that can serve as evidence.

- Teachers should read the specific requirements as written in the film guide themselves so that they are clear on the formal and content requirements of the production portfolio. Many candidates are still using excerpts from movies and other audio-visual elements that they did not create themselves. Teachers should share the specific requirements, such as content, word length of commentary, and time limit requirements of the film guide. A few candidates wrote that they had initiated their projects and then were told that X or Y would not conform to the guidelines.

- Candidates need to know the difference between description and analysis and that all that they write should be through the eyes and ears of the specific role for assessment.

- More time in class should be spent on the unique structure and requirements of the short film format. Too many candidates wrote that the rough cut of their films were originally 15-20 minutes long. Obviously they did not start off with a script for a 4-5 minute long film (6-7 minutes for HL). They are then faced with the task of cutting down the rough cut to fit the time limit. The result is often a confusing, convoluted story which cannot be understood. This problem could be avoided if the original script is the proper length. Candidates need to understand that they cannot simply squeeze a feature length film into a few minutes.

- Too many projects were completed in a month or less, usually near to the IB deadline. Faced with such constraints, candidates did not re-shoot weak scenes because they had no time. A few projects began and ended in a week's time.
- Teachers should take advantage of the samples placed on the OCC so that candidates can see what worked and what didn't.

Further comments

More than one project this year cited the arrival of police at a film shoot where a fake gun was being used. Teachers should remember that uncontrolled location shooting is one of the dangers referred to on page 16 of the guide.

Health and Safety: *Please note that all schools are required to follow health and safety guidelines in their film production work, observing standard regulations on film production, as appropriate. Each school should recognize and accept its responsibilities and obligations as an institution offering film to provide a safe and healthy working environment, and is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of students and staff in all film production work.*

Teachers need to make sure than candidate IA materials are clearly labelled with slates at the beginning of the film itself. The slate should state film title, candidate name and number, and the role for which the candidate is being evaluated. The DVDs should also be clearly labelled with the same material as the slate. It is important to remember that **DVDs should play on a regular DVD recorder**. Many projects were sent in compression formats which are intended for computer play which is inappropriate. Remember the rule that work should be transferred using the best equipment and checked using the worst equipment to make sure it will play on a standard recorder.

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

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The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Many candidates were able to choose engaging film history topics (though somewhat less successful with film theory) and were able to discuss the topic in cinematic terms. The strongest candidates demonstrated a sophisticated understanding and depth of knowledge and were able to communicate that knowledge through a well structured and correctly formatted script.

The strongest scripts demonstrated an enthusiasm for the film history or theory topic, employed an intelligent and engaging structure, and gathered a variety of well-chosen and well-integrated sources. Most candidates appeared comfortable with the two-column format and the formal requirements and most understood how to successfully exploit the documentary format as a way to communicate meaning.

The strongest candidates were able to combine knowledge, analysis and interpretation while supporting their arguments with well-chosen, aptly applied film clips.

The areas of the programme and examination that appeared difficult for the candidates.

A large number of candidates developed topics better suited for literary, socio-cultural, psychological or political scripts. These candidates often had difficulty understanding that the independent study is about how ideas, themes, and issues of character are *represented*, or made manifest, in film. Some candidates seem to ignore that film (most often) represents a director's intent and that the elements on the screen do not happen by accident. Many candidates failed to organize their scripts around actual film theory, in the rationale or in the script proper.

Many candidates still focus on plot, character and a re-telling of the story of the film. This is often an indication that the candidate has not developed a workable topic based on film theory and/or history and so must rely on examining the films on the surface rather than in-depth.

Some candidates (though noticeably fewer than last year) developed complicated and distracting narrator sequences, which used up page space that would have been better utilized for developing the arguments of the topic. While some creative use of the narrator sequences may support audience engagement, the narrator should not become the focus of the script.

Some candidates had little or no familiarity with film terminology and this lack of knowledge weakened their scripts considerably.

Scripts showing a lack of sources and/or poor use of sources were still fairly common, and many source lists were left un-annotated.
The visual columns were sometimes lacking in detail which weakens structure and argument.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of film genres, styles and eras, and should be watching films from many different countries and cultures. Teachers should be encouraging discussions of these films and incorporating the proper use of cinematic terminology.

- Teachers and candidates must understand what makes a topic relevant to film history or theory and understand how to frame the right rationale.

- Candidates should be introduced to the concept of "a culture unfamiliar to their own" and should keep that concept in mind when choosing a topic for the independent study.

- Teachers should ensure the candidates understand the specific requirements of the independent study. This should include a direction to use the two-column format in "portrait" or vertical position with video on the left and audio on the right.

- Teachers and candidates should view a wide variety of documentary films in order to appreciate how the format can be used to communicate ideas to an audience. Candidates must present their ideas in a structure that will engage an audience of like-minded peers.

- Candidates should understand that the primary focus of the script is the film / history topic and should not be encouraged to develop over-long, superfluous and distracting narrator sequences.   Teachers and candidates should read the film guide for clarification of the candidate/narrator's role in the script.

- Candidates and teachers should examine a wide variety of research materials and discuss how to choose and utilize the most appropriate sources. The sources used should be fully annotated.

- Teachers should use the IB support materials, particularly the OCC and the wide variety of current sample materials now available.

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

Areas of the programme which proved difficult for candidates

There seemed to have been limited improvement overall in this session. Too much time was wasted by many candidates who considered merely listing awards, actors and characters names was an integral part of analysis or a substitute for discussing the socio-cultural context. Very often this was due to a lack of careful preparation and lack of detail. It was quite common for weaker candidates to attribute critical responses to "some people" or "some critics" without proper referencing. Whilst stronger candidates undertook careful and appropriate research, weaker candidates relied far too heavily upon one or two websites such as IMDB and Wikipedia and then presented additional lists or plot summaries that did 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.

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 to describe or discuss the whole film. 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." It was common with weaker candidates to attribute comments to "some people" or "some critics" without citing specific individuals or publications.

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 less than ten minutes and at SL less than six.

Some candidates select scenes that do not offer sufficient scope for analysis.

The areas of the programme in which the candidates appeared well prepared.

Whilst a significant number of candidates had difficulties, the general level of knowledge and understanding is improving and candidates have a genuine sense of engagement with the films chosen. Many seemed reasonably well prepared in the use of basic film language and terminology although few were able to use this knowledge as part of an in-depth analysis. Too often the presentations became 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. Many weaker candidates struggled to use even the most rudimentary film language and did not move beyond simple plot description and describing what is seen and heard on screen but without analysis. The better candidates 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 strengths and weaknesses of candidates in the treatment of individual areas

In spite of difficulties shown during this session, the significant strength of many of the candidates was their good understanding of the underlying themes in the films that they had studied. Many had clearly handled their research and preparation well. 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. Far too many of the candidates are coming to the recording of their presentation ill-prepared. Many more candidates in this session were finishing their presentation in significantly less time than allowed. The timing of the presentation commences after the candidate has given the school and candidate numbers and has identified the film that they are going to address.

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.

- 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 presentation. 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 presentations effectively and eliminate issues regarding timing.

- Teachers must check the sound levels on the CDs to be sent to the examiner. 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 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.

- Teachers need to be very sure they review the purpose of the film presentation with candidates. The main focus of the presentation is a close analysis of the selected extract, using this close analysis to discuss aspects of the film as a whole. They should try to cover every cinematic aspect of the sequence.

- Candidates should be given practice with films other than those listed for the assessment consistently to try to link the analysis of cinematic features of a film extract to the stated themes and/or director's intent, or even socio-cultural aspects or genre. This gives presentations a clear focus and allows for very specific and unique analysis.

- Candidates, through their specific analysis, should try to say something unique and original. Too many presentations rely on the same internet databases, select the "easy" film to analyse (ie. the well known) and end up producing work that is unoriginal.

- Teachers should dissuade their candidates from offering redundant material in their presentations. Narrative summaries and lists of actors, characters and technicians waste valuable time.