

## FILM

### Overall grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	E	D	C	B	A
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 22	23 - 28	29 - 36

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a significantly wide range of work submitted which covered a range of marks, creativity of choice of topic and quality of the treatment of individual topics. This included some pleasing attempts at cross-cultural references. However, rather too many of the essays lacked the specificity needed to address issue related to film. Many were too closely related to social, psychological or historical critiques rather than analysis within a context of film. Where a suitable topic was addressed, too many candidates focused upon basic plot description and/or conventions, genre development or character profiles. Analysis tended to be too descriptive and superficial for the majority of the candidates. Many of the essays were written with enthusiasm and engagement but too often lacked substance. The style of an enthusiastic film fan was too prevalent. Using film terminology and focusing upon how meanings are constructed through film language proved problematic for many candidates. Where connections were made with area of study such as violence in society, mental health or adaptations of works of literature, the essays must be firmly focussed upon the study of the chosen films.

The weakest of the essays ignored the fact that film has its own language, grammar and techniques that need to be addressed. In some cases, the film essays could just as easily have been a History or English Literature essay.

The best of the essays focussed upon careful research, integrating this seamlessly and coherently and drawing conclusions based upon clear and appropriate evidence, presented from fully referenced sources.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### **A: research question**

In many cases this proved to be difficult for candidates. Titles were often far too elaborate and the candidate would then fail to address the different layers included in the title itself. Students were also often too broad in their focus aiming to address a topic that was beyond their scope. It is essential that candidates frame a question that offers the opportunity to open out discussion, lead to investigation and present thoughtful conclusions.

**B: introduction**

Many introductions were unfocussed and frequently quite rambling, which did little to fulfil the requirements of this section. However, the better responses were clear, concise, well structured and showed full engagement with the topic.

**C: investigation**

Very few candidates scored more than 2 for this criterion due mostly to inappropriate sources and a lack of clear planning. Far too many candidates offered very narrow research often restricting sources to IMDB, Wikipedia and special features on the film DVD. The best candidates clearly integrated apt sources with their own opinions, observations and analysis.

**D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied**

Where candidates drifted away from a filmic topic and addressed solely the disciplines of sociology or history, knowledge of the topic was often limited. Certainly the films studied should be placed within their socio-cultural context but the focus must remain with the films themselves.

**E: reasoned argument and F: application of analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject**

The Criteria for E and F were often weakened by excessive use of narrative summaries and broad generalisations unsupported by clear evidence. Sometimes a weak question that leads towards a narrative approach was the prime cause.

**G: use of language appropriate to the subject and H: conclusion**

For Criterion G few candidates scored highly and these were candidates who appeared to be following a film course. Candidates must use terminology that is pertinent to film. The guide clearly states that filmic terminology must be used wherever appropriate. Most candidates, including those who responded with less successful essays managed fairly well in this area and produced conclusions that were consistent with the body of the work for Criterion H.

**I: formal presentation**

Most candidates scored well in this area and offered essays that were laid out well with appropriately formatted footnotes and clear references to sources. However, there were more basic errors in bibliographies than should be expected. When used to complement the written text screen shots and other visual material can be very effective. Where possible they should appear within the body of the essay, as close as possible to their first reference and not collected together in an appendix.

**J: abstract**

Abstracts varied enormously in quality from some excellent examples to some not submitted at all. A surprising number were substantially over the word limit.

**K: holistic judgment**

This was a criterion in which few candidates who had not studied film did well.

**Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates**

- First and foremost, all candidates and supervising teachers must read the current guide carefully. The phrase “in-depth investigation” as stated in the Guide is essential in guiding the choice of topic and the research question.
- Supervisors must complete the report on the inside of the cover sheet. In this session a substantial number were blank. It is requirement that these be completed.
- It helps the candidate if the reports are as full as possible. This is where reference to the Viva should be made.
- An average of 4-5 hours of supervision should be undertaken. Some candidates had only half an hour or less with no explanation.
- Students and supervising teachers must have a clear understanding of the current requirements for a film extended essay. [Some entries this session were undertaken under the auspices of the old guide.]
- Students must recognise that the film extended essay is not to be approached simply as a general consumer of film.
- Easy marks were lost on formal requirements. These are clearly set out in the guidelines.
- The marking criteria should be made available to candidates so that they have a clear idea of what is expected of them.
- Referencing skills need to be purposeful and consistent.
- Candidates should be steered clear of titles that seem to have a narrative default.
- Students should limit the number of films for study to allow for an appropriate depth of analysis. However, a study of a single film does not allow a proper context to be discussed. In general a study of two to three films would be appropriate.
- Special care should be taken when advising candidates who choose a film EE but who have not studied film. They should be especially aware of Criteria D, F and G. These areas seem to cause the greatest difficulties for non-film candidates.