Production Overview

**Pre-Production**  
  
There is SOOO much to do BEFORE you begin to shoot. If you manage to follow these steps and stages you will be very well prepared and this wil make the making of your film a significantly smoother task.  
  
**Initial planning**  
Finding the idea   
Research   
Treatment and script development   
  
**Pitch and approval**  
Developing the proposal   
Negotiating the proposal with the teacher   
Receiving approval to proceed   
  
**Technical planning**  
Conceptualization – interpretation of the script in terms of theme, genre, purpose, style, mood and overall structure   
Visualization – definition of shot selection, camera position and movement, lighting, colour, set design, costume and make-up, supported, where appropriate, by the creation of a storyboard containing key images of relevant scenes   
Production Scheduling – definition of responsibilities, task lists and matter relating to organisation, time frames and deadlines  
Editing and Sound Strategies – outlining the preliminary concepts of editing and sound as dictated by the chosen genre and by the individual project   
  
**Key Pre-Production Tasks**  
Selection of crew members, scouting for and determining locations, acquiring costumes and props, casting of actors (if applicable), definition of technical needs, finalizing script, storyboard and production schedule  
  
  
  
**Production**  
This is where you go and film it! ;o)  
Principal photography and sound recording, execution of storyboard, continuous overview of production planning  
  
  
**Post-Production**  
Putting it all together...  
Various phases of editing (assembly, rough and fine cuts), sound editing, selection of music, titles and visuals, and final mix  
  
**Editing**  
This is a great resource on editing films and on the types of cut and shots to use...  
<http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/htmfiles/editing.htm>  
  
  
**Production Portfolio**  
**Production journal**  
Each student, whether working alone or in a group, should maintain an individual journal recording key information throughout the entire production process. The journal should note decisions made, issues raised and solutions reached. Students should include reflections and lessons learned, as well as objective evaluations of their own and others’ performance and the finished productions. Although this journal must not be included in the portfolio in its entirety, relevant excerpts should be included where appropriate as supporting evidence to clarify the individual student’s work and thinking on the project. This may include selections from storyboards, screenshots, script excerpts or excerpts from other production documents.  
  
The processes of producing (construction), and deconstructing and evaluating the finished production must be informed by an understanding of how meaning is constructed through film language.  
  
**Written Production Portfolio**  
Your Written Production Portfolio MUST contain the following components:  
1. An individual rationale for the film of no more than 100 words (A rationale outlines the intentions and purposes of your work)  
2. An individual rationale for the trailer of no more than 100 words (HL only)  
3. An individual written commentary based on your experiences making your film – this must be based on your role within the production team. See the notes below as to how to structure this and what to include  
4. A bibliography of any sources  
5. A signed declaration form stating that this is all your own work (I will provide you with this form)  
  
  
**Purpose of the Written Production Portfolio**  
You MUST focus your written production portfolio on YOUR role within the team. The purpose of the production portfolio is to explain to the examiner the process of making your film. I recommend that you divide your work up into the 3 main sections of Pre-Production, Production and Post-Production. You may wish to divide these section up even further with additional subheadings. Throughout your work you should include excerpts from Production Journal as evidence for how your project progressed.  
The written production portfolio should be a personal and engaging account of the filmmaking process. It should enlighten the examiner as to your process and should include your individual views, passions and frustrations.  
ALWAYS use film language and vocabulary to describe the filmmaking process.  
  
**What MUST I include in the Written Production Portfolio?**  
By the end of your written production portfolio the examiner should have answers to the following questions:  
1. What is the purpose of the film?  
2. How did you plan to use (and how did you use) film language to convey this purpose to your target audience?  
3. What filmmakers (films) or styles (genres) have influenced your creative expression?  
4. Which choices in regarding the look and feel of the film (production design) have been deliberate?  
5. Where did you have to take creative risks in order to solve problems?  
6. What were the biggest challenges you faced during the making of your film? How did you overcome them?  
7. What might you do differently next time?  
  
  
**What else might I want to include in the Written Production Portfolio?**  
You may also want to include a discussion or analysis of some of the following:  
Did you work with or against the conventions of the genre?  
How did the characterisation of your protagonist/antagonist develop? Did the final result fit in with the writer’s initial vision?  
How did you successfully incorporate costume design into your film?  
What did you enjoy most about the making of this film?  
How well did you group work together?  
Was the Location Scouting and Selection a difficult process or did you always know where you would film? Was it easy to get permission to film where you wanted to? Was there a location that you really wanted to use but were unable to do so?  
For the **writer**:  
o Was the final edit of the film in keeping with your original vision?  
o What did you find hardest about the writing process?  
For the **director**:  
o Was the final film in keeping with your original vision?  
o How well did your group react to your direction?  
o Did you encounter any problems with actors?  
o Were you able to get lighting/sound/location/costume/ issues resolved?  
o Were you happy with all of the footage?  
o Were you able to stick to your shooting schedule?  
For the **cinematographer**:  
o Were you happy with all of the shots you took?  
o Did the editor include any shots that you were not happy with? If so, why do you think he/she included them?  
o Did the locations chosen serve any limitations on the shooting?  
o Did you encounter any technical problems with your shoot? Did your equipment always function as it should? Did you ever wish you had a piece of equipment that you did not have access to?  
o Was lighting ever a problem with your shoot?  
o Did your vision for the cinematography align with the director’s?  
  
o Were there any shots that you wanted to experiment with - such as use a dolly or steady cam - but found it technically hard to achieve? Why?Was lighting ever a problem with your shoot?  
  
For the **sound designer**:  
o What specific problems did you encounter in the creation of your foley?  
o Were any sound effects (such a tires screeching/a gun shot/a knife wound/an echo etc) hard to replicate?  
o Did the music/sound you created align with the group’s vision?  
o Did you encounter any technical difficulties with equipment or software?  
For the **editor**:  
o Did you wish to create a specific effect, but find the software limited in any way?  
o Did you final edit of the film align with the rest of the group’s?  
o Did you ever find yourself wishing there was an extra shot or another take that you could use? How did you overcome this problem?  
o How hard/difficult was it matching up audio with visual in the editing room?  
  
Finish your work with an overview of the process (like a conclusion). At the end of your work include a word count.  
  
**Tailoring your work to the Assessment Criteria**  
How carefully have you checked out the assessment criteria?  
Have you made sure you have addressed these issues - allowing yourself to get top marks - in both the written portfolio and in the film itself?  
Check out how to get top marks, and have another look at you work with a critical and objective eye to see if your work really is worthy of top marks...  
  
FOR FULL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA SEE ABOVE... this is just a summary...  
(For SL ignore the references to the trailer)  
  
**A - Planning and Research (assesses both film and written commentary)**  
This is concerned with the documentation of production processes, from planning and research, pre-production, production and principal photography, through to post-production. This includes planning and research required for the production of the film trailer. How much evidence of planning is there?  
For 9 or 10 marks you need to show: "Excellent planning for and research into the production processes for the film itself and the trailer. Documentation of the relevant development stages is comprehensive. Planning of production and documentation has all be clearly integrated with the production of the individual film trailer."  
  
**B - Reflection and Evaluation (just assesses the written commentary)**  
This is concerned with the artistic and logistical analysis of the various production processes. The evaluation in your written commentary on the project as a whole, focusing on your specific role. Reflect honestly.  
'Artistic' refers to how you used film language to portray your ideas and emotions.  
'Logistical' refers to how well the practical aspects of the project functioned.  
For 9 or 10 marks you need to show: "A highly effective artistic and logistical analysis of the relevant production processes, with excellent critical evaluation of the project as a whole. There is also a highly effective awareness and analysis of the different artistic and logistical processes required for the production of the trailer."  
  
**C - Professional and Technical Skills (assesses both film and written commentary)**  
This is concerned with professional and technical skills (including organisational skills) that may be demonstrated during the production processes of in the finished product itself.  
For 9 or 10 marks you need to: "Demonstrate excellent ability in the professional and technical skills (including organisational skills) necessary for one principal production role, and make highly effective use of available resources and technology. There is also excellent use of available resources and technology in the construction of the individual film trailer"  
  
**D - Effective use of Film Language (just assesses the film)**  
This is concerned with evidence of your effective use of film language, as seen in the finished product.  
For 9 or 10 marks you need to: "demonstrate an excellent ability to communicate effectively in film language both in the film itself and in the individual film trailer."  
  
**E - Originality and Creativity (assesses both film and written commentary)**  
This is concerned with originiality and creativity in the film-making process (referred to as 'creative intelligence' below). This may be demonstrated by freshness of approach, by intelligent work that goes with or against the conventions of the genre, or by problem solving. Another key indicator is the level of audience engagement with the work. This criterion is also intended to provide a holistic assessment of each student's contribution to the finished film and of the trailer they have made as an individual.  
For 9 or 10 marks you need to: "provide excellent evidence of creative intelligence in all aspects of the film-making process, and provide excellent awareness of, and imaginative use of, the generic characteristics of a film trailer. The film production and trailer engage audience interest with great success."  
  
  
**Checklist**  
Before you hand in your work, check that you have done all of the following:  
  
  
CHECKLIST: **PRODUCTION PORTFOLIO** (IA-Higher Level)  
  
-Has the student began work on this important final evaluation with enough **time** to do an excellent job?  
  
-Is there a **Rationale** (not a synopsis) for the project? (**100 words or less**)  
  
**-**Is there a **Rational** (not a synopsis) for the **individual trailer**? (**100 words or less**)  
  
**-**Do the **Rationales** detail the student’s and the group’s reason for engaging in the project, and the student’s approach to the**individual trailer**?  
  
- Is the **student declaration form** signed?  
  
-Has the student clearly chose **ONLY ONE ROLE** to be assessed in. (The roles that can be chosen are **Screenwriter**,**Director**,**Cinematographer**, **Editor**, or **Sound Editor/Sound Designer**.)  
  
-Is the **film** presented as part of the **Portfolio** between **6** and **7** minutes, and **no longer than 7** (including credits)?  
  
-Does the film begin with a **slate** (text on black frame) that includes **film title**, **student’s name**, **student number**, and**student’s choosen role**?  
  
-Is all the **audio** and **visual work** in the film the ***original work of the student*** or the group (elements including but not limited to soundtrack, foley, graphics, and visuals)?  
  
-Is the **content** and **treatment** of the film made appropriate for a **“young person no older than 15 years of age”**?  
  
-***IF THE STUDENT IS WORKING ALONE***, have they given thought to **which role** represents their **best work** in communicating in**film language** and solving **artistic** and **logistic** problems?  
  
-Is the film accompanied by a written commentary **not more than 1,750 words**?  
  
- Is the written commentary also not significantly **less than 1,750 words**?  
  
-In the commentary, is there enough information to show that **planning** and **organization** of both the***production***and the***individual trailer*** **were** excellent?  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a clear picture of the film’s entire production: **pre-production/production/post production**?  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a clear picture of the **planning** and **creation** of the **individual trailer**?  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a clear picture of their **work in their chosen role**?  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a clear picture of all their **individual work** on the **trailer?**  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a highly effective **artistic** and **logistical analysis** of all **relevant production processes** for both **film** and **trailer**?  
  
-In the commentary, does the student present a **critical evaluation of the project as a whole** (in other words, **the completed film** and **trailer**)?  
  
-Is there **graphic and pictorial evidence** presented to support the **production planning** and the student’s **work** and**problem solving** in their **chosen role**?  
  
-Does the **evidence** support the written discussion of **logistic** and **artistic problem-sovling**?  
  
-Has thought been given to **why** particular graphic and pictorial **evidence** has been included?  
  
-In the film and the commentary is there “**excellent evidence of creative intelligence in all aspects of the film-making process**?”  
  
-is there a bibliography of support material and sources used?