



Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD003006	Version: 6 Date Amended: 20/Jan/2025
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1. Module Title
Non-Fiction Filmmaking

2a. Module Leader
Simon Payne

2b. School
Cambridge School of the Creative Industries

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education and Social Sciences

3a. Level
5

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	BA (Hons) Film, BA (Hons) Film and Television Production, BA (Hons) Film and Media, BA (Hons) Writing and Film, BA (Hons) Drama and Film		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

You will examine the nature and practice of documentary filmmaking, focusing on the aesthetics of documentary concerning expository, poetic, observational, performative, participatory, and reflexive modes of practice. You are encouraged to consider, reflect and implement appropriate responses to the range of issues that might arise in your work, including the ethical, creative, methodological, theoretical, and technical concerns that relate to documentary.

Examples of contemporary, historical, independent, mainstream, television and film documentaries are examined in detail to rationalise the subject of non-fiction film and video in terms of forms and conventions of documentary language. A range of work will be screened and discussed during the module, which provides a context for the projects that you undertake in small groups.

The module begins with you being asked to make a number of concise introductory pieces that explore concepts and aesthetics concerning documentary and 'non-fiction' filmmaking. You will then pitch a more substantial project to the module tutors and seminar group, followed by feedback and further discussion of ethical, creative and practical issues raised by each proposal. Groups should then produce a shooting script and production schedule making sure to gain all permission from interviewees, copyright and location owners, prior to filming. The module tutors will supervise the production and editing processes and require students to attend group tutorials.

6b. Outline Content

- Examination of models of a variety of documentary forms as situated in a range of cultural, historical and aesthetic contexts.
- The practice of research, creative, technical and editorial skills particular to the documentary form.
- Consideration of the interplay of theory, practice and form in the documentary mode.
- Exploration and practice of ethics, commercial prescriptions, strategies and working tactics in the field.
- Examination of strategies of observation and intervention in documentary.
- Creation of short documentary work and critical commentary and evaluation.

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

Video Production Equipment, Editing and Post Production Facilities, Screening theatre/cinema

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Address, through inspection of varied models, video practice and discussion, the distinctive features of the processes and techniques of the documentary form;
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Explore critically differences in observation and the consequences of intervention in documentary;
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Practice and develop creative, technical and editorial skills particular to the documentary form, producing a short documentary for the developing portfolio/showreel;
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Demonstrate critical and practical cognisance of the ethics, commercial prescriptions, research methods, creative strategies and working tactics in the field.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2025/6	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	0	None	None
Other teacher managed learning	36	1-4	3 hour seminar workshop each week
Student managed learning	114	1-4	Hours of independent viewing, research and production work
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Practical	1-3	75 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Non-Fiction Film: 3-10 minutes					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Coursework	4	25 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Critical Commentary and Evaluation: 1000 words					

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]