

Module code: MOD010845	Version: 1 Date Amended: 20/Jan/2025
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1. Module Title
Documentary Making

2a. Module Leader
Hans Petch

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
30

4b. Study Hours
300

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

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This is a major practice-led module designed to build upon your Level 4 creative storytelling, and critical and reflective skills. A documentary can provide us with imaginative, engaging and moving stories. Since the birth of cinema, the form has evolved and kept pace with technological change, audience sophistication and innovation in practice.

Documentary filmmakers seeking a way to represent reality and to express a “truth” about society or people can be faced with a series of complex moral and ethical problems. In this module, you will be able to discuss and respond to these practical, critical and moral issues.

This module focuses on storytelling skills, idea generation, research, interview technique, proposal writing, pitching and directing. You will build upon your skills of working independently and in teams, through practical group exercises and analysis. The module is structured around different production projects, which explore a range of styles and approaches. Towards the end of each project, group feedback on near complete projects will facilitate peer-to-peer learning whilst an individual workbook will encourage deep learning of issues discussed and technical skills learnt.

6b. Outline Content

Analysing various documentary approaches and modes of storytelling through screenings, crits and supported reading and tutorial guidance. Discussing and debating approaches, effectiveness, and the creative application of the filmmaking process to maximise the audio-visual potential of the finished projects.

The production of several projects in groups exploring storytelling devices, testing and developing theory and practice, culminating in the production of student documentaries. Students will be asked to think of creative ways of telling real stories. The production process will mimic industry practice: a) Pre-Production: researching various potential subject and potential contributors; idea generation; proposal writing, pitching; analysing structure and content; scripting the documentary; scheduling; health and safety and sustainability b) Production: production management; interviewing skills; visual storytelling; understanding sound as a storytelling tool; directing and troubleshooting. c) Post-production including: rough cut to fine cut; sound and dub; editing; story arc; pick-ups; and delivery. Screenings and Discussions.

6c. Key Texts/Literature

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

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

FS 5 Sony cameras and other suitable 4K Cameras,
Tripods,
Sound Equipment,
Portable lighting kits
Edit suites, grading suites
Screening room

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	Demonstrate an understanding of professional practices and production contexts for documentary.
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Display an understanding of the creative and storytelling process and its application to documentary.
3	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate an awareness of the creative and relevant technical skills utilized in documentary film making.
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Interact and negotiate within production teams or within group exercises and provide critical feedback on practical work.
5	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Plan a production and take it through all stages of completion appropriate to the story and mode of documentary.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2026/7	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	36	1, 2, 3	Lectures, seminars, workshops: 3 hours per week over 12 weeks
Other teacher managed learning	8	1, 2, 3	Practical specialised workshops, crit sessions
Student managed learning	256	4, 5	Students research, prepare, shoot and edit their programs and write their workbooks.
TOTAL:	300		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-5	70 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Portfolio and supporting documents equivalent to 4,000 words					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Coursework	1, 2, 3, 5	30 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Research Workbook equivalent to 2,000 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]