## Marking criteria

All assessed work submitted by students in the Media Arts Department is evaluated on a percentage scale. The relations to class band are shown in the tables on the next pages, these articulate marking criteria for:

* Critical Theory coursework
* Creative Audiovisual coursework
* Oral Presentations
* Creative Reflection Papers
* Creative Production Portfolios
* Creative Written coursework

For each percentage band, a set of general assessment criteria has been articulated. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

A mark in the class range may be awarded where the assessed work meets the majority of the criteria for that range. It is possible for strength in one criteria (e.g. originality and critical reasoning OR Creativity) to compensate for some weaknesses in other criteria (e.g. Presentation and communication OR Conceptual/narrative progression). Feedback sheets provide explicit feedback on the extent to which specific criteria have been met. However, students should note that the markers’ use of the evaluative categories in the assessment matrix is indicative: feedback in the commentary section explains the final mark and points for development.

All coursework (theory and practice) and exam scripts are marked ‘blind’. The standard of marking is then moderated or, in the case of final year dissertations and final practice projects, second marked (again, blind). The Visiting Examiners, who are independent of Royal Holloway, may also see your work. Visiting and External Examiners can suggest changes, where appropriate, to marks awarded by markers and moderators in order to maintain and enhance the general standards of marking.

**Critical Theory Coursework** is marked across 4 criteria: 1. Research, Study and Understanding; 2. Originality and Critical Reasoning; 3. Argument and Analysis; 4. Presentation and communication. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class**  **(Marking scale)** | | **Theory Coursework marking criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | Work should demonstrate a deep understanding and near comprehensive knowledge of the subject. It should show significant originality in interpretation and analysis. The essay or dissertation should have a coherent structure, demonstrate exceptional synthesis of primary and secondary research, and show overwhelming evidence of in-depth reading with clear indications of substantial research beyond the reading lists. Its presentation should be as near perfect as possible, with a written style that is incisive and fluent. In general, an upper first class should be of a quality that is considered worthy of publication or retention for future reference, either for research or teaching. | |
| **1st (70-84)** | Work should be excellent in most respects and may contribute some creative or original thought. It should demonstrate a mature, accurate grasp of the issues raised by the question or brief, as well as an exemplary knowledge of appropriate texts, techniques and relevant theoretical perspectives. It should conduct a sustained coherent argument in a fluent academic style and should demonstrate good skills in marshalling appropriate evidence. | |
| **2(i)**  **(60–69)** | Work in this class will typically be thoughtful, knowledgeable and well presented. It will exhibit a detailed understanding of the material studied on the course and the issues raised by the question or brief, and will demonstrate the ability, sustained through long stretches of the essay, to marshal the relevant evidence and develop ideas. It should contain little or no irrelevant material and should generally be well constructed. Creativity and originality or breadth and depth of response could compensate for some weakness or incoherence in style, argument, presentation or execution. At the lower end (60-62), this grade might also be awarded where a detailed answer, with considerable insights, is marred by a lack of fluency, poor organisation of material, persistent grammatical irregularities or failure to observe conventions of presentation. | |
| **2(ii)**  **(50–59)** | Work gives some evidence that the main thrust of the question or brief is recognised and shows that some of the course material has been absorbed; however, recognition of issues is incomplete. The material presented is restricted and may be unbalanced or of dubious relevance. There is a failure to interrogate received ideas. A comprehensive understanding has not been achieved and will result in weakness in application of ideas in practice. This class is appropriate where much of the content seems worthy of a higher grade but where poor organisation, syntax or presentation obscures meaning. | |
| **3rd**  **(40–49)** | Work attempts to answer the question or fulfil the brief, but without understanding its implications. It may be characterised by insufficient use of materials studied or application of ideas explored in the course. Such attempts as there are will only endorse or repeat ideas rather than supporting or extending them. The work may also be descriptive and brief or repetitive, lacking focus and precision. Clumsy expression, ineffective paragraphs and poorly written sentences will often appear in third-class work. Improper use of scholarly referencing conventions will also frequently feature in work of this standard. | |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | Written work will suggest that expressive abilities are severely limited. There will be a serious lack of relevance to the question or brief, and work will show little or no evidence of the candidate having studied the work set for the course. Research, organisation and presentation will be inadequate. | |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | Work in this category will be incompetent or inadequate in all areas. It may demonstrate no understanding of the subject or it may contain substantial errors in the writing. Or it may have an incomplete or chaotic structure. | |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | For written work where only a few lines have been submitted and the candidate is not deemed to have made any attempt at the paper. | |
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*Additional notes:* 1. Details of how to provide appropriate referencing are available in the [*Media Arts Style Guide*](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/mediaarts/informationforcurrentstudents/home.aspx).

2. Any figures (such as screen grabs) included in coursework will be assessed on the basis of the extent to which they enhance the reader’s understanding, are clearly explained and integrated with the arguments being developed in the text and are clearly labelled and captioned.

**Creative Audiovisual** work is marked across 4 criteria[[1]](#footnote-1): 1. Quality of work 2. Creativity 3. Critical awareness 4. Conceptual/Narrative progression. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class** | **Creative Audio-visual coursework marking criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | Quality of work: unity of form is achieved with an outstanding standard in concept, delivery, research and planning, with highly sophisticated use of appropriate technologies. Creativity: Significant and appropriate creative risk has been achieved to produce a work of near professional standard. Critical awareness: shows a deep and relevant understanding of history of the audio-visual form. Conceptual/narrative progression: outstanding with sophisticated editing, rhythm and composition. |
| **1st (70-84)** | **Quality of work:** fully unified in form and of an excellent standard in concept, delivery, research and planning, with sophisticated use of appropriate technologies. **Creativity:** Significant and appropriate creative risk has been achieved to produce a work that requires little further development. **Critical awareness:** shows a very high understanding of relevant history of the audiovisual form.  **Conceptual/narrative progression** is excellent with strong editing, rhythm and composition. |
| **2(i)**  **(60-69)** | **Quality of work:** formally unified in form and of a very good or good standard in concept, delivery, research and planning, and use of appropriate technologies. **Creativity:** Some significant and appropriate creative risk has been taken although its achievement may be less successful. **Critical awareness:** very good or good understanding of relevant history of the audiovisual form. **Conceptual/narrative progression** is very good or good with strong editing, rhythm and composition. |
| **2(ii)**  **(50-59)** | **Quality of work:** generally unified and of a satisfactory standard in concept, delivery, research, planning and use of appropriate technologies, but these may be under-developed or inconsistent. **Creativity:** evidence of attempts at creativity but these are either largely conventional or may only be achieved unevenly. **Critical awareness:** some understanding of relevant history of the relevant audiovisual form. **Conceptual/narrative progression:** acceptable, demonstrating a fundamental grasp of editing, rhythm and composition. |
| **3rd**  **(40-49)** | **Quality of work:** may lack unity and is generally of a weak standard in concept, delivery, research, planning and use of appropriate technologies, but with significant failures in many of these areas. **Creativity:** little evidence of attempts at creativity and these are either largely conventional or are not successfully achieved. **Critical awareness:** little understanding of relevant history of the relevant audiovisual form. **Conceptual/narrative progression:** is unclear or inconsistent with only a rudimentary grasp of editing, rhythm and composition demonstrated. |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | **Quality of work:** largely un-unified, the work fails to reach a satisfactory standard in concept, delivery, research, planning and use of appropriate technologies. **Creativity:** ideas contain significant flaws or inappropriate risks that are unsuccessful in their execution. **Critical awareness:** No or very limited understanding of relevant history. **Conceptual/narrative progression:** is almost entirely absent with significant flaws in editing, rhythm and composition. |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | The work contains all the features described in the ‘marginal fail’ category, but will either be significantly under length and/or exhibit these deficiencies to a much greater extent. |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | Work is so short that the candidate is not deemed to have made any attempt at the work. |
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**Oral Presentations** are marked across 4 criteria: 1. Focus and creative engagement; 2. Critical Understanding; 3. Knowledge and research; 4. Presentation and communication. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class**  **(Marking scale)** | | **Oral Presentation Marking Criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Original, imaginative and incisive engagement with topic/brief.  **Critical understanding:** Clear and original structure; ideas linked coherently and confidently;explicit, well-structured and relevant analysis. **Knowledge and research:** Evidence of comprehensive research and original thought; deep awareness of key debates and/or context.  Presentation and communication: Clearly audible presentation; audio-visual aids used to a very high standard; well-paced and to time; excellent relationship with audience. Answered questions with authority and/or originality; able to generate discussion/engage others at a very high level. | |
| **1st (70-84)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Explicitly addressed the topic/brief, identifying subtleties in assignment details. **Critical understanding:** Evidence of original thought with respect to structure of content or conclusions; ideas linked coherently; well-structured and relevant analysis.  **Knowledge and research:** Clear awareness of key debates and/or context; consultation and evaluation of a broad range of relevant sources. **Presentation and communication:** Clearly audible presentation; excellent use of audio-visual aids; well-paced and to time; very good relationship built with audience; answered questions with knowledge and understanding; able to generate discussion/engage others at a high level. | |
| **2(i)**  **(60-69)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Explicitly addressed topic/brief; structure evident, but could be more focused. Commenced and concluded appropriately. **Critical understanding:** Evidence of coherent links between ideas and relevant analysis. **Knowledge and research:** Evidence of a wide range of relevant sources, with some evaluation; awareness of some key debates and/or context.  **Presentation and communication:** Clearly audible; mostly well-paced and on time; audio-visual aids used to increase effectiveness; relationship built with audience; able to generate discussion/ engage others; answers to audience questions demonstrate knowledge and understanding. | |
| **2(ii)**  **(50-59)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Addressed set topic/brief; structure evident, though unclear.  **Critical understanding:** Evidence of understanding but largely descriptive with lack of critical insight. **Knowledge and research:** Limited awareness of wider debates and/or context. Evidence of some engagement with, and evaluation of, relevant sources. **Presentation and communication:** Audible throughout; pace not always appropriate and ran over/under time. Some attempt is made to build relationship with audience and generate discussion or engage others; answers to audience questions demonstrates basic understanding. | |
| **3rd**  **(40-49)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Partially addressed the set topic/brief; some evidence of an appropriate structure, but presentation partially rambling or unfocused. **Critical understanding:** Included little or no analysis. **Knowledge and research:** Few relevant sources consulted; sources not evaluated. **Presentation and communication:** Slightly inaudible; audio-visual aids not very effective; ran over/under time; paced too fast or too slow; weaknesses in basic understanding indicated in answers to audience questions; little attempt to generate discussion or engage others. | |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Largely failed to address set topic/ brief; rambling, unfocused.  **Critical understanding:** Included little or no analysis. **Knowledge and research:** Few relevant resources consulted, and little valuation made of them. **Presentation and communication:** Fully or partially inaudible; equipment used ineffectively; ran severely over/under time; no relationship built with audience; no attempt to generate discussion or engage others; answers to audience questions largely erroneous or irrelevant. | |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | **Focus and creative engagement:** Failed to address topic/brief; very rambling and unfocused.  **Critical understanding:** Included no analysis. **Knowledge and research:** No resources consulted.  **Presentation and communication:** Fully or partially inaudible; presentation severely over/under time; pace too fast or too slow; no attempt to generate discussion or engage others. | |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | Completely fails to address the topic. Or did not present. | |
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**Creative REFLECTION Paper** work is marked across 4 criteria: 1. Research and Planning; 2. Argument and Analysis; 3. Critique; 4. Presentation and communication. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class** | | **Creative Reflection Paper coursework marking criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | Research and Planning: outstanding evidence of research revealing extensive planning and ability to move beyond description of production process. Argument and Analysis: A coherent and cogent argument, showing an outstanding analysis of the creative work’s conceptual evolution in relationship to its critical context. Critique offers an in-depth and cogent evaluation of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style in terms of quality, creative aims and achievements (whether positive or negative) and narrative/conceptual progression. Presentation and communication: a professional standard, with fluent communication, grammar, punctuation, spelling and referencing/bibliography. | |
| **1st (70-84)** | **Research and planning:** excellent evidence of research, revealing significant planning, and ability to move beyond description of production process. **Argument and analysis:**  A coherent and cogent argument, showing an excellent analysis of the creative work’s conceptual evolution in relationship to its critical context. **Critique:** offers a clear and cogent evaluation of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style in terms of quality, creative aims and achievements (whether positive or negative) and narrative /conceptual progression. **Presentation and communication:** a very high standard, with few errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and referencing/bibliography. | |
| **2(i)**  **(60-69)** | **Research and Planning:** good evidence of research, revealing some detailed planning, and some ability to move beyond description of production process. **Argument and analysis:** A clear and considered argument, with some small weaknesses, showing a good analysis of the creative work’s conceptual evolution in relationship to its critical context. **Critique** offers a good, but at times inconsistent, evaluation of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style in terms of quality, creative aims and achievements (whether positive or negative) and narrative /conceptual progression. **Presentation and communication:** a high standard, with few errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and referencing/bibliography. | |
| **2(ii)**  **(50-59)** | **Research and planning:**  satisfactory evidence of research, showing some planning but largely descriptive of the production process. **Argument and analysis:** An attempt at argument, with significant weaknesses, showing some analysis of the creative work’s conceptual evolution in relationship to its critical context, but may be descriptive rather than critical. **Critique:** a satisfactory, but often partial or inconsistent, evaluation of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style, often failing to link key production decisions to final aesthetic form. **Presentation and communication**: contains errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and referencing/bibliography. | |
| **3rd**  **(40-49)** | **Research and planning:** weak evidence of research with little evidence of planning and an entirely descriptive account of the production process. **Argument and analysis:** No clear or consistent argument or analysis as to the creative works conceptual evolution, with little awareness of the creative work’s critical context. **Critique:** very limited, with a weak account of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style. **Presentation and communication:** are straightforward, but contain significant errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and referencing/bibliography. | |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | **Research and planning:** No or unsatisfactory research and planning. **Argument and analysis:** Little or no argument or analysis, with no or incoherent awareness of the creative work’s relationship to critical context. **Critique:** An unsatisfactory critique of the creative work’s form and aesthetic style, which may be defensive and descriptive. **Presentation and communication**: is inadequate with major errors. | |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | The work contains all the features described in the ‘marginal fail’ category, but will either be significantly under length and/or exhibit these deficiencies to a much greater extent. | |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | Work is so short that the candidate is not deemed to have made any attempt at the work. | |
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**Creative Production PORTFOLIO** work is marked across 4 criteria: 1. Quality of the work; 2. Production organisation; 3. Critical context; 4. Presentation and communication. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class** | | **Creative Production PORTFOLIO coursework marking criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | The Production Portfolio should be outstanding in every respect demonstrating a high level of originality, comprehensive understanding and familiarity with both the underlying creative principles and practical application of the production process. It must be an exemplary demonstration of production organisation in how to schedule, budget, script, cast, shoot, post produce and cash flow an actual or example production. Critical context will show a deep awareness and engagement in relevant history and theory in the creative work’s form as well as suitability to its market. Where appropriate, industry standard software or formats will have been used to present information. Both in presentation and written style it should be near perfect and capable of being used as a benchmark. | |
| **1st (70-84)** | The Production Portfolio should be excellent in most respects. It must demonstrate originality, a full understanding of the creative and practical production process and how it operates in practice. It will need to demonstrate a full knowledge and understanding of production organization in how to schedule, budget, script, cast, shoot, post produce and cash flow an actual or example production. Critical context will show a high awareness and engagement in relevant history and theoryin the creative work’s form as well as suitability to its market. Where appropriate industry standard software or formats should be used when presenting information. Presentation should be of an industry acceptable standard. | |
| **2(i)**  **(60-69)** | The work will have many of the features of a First Class Production Portfolio. A clear demonstration that the candidate fully understands the production process with some originality. It will demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of production organization in how to schedule, budget, script, cast, shoot, post produce and cash flow. It’s critical awareness of relevant history and theory, as well as suitability for market, will compensate for some weaknesses in presentation and use of industry standard software and formats. Alternatively a well-presented portfolio that enables effective production can compensate for some weakness of understanding of the underlying principles of the process. Presentation must be businesslike with no irrelevant, badly presented or ill thought out material. | |
| **2(ii)**  **(50-59)** | The Production Portfolio will not demonstrate a complete understanding of what is required to successfully produce a piece of audio visual work and display limited originality. It will demonstrate some good knowledge and understanding of production organization in how to schedule, budget, script, cast, shoot, post produce and cash flow. Some aspects of critical context will be well covered, often with some attempt at considering suitability for its market, but vital areas will be either incomplete or absent. Relevant software and formats will not always have been used. Presentation will contain errors and may include some irrelevant or ill thought out material. | |
| **3rd**  **(40-49)** | The Production Portfolio demonstrates a weak understanding of the task or the ideas and principles explored in the course. It will demonstrate some knowledge, but often limited understanding, of production organization.There will be little critical context covered, often with only a rudimentary attempt at considering suitability for its market. Work is likely to be poorly presented and incomplete. Industry standard software and formats will not have been used making the submitted material difficult to assess. | |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | The Production Portfolio will demonstrate no real understanding of the brief or its purpose. There will also be little evidence that the course work has been understood by the candidate. | |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | The work contains all the features described in the ‘marginal fail’ category, but will either be significantly under length and/or exhibit these deficiencies to a much greater extent. | |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | Work is so short that the candidate is not deemed to have made any attempt at the work. | |
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**Creative Written** work is marked across 6 criteria[[2]](#footnote-2): 1. Quality of work; 2. Creativity; 3. Professional development; 4. Audience engagement; 5. Critical awareness; 6. Presentation and communication. These criteria should be read in conjunction with the specific instructions and advice on individual assessments cover sheets.

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| **Degree Class** | | **Written Creative Coursework marking criteria** |
| **Upper 1st**  **(85+)** | Outstanding work exhibiting a writer’s voice of striking originality in both form and content. Deploys formal elements such as rhythm, tone, structure, viewpoint, characterization, and dialogue, with considerable mastery, control and complexity. Contains original insights, or presents familiar insights in an arresting, fresh manner. Extremely well structured with a mature understanding of the medium. Engages its audience at a complex, demanding and sophisticated level. Evidences a very high awareness of and engagement with relevant history and theory. Ready to submit for professional consideration. | |
| **1st (70-84)** | Excellent work. Meets all the criteria for the lower grades, but exhibits substantial levels of flair and originality. Shows a sophisticated understanding of creative writing for an audio-visual medium with good craft skills and accomplishment of dramatic purpose. Formal experimentation, if present, shows clear understanding of formal conventions and achieves its narrative purpose. Excellently structured narrative with high quality dialogue. Both form and content demonstrate a substantial engagement with reader and potential audience. Evidences a high awareness of, and engagement with, relevant history and theory. Largely meets professional standards in its given medium. | |
| **2(i)**  **(60-69)** | Very good work. Meets all the criteria for the lower grades, but exhibits a greater level of control and consistency. Content is of greater substance and complexity, demonstrating a noticeable level of originality and insight. Shows evidence of character development, and narrative structure The writer’s voice is clearly discernible, and there may be experiments in form and content but these may not be wholly successful. Evidences a good awareness of, and engagement with, relevant history and theory. Requires further development to meet professional standards in its given medium. | |
| **2(ii)**  **(50-59)** | Generally good work. Where appropriate, accepted conventions of format and layout are correctly followed. Has a clearly discernible story and/or theme, which is articulated with some fluency and consistency. The conventions of the genre/medium are understood and deployed competently with some familiarity of the genre. However, the work is likely to contain hesitancy, uncertainty or inconsistency in deployment. Characters have some sense of development but may not be fully rounded. May not be particularly original, perhaps tending towards the routine or derivative. Evidences some awareness of, and engagement with, relevant history and theory. Work would need substantial further development to meet professional standards in its given medium | |
| **3rd**  **(40-49)** | Competent but often weak, partial or unbalanced understanding of the forms of the genre/medium with errors, faults or inconsistencies in deploying them. There is some evidence of understanding of writing for the relevant medium, but story and/or theme and character may be poorly developed, muddled or incoherent. Dialogue may be poor and the screenplay or script fails to achieve its purpose. Unsatisfactory command of the language, expressing ideas with clumsiness or lack of clarity, and evidencing poor grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Work shows a rudimentary awareness of, and engagement with, relevant history and theory. The work is largely unsuitable for further development to meet professional standards in its given medium. | |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39)** | Work may be short in length, or work which displays the faults of the preceding categories in still graver form. The work does not engage the audience effectively and is largely derivative. Conceptual/narrative progression is almost entirely absent with very significant flaws in presentation, narrative structure and/or dialogue. Does not show awareness of, and engagement with, relevant history and theory. The work is unfit for consideration for professional Development. | |
| **Clear Fail**  **(10-29)** | The work contains all the features described in the ‘marginal fail’ category, but will either be significantly under length and/or exhibit these deficiencies to a much greater extent. | |
| **Clear Fail (0-9)** | Answer is so short that the candidate is not deemed to have made any attempt at the paper . | |
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1. *Additional notes:* 1. Marks may be deducted for failure to deliver AV work in the required format, as detailed [here](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/mediaarts/documents/pdf/audiovisualassessmentsubmissioninstructions.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Additional notes:* 1. Marks may be deducted for failure to deliver AV work in the required format, as detailed [here](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/mediaarts/documents/pdf/audiovisualassessmentsubmissioninstructions.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)