



Open  
College  
of the Arts

## Formative feedback

Student name	<b>Peter Walker</b>	Student number	<b>514508</b>
Course/Unit	<b>An Introduction to Film Culture</b>	Assignment number	<b>A2</b>
Type of tutorial	<b>Written / Audio-Visual</b>		

### Overall Comments

This is an assignment that makes a number of interesting and worthwhile points, Pete, and continues to point to a student with promise. However, the presentation of the work is poor. There are quite a lot of typos and grammatical errors and the work as a whole suffers from a certain lack of clarity. An essay's content is one thing, and there are moments here that continue to demonstrate potential, but if it suffers from so many presentational flaws it can only ever have limited success.

As well as my comments in this document, I've also added notes to your original assignment and attached it to my email. These should hopefully offer a very detailed sense of the assignment's problems. A number of the notes include references to presentational issues. Please do note, however, that it is not standard practice for a tutor to do this and, other than a very general overall comment on how the work has been presented, it's not something that I'll repeat with future assignments. You **must** carefully proofread your work, Pete, and make sure that everything is clearly expressed and structured. I'm aware that this has been flagged up as something of an issue with previous units, so if you are having any difficulties please let me know and I will be only too happy offer guidance and/ or to direct you to further support.

### Assessment potential

*I understand your aim is to go for the Photography Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I believe you have the potential to pass at assessment. In order to meet all the assessment criteria, there are certain areas you will need to focus on, which I will outline in my feedback.*

## Feedback on assignment

### Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

I appreciated your honesty in confessing that you didn't submit this assignment with an abundance of confidence, but I did wonder why you didn't just contact email me about this: as a general rule, I'd much rather we exchange an email or two and get to grips with any issues than you submit work you had doubts about. It's important to meet deadlines, of course, but there is a degree of flexibility, and the bare minimum for any submission is that you at least feel reasonably happy with what you've handed in.

You explore a relevant and useful set of films, highlight some interesting ideas, make some agreeable points, and show yourself to be fairly observant: the point about the plotline on the fringes of *Brief Encounter* 'with the flirting between that station guard and café manageress' is good. Equally, the material that suggests that the film was something altogether more personal to Noel Coward, a parable of some sort, is really interesting. However, these points, like a number of others in your essay, are merely gestured towards and could have been worked through with a touch more rigour, and with a much more explicit sense of you having developed your ideas in close relation to wider research appropriate to HE study. Good ideas are one thing- and you certainly have a number of those- but these alone aren't enough to produce a consistently plausible and solid essay. In order to do that, you need to expand your points over the course of (at least) a paragraph. You don't really do this, so your essay often reads like a series of bulletpoints that are interesting enough as ideas but lack the level of serious engagement needed to make them *really* good. Definitely something to consider with your preparations for A3....

As mentioned in my introduction, the presentation of the work is unfortunately quite poor. There are problems from the first sentence, and it can be a little more challenging than is ideal to make sense of some of your ideas. This is frustrating because, as outlined above, there are lots of interesting ideas in this essay, and with a bit more care and attention to detail things could have been more successful. Likewise, you can be a bit causal in your use of language and needed to do more to clarify some of your observations. I *kind of* know what you mean when you use the term 'raw', but something a little more formal and consistent with the language of film studies would have been more advisable. By the same token, the idea of 'symbolism' crops up on a few occasions, but you could have been a little more clear and careful in the way that you approached and handled it- (I think) I can see what you're driving at, but it's a promising idea that hasn't been executed as well as it might have been.

Overall, I'd recommend substantial reworking of this assignment, Pete. To do this, you'll need to look carefully at how you structure and express your ideas, and think about the difference between descriptive and analytical modes of writing. An essay will generally require both, but **analysing** should always be more of a priority than **describing** something, for example a film's plot, or what happens in an actual scene. Descriptive material should lead onto analysis, but that's not always the case here.

Equally, you need to demonstrate much more evidence of wider academic reading- there is not really anything here to say that you've been doing this. As a specific example of how you can utilise this, you mention the Hays Code on a number of occasions, which was pleasing, but you do it in a very vague and casual way. Offering a more detailed outline and overview of what it was exactly and then bringing in specific material from writers who've explored it would have made everything a little more solid. Richard Maltby's 'Censorship and Self-Regulation' essay in *The Oxford History of World Cinema* may be useful in this respect.

## Research

**Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis**

As suggested above, this needs to be more focused and rigorous, Pete. Put simply, your work needs to be based on much more substantial research and reading, and you need to show evidence of this in your work. We've discussed some texts that are worth a look, but they don't really make their presence felt in this assignment. Likewise, when you do mention a writer, for example David Thompson, you do not indicate the source you referred to, which was rather sloppy. Please make sure you're clear on the formal requirements of referencing ahead of A3.

## Suggested reading/viewing

**Context**

*Film Art and An Introduction to Film Studies* are two books I've mentioned before, and- I think- you said you may have purchased one of them. Rather than suggesting any new material to read, I think it's important that you carefully work through what's already been suggested and take it from there.

## Pointers for the next assignment / assessment

More attention to detail. Too often your- promising and thought-provoking- ideas read like underdeveloped bulletpoints and/ or are rather lost because of the way they are presented. Think about how you note down your ideas and plan and organise your work, and get into the habit of mind-mapping your ideas before committing them to the page.

**Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio. Given the issues that I've highlighted here, I think that video feedback would be more effective, as I think it's worth us talking about how you approach essay writing- but this is entirely up to you, Pete.**

Tutor name	Andrew Conroy
Date	16/11/16
Next assignment due	10/1/17