

Course Code – 6MFM036

Course Title – Documentary Film Making

Level Level 2

Qualification BTEC National Award

Course Leader: David Barker

What the course involves:

What are the main areas of work?

You will look at the historical background of documentary filmmaking; use of documentary as propaganda; contemporary issues and styles. You will look at pre-production issues such as budget, shooting schedule, ways of posing questions, use of storyboarding. You will learn camera controls such as aperture, depth of field, focus as well as learning the type of shots essential to the making of interesting and engaging material. You will learn how to use available light on location as well as studio lighting for interior shots. You will study various interviewing techniques as well as location and studio sound recording techniques. During and after shooting you will learn to edit your video footage and audio, which may include additional musical material. Finally you will put your edited documentary on to DVD for presentation and evaluation.

What do the software packages on the course do? What are the differences between them?

You will be using Apple Final Cut Pro 5, the editing package used by professionals. You will probably use Apple Motion for special effects and compositing, as well as Apple DVD Studio Pro for presenting your work in an attractive and professional manner.

Do I need my own computer at home to join the course?

Though it is not essential, it would be a great advantage to have a fairly recent Apple Mac computer; either a desktop or a laptop

What computers will we use?

We use Apple Mac G5s 2GHz dual processor. We have a range of professional studio lighting as well as Steadicam for effective location shooting. We have good camcorder equipment, including a Canon XL2 and Panasonic DVX 102.

Can I print at college?

You can. However the quality of our colour laser printer is not good enough for exhibition display.

Can I work at college outside of class time?

You can work in our Skills Centre where we have some Apple Mac computers, an extensive range of books, and broadband connection.

Is the course set with projects for us to do?

There will be exercises set to enable you to learn the many facets and processes involved in documentary film making. The major piece of work will be based upon a project brief designed by the students and staff; one that can be realistically achieved

What materials do I need to bring?

You do not need to bring anything at the beginning of the course, but during the course you will sometimes be asked to bring to class examples of others' documentary work on video or DVD for discussion and analysis

What is the likely cost of materials per term, per course, per session?

You may be required to buy mini DV cassettes for shooting, and DVDs for presenting your work to potential employers or production companies.

Is there any disabled access to the classroom?

Yes – via a lift to the third floor

How does my work get assessed and how often?

As most of the work is practical, there will be ongoing assessment so that you can monitor your progress. A formal final assessment for grading will take place at the end.

Is there any tutorial support? How often?

You should get a one to one tutorial each term

How many students are in a class?

A maximum of 15

Is there group work?

The nature of documentary film making makes it essential that you work in groups. The size of the group may depend on the subject, theme and construction of the documentary.

Do we go out to visit galleries or studios?

Hopefully we will be able to visit film studios and/or editing suites to see look at professional practice.

Are there any mechanisms for getting handouts or lesson supplements in order to catch up?

Lesson plans, briefs and schemes of work will be placed on our KCC Multimedia web site for you to access if you are unable to attend College for some reason. The site will also have a list of useful books and web site links for you to research

Where it leads to:

If you are a regular TV watcher you will be aware of the great number of documentaries on terrestrial channels as well as digital. This is partly due to their comparatively small cost compared with drama, and partly peoples' fascination with unknown aspects of the world. Many of these projects are made by small production companies who sell on the material to TV companies such as ITV or BBC. If your documentary is engaging and well made, there is no reason why it should not be considered for further development and extra funding.

Are there any associated courses to gain similar or useful skills after or during this course?

The College has a wide range of related courses. You could do the Music Video Production course which is one day a week for 24 weeks, or the DVD production course. An evening class learning Final Cut Pro would boost your ability to edit effectively, while a web design course would give you insight in how you could distribute your documentary on the WWW.

What background and qualifications do you need to join?

You do not necessarily need any academic qualifications though evidence of some proficiency in visual arts would be useful. The greatest qualification would be enthusiasm and commitment.

Should I bring anything to my interview?

We would like you to bring any creative work to interview, especially art and design. If you don't have any but do have a real interest in the subject then come with what you have – creative writing, journalism etc. The most important thing you can bring to interview is enthusiasm and commitment.

I have relevant work experience but no educational qualifications? Can I still join?

Yes – students are encouraged to join with work experience.

Course duration and Hours:

The course runs on Friday from 10 to 4. It lasts for 24 weeks.

You can take a lunch break from 1 to 2PM. There are some half terms; see the website for College dates.

Fees: [FEES](#): **£274 (£58) £1120 non EU**

Location: Wornington Road Site

How to apply:

You must be interviewed before acceptance onto this course. Please complete an application form online and we will contact you. You may also apply by post or in person and we will contact you to arrange an interview time.

Please bring work to your interview, which you feel supports your application to the course. This may include sketchbooks, drawings, photographs, graphic design, video and film work, web page design and computer aided design work. Work done on computer should ideally be presented as printed hard copy, however we shall make every effort to view work stored on CD if time and resources allow.