Est. 1841 | YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Programme Specification

BA (Hons) Film Studies

School:	Humanities
Subject area:	Media and Film Studies
Entry from academic year:	2026-27
in the month(s) of	September
Awarding institution:	York St John University
Teaching institution:	York St John University
Delivery location:	York St John University
Programme/s accredited by:	Not Applicable
Exit awards:	Certificate of Higher Education Film Studies Diploma of Higher Education Film Studies BA (Ord) Film Studies
UCAS code / GTTR / other:	
Joint Honours combinations:	BA (Hons) American Studies and Film Studies BA (Hons) English Literature and Film Studies BA (Hons) Film Studies and Media
QAA subject benchmark statement(s):	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2019)
Mode/s of study:	Undergraduate periods of study[1] for full time / part time
Language of study:	English
Paired with Foundation Year	Yes
Study abroad opportunities:	Yes
Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:	Yes
Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?	No

Introduction and special features

BA (Hons) Film Studies at York St John University is made up of exciting and cutting-edge content which represents the changing nature of the subject area and the links between film and other disciplines.

The Film Studies programme is specifically designed to help you become more independent, confident and digitally literate film and screen scholars, conversant in a range of theoretical, analytical, and practical approaches to this exciting and ever-evolving field of study. BA (Hons) Film Studies at York St John is part of a thriving academic and creative industries community housed within the School of Humanities. The programme has been designed to support your development in research, analysis and digital versatility. You will be given the opportunity to understand, analyse and engage with film studies through modules which examine the history of the study of media and screens as it both engages with and informs the contemporary landscape. The knowledge, skills and contextual information gained will be put into practice as you work on a variety of research-led projects.

[1] The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

As the digital world moves forward, so do the skills which are needed in an ever developing and changing job market. Over your time on this course, you will be afforded the opportunity to engage practically with the Adobe Creative suite of applications, concentrating on the apps which are most relevant and carry the greatest weight within the commercial sector. Our experienced on-staff graphic designer who will be working closely with the you will teach through and implement the use of the Adobe suite of software within the assessment of our modules. Adobe Photoshop CC is the industry standard for image manipulation and photo integration; InDesign is the leading application for creating page layouts and digital rich content which can be output in a variety of different media; and the programme will approach web design via Adobe Dreamweaver CC. Digital coding is currently used on a large scale within many businesses and enterprise, and Dreamweaver will give you a great starting point in learning HTML code whilst using CSS to give the code a unique look and feel. These core elements will give you a commercial edge, and when considering your next steps after completing this programme, tutors will help you to integrate these skills into your CV.

The City of York is a fantastic place to be if you enjoy the study of film and media. From being the campus home to the Yorkshire Film Archive to serving as a host institution for Aesthetica, a BAFTA-Qualifying annual short film festival, there are a range of city-based projects and venues to explore. In 2014 York was named the first (and so far, only) UK UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts. This designation was achieved through a competitive bid prepared by the private and public sector, highlighting the collaborative spirit within our vibrant and thriving media city.

In addition to classroom study, you will be given the opportunity to attend field trips, supported and subsidised by the university. York is extremely well positioned in terms of its access to venues of particular interest to screen scholars – field trips might include a visit to Leeds International Film Festival, the Science and Media Museum at Bradford, and more locally, the IMAX screen at Monks Cross or the Everyman Cinema in South Bank. All students on the Media and Film programmes have access to subsidised passes to the events and film screenings at the Aesthetica Short Film Festival, which takes place annually in York each November.

On BA (Hons) Film Studies, you will have the flexibility to pursue projects that you are passionate about; you will be supported by the expertise of a research-active staff team; your assessment will be developed and tailored to your individual learning needs; and they will be offered a range of enhancements such as guest speakers, field trips, and the programme's digital magazine Neutral.

It is important to the team that your experience of work-related learning is completely embedded to every element of our programme. You will encounter this kind of post-university focussed embedded into every level of your study. Our curriculum has been designed to maximise your ability to apply your learning directly to work, and to build a portfolio of evidence which demonstrates using and developing your academic knowledge, skills and attributes, in work-focused settings. There are many ways in which we have embedded this framework into our curriculum from authentic assessment to visiting speakers, employability focused assessments, and globally focused activities.

Several key strands can be found in the programme which aims to enhance your experience and also give you transferable skills. These include:

- The recent 'de-Westernisation' of Film Studies and the growing body of academic research and scholarship into Transnationalism in Cinema.
- The exploration of regional and national cinema as a cultural expression which reflects history, ideology and popular culture.
- The trans-media emergence of 'Screen Studies' as a discipline, which incorporates the changes in media where film culture has blended with televisual forms and digital media such as streaming, video games and animation.
- An incorporation of non-fiction and short-film film forms and Documentary Studies.
- The developments of scholarly approaches to wider film culture and film histories, fandom, spectatorship, user generated content and convergence culture.
- Curricula which encourage you to get involved in optional field trips (partly subsidised by the programme) to film festivals, museums, galleries, and other exhibits.
- Modules which require you to engage in enterprise activities such as organising and promoting film themed events and film publications.
- Engagement with the Yorkshire Film Archive, currently housed on our campus.

- Opportunities to become involved with our own publication, Neutral Magazine (neutralmagazine.com)

Special Features:

- Every staff member on the Film Studies Programme is an active researcher, with recent publications that address topics such as Nostalgia in the television sitcom, 'Hoodie Horror', Transnational Perspectives in Gothic and Horror film, the work of director Guillermo del Toro, and the relationship between film, media and mental health.

- As the field of film and screen studies undergoes continuous evolution, we are committed to encompassing all essential and diverse elements that enhance the study of film. Notably, a transmedia approach, exploring screens beyond the cinematic, holds a significant place in our curriculum, with dedicated coverage across a substantial portion of the modules within this programme.

- We are a host-institution for the Aesthetica Short Film Festival, and you will be given full access to the texts premiered and shown at the festival in addition to the over 400 films shown each year. Aesthetica provides an exciting platform for industry engagement through our institutional partnership, offering valuable insights via live masterclasses, panel discussions and spotlights with renowned and award-winning practitioners in addition to their publication, Aesthetica: The Art and Culture Magazine. This link offers access to employability-enhancing networking.

- Through our partnership with the Yorkshire Film Archive we are able to gain access to and engage with their archive materials. As a registered charity, the YFA works to collect, curate, and create access to our regions' screen heritage collections. Whether the focus is on our amazing landscapes, our rich industrial heritage, our cities, towns, villages, coast and country stretching from Sheffield to the Scottish borders, amateur and professional filmmakers alike have been capturing life in Yorkshire and the Northeast of England on film for over 130 years. This partnership is plugged directly into the *Britain on Film* module but will prove useful throughout the programme. Our students are offered unique, up-close access to the knowledge and information held in this archive and will have the opportunity to engage with these artefacts to enhance research and assessment.

We are also dedicated to the enhancing your experience, which includes:

1. The further integration of the Neutral project as an e-publication driven by the talent and dedication of our students (see our latest edition here: neutralmagazine.com).
2. A further development of part-subsidised optional excursion events which allow you to explore film cultures on a local, national and international level.
3. A healthy roster of visiting speakers, industry experts and academics who will enrich the discourse of your programme and provide practical insight into Film in a commercial and creative context.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of Recognition of prior learning (RPL). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The aims of the BA (Hons) Film Studies programme are to:

1. Provide you with a comprehensive grounding in the concepts, theories, methodologies, issues and debates pertaining to Cinema and Screen Studies.
2. Examine the evolution of Film as cultural expression and as a medium in dialogue with other forms.
3. Facilitate personal development, and enable you to develop key academic, generic, cognitive and technical skills which will enhance employment potential.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

4.1 Gather and organise information from recommended sources in the discipline of Film Studies.

4.2 Identify and practice the key elements (e.g., Essay writing, portfolio building, presentation, etc) for both short-term and long-term academic development.

4.3 Demonstrate awareness of foundational conceptual, theoretical, and historical perspectives relating to cinema and its cultural contexts.

4.4 Demonstrate competence in the analysis and evaluation of film texts.

4.5 Consider and evaluate some of the relevant skills and learning requirements for working independently and in groups.

4.6 Communicate effectively using a range of key skills appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Level 5

5.1 Demonstrate a critical understanding of the key theories and concepts relating to film and screen studies.

5.2 Critically analyse data and information relevant to study of film.

5.3 Demonstrate effective research skills and methodologies in preparation for advanced level study.

5.4 Effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

5.5 Make appropriate selections of materials and use them analytically and critically in the exploration of cinema.

5.6 Develop professional and career skills and utilise key skills in the context of work-related learning.

Level 6

6.1 Demonstrate the appropriate application of advanced research skills.

6.2 Deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry to the key strands of the degree.

6.3 Demonstrate independence, innovation, and entrepreneurial skills in working and academic practices.

6.4 Devise and sustain arguments, assumptions and abstract concepts and effectively engage with such matters as a critical thinker.

6.5 Demonstrate a complex understanding of subject-relevant information, ideas, and arguments effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

6.6 Synthesise and apply complex theoretical perspectives and concepts to a range of situations and issues relevant to film studies.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
FIL4002M	4	1	Filmmakers on Film	20	C	X
MED4004M	4	1	Research in Practice	20	C	X
FIL4003M	4	1	Britain on Film	20	C	X
FIL4005M	4	2	Film History: Industry, Technology, and Exhibition	20	C	X
FIL4006M	4	2	Cinema and The Americas	20	C	X
FIL4004M	4	2	Cult and Extreme Cinema	20	C	X
FIL5005M	5	1	Imaginary Worlds: Researching Science Fiction	20	C	X
FIL5002M	5	1	Film and the American Imagination	20	C	X
FIL5004M	5	1	European Cinema	20	C	X
MED5004M	5	2	Media Enterprise	20	C	X
FIL5003M	5	2	Gothic and Horror	20	C	X
FIL5006M	5	2	Movies at the Margins	20	C	X
MED6001M	6	1&2	Dissertation	40	C	NC
FIL6001M	6	1	Animations	20	C	X
FIL6002M	6	1	Documentary Film Studies	20	C	X
FIL6003M	6	2	Transnational Cinema	20	C	X
MED6006M	6	2	Gender and Sexualities: Issues and Debates	20	O	X
MED6004M	6	2	Pop Americana: Mass Culture and National Identity	20	O	X

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40) in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

We provide a positive learning environment. You will experience a range of teaching styles and settings and a variety of approaches to learning. Activities may include small group work, discussions, guided reading, and library-based research leading to feedback alongside seminars and tutorials (one-to-one meetings with a tutor). In addition, there is an emphasis on independent study outside of formal teaching sessions. This ‘supported open learning’ will include directed reading tasks, student-based project work, engaging with the online virtual learning environment and encouragement to attend guest lectures and research seminars. This also includes opportunities to engage with professionals, industry experts and others who will instruct you as the course progresses.

Our range of resources are designed to enable you to work collaboratively and to build your knowledge beyond guided reading so that you can engage with key debates within the approaches to theory. Film Studies is a rich and varied discipline and, as such, you must be able and willing to explore the depth of knowledge and experience at your disposal. You will study popular cultural forms as well as more extreme and experimental forms of cinema. This will require you to undertake reflective learning.

York St. John University adopts the position that students are co-producers of knowledge rather than just recipients of it. We see students as an important aspect of a student-centred approach. As such we encourage you to explore wider film culture including York's rich cinematic culture and special events and resources such as the Aesthetica Short Film Festival and the Yorkshire Film Archive.

The programme will help you to develop your research skills and methodologies. For example, at Level 4 you will be introduced to essential research practices in the module 'Research in Practice' and the foundational skills learned here are applicable throughout the whole degree. At Level 5 this will be further explored in modules such as 'Imaginary Worlds', 'Movies at the Margins', and 'Gothic and Horror', where methodologies such as the compiling of a literature review, comparative critical writing and preparing for presentations are honed. At Level 6 you will be instructed on how to develop a literature review for the 40-credit 'Dissertation' module and assisted in creating a research file on modules such as 'Gender and Sexualities'.

Throughout your studies you will have an opportunity to undertake learning that is related to the careers that you may wish to pursue in the future. In Level 5, you will study a specialist module, 'Media Enterprise', that will allow you to reflect upon a range of possible future careers. Guest speakers from the Media and academic world will provide relevant learning experiences.

You will be assigned an academic tutor in addition to module tutors. The role of the academic tutor is to provide additional support with your studies where necessary. In addition to this support the University provides extensive support in a range of academic skills, such as writing assignments and the use of the library for locating relevant information.

Assessment approaches

The assessment across our modules will prepare you for different forms of professional practice upon graduation or for continuing into postgraduate study or research. The programme will allow you to develop skills in verbal, written, collaborative and practical assessment modes within modules so that you can successfully engage with research. These are activities which develop your understanding of how assessed work is marked and how you might produce work to a higher standard. The intention is to ensure that you receive on-going feedback relating to your learning and development which will assist you in being successful in your studies. You will encounter a range of assessment approaches which are designed to enable you to develop a range of skills and meet the learning outcomes detailed earlier.

These include:

- Short and long essay,
- Analyses of textual and cultural forms and practices,
- Reviews,
- Individual and group presentations (oral and video technology based),
- Podcasting,
- Curation,
- Critical self-evaluation,
- Individual and group portfolios (using a range of platforms such as Word-Press and InDesign),
- Group and individually produced artefacts, including productions in sound, audio-visual and other media.

Formative and summative assessment will be by a variety of methods appropriate to the specified Learning Outcomes for the programme, the level, and the specific module.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's general regulations for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- University mission and values
- University 2026 Strategy
- QAA subject benchmark statements
- Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications
- Freedom of Speech Code of Practice
- The University's Approach to Dignity and Respect

Date written / revised:
Programme originally approved: