Short Course

Film

Exploring
Creating
Sharing

Specification for Junior Cycle

Irish Film Institute

the arts council
funding
the art of film
schomhairle
ealaíon
artscouncil.ie

FÍS

Íadt
DUN LAOGHAIRE

freshfilmfestival
Encouraging young people to make films

Contents

Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society, and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome.

The junior cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering relevant experiences that are engaging and enjoyable. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The junior cycle programme builds on students' learning to date, actively supports their progress and, in addition, supports them in developing the skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

Rationale for a short course in film

Film is one of the most significant artforms of our time. It has the power to engage our emotions, to inform, entertain, stimulate and provoke. It can reflect our own culture, history and traditions, and open our eyes to other worlds, human relationships and life experiences. Film is an inclusive and accessible medium, which young people instinctively enjoy and appreciate, and through which they can communicate and express themselves**.** Yet its very pervasiveness suggests the need for critical engagement and an understanding of the processes involved in image creation. The short course has been devised to address this need, and offers a framework through which these skills can be developed.

In school, film already features across subjects and offers many possibilities for teaching and learning; it acts as a specific element in curricula such as in junior cycle English, and serves as a tool to support other syllabii. Film scenarios can offer realistic situations for empathetic response, prompting discussion and sharing of one's own experiences or as an element of a school wellbeing programme. Furthermore, film education underpins the aims of the Arts in Education Charter in promoting students' understanding of the art form itself, of artistic practice, and their own potential to create.

This short course starts with students' experience and enjoyment of film, their curiosity for new content and their willing adaptation of digital technologies. Students learn to appreciate the art of film; they explore the processes involved in filmmaking and the cultures and traditions represented on screen. They are equipped to make informed choices about what they watch and how to apply their new understanding to collaborative filmmaking projects. Students use their innovation and enterprise to develop their ideas, and to consider ways of presenting and sharing their films and reflecting upon the work of their peers.

By participating in this junior cycle short course, students become more active, creative and critical consumers of film culture and digital media, open to engaging with the arts; they become increasingly aware of Irish film and career possibilities in Ireland's growing creative industries.

Aim

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This short course aims to capture and further young people's interest in film. It offers a structured approach to film education and through this students can develop critical, cultural and artistic skills in collaborative and creative projects.

Overview: Links

The following tables 1 and 2 show how this short course in film is linked to central features of learning and teaching in junior cycle.

Table 1: Short Course in Film and Statements of Learning

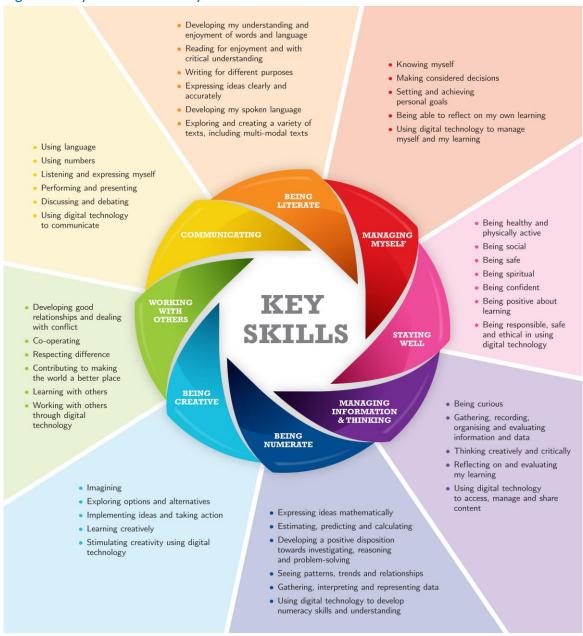| Statement of Learning	Examples of related learning in the course
SOL 3: The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets texts.	Students explore a range of films in Strand 1 to learn appreciation of film content and to understand how meaning is communicated through film language; Students select a scene to analyse and present to their peers.
SOL 4: The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the processes and skills involved.	Students use film language acquired in Strand 1 to plan and create a short film project, and in so doing, appreciate the processes involved. They are able to explain their filmmaking choices e.g. camera / lighting or costume in presenting their work to their peers.
SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which they she/he lives.	Through watching a range of films, including documentary, students appreciate film depictions of their own and other cultures; they engage in discussion around film themes and develop respect and empathy for the communities represented.
SOL 24: The student uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.	Students use digital media technology in collaborative filmmaking projects which they share with their peers. Students take responsibility for health and safety during a film shoot. Students consider ethics by having an awareness of film classification in their viewing choices, and of copyright issues in accessing film or choosing soundtracks for their own projects. They consider safety online when file sharing or accessing software or film content.

Short Course in Film and Key Skills

In addition to their specific content and knowledge, the subjects and short courses of junior cycle provide students with opportunities to develop a range of key skills. The junior cycle curriculum focuses on eight key skills.

Figure 1: Key Skills of Junior Cycle

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This short course in film offers the opportunity to support all key skills, but some are particularly significant. The examples below identify some of the elements that relate to learning activities in the three strands of Exploring, Creating and Sharing film. Teachers can also build many of the other elements of particular key skills into their classroom planning.

Table 2: Short Course in Film and Key Skills

Key Skill	Key skill element	Student learning activity
Being Creative	Exploring options and alternatives	Students demonstrate creativity by exploring options in the type of films they view and by considering various interpretations.
	Implementing ideas using digital technology	Students express their creativity in coming up with ideas for a film project and use digital technology to realise them.
Communicating	Discussing and debating	Students learn how to analyse and discuss film, developing an understanding of how it can communicate meaning through image and sound. Students discuss ideas for their short film project and investigate different possibilities for making and sharing their films. Students listen with respect to their peers, they offer and accept feedback and use it to inform their work.
Managing information and thinking	Being curious	Students are curious about the themes, contexts and cultures represented in the films they watch.
	Think creatively and critically	Students reflect upon various ways of using film language in their film projects and the meaning it conveys. Students present their film-based questions, answers, problems and solutions in a Film Notebook.
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Students reflect upon their learning in all three strands of the short course, using reflections to inform their presentations at the end of each strand.
	Knowing myself	Students accept feedback and acknowledge their own contribution to the group learning process.
Staying well	Being confident	Students gain confidence from being enabled to draw on their existing knowledge of film and use this to explore and create further. In so doing, they see continuity and development in their learning. Students are enabled to bring their personal enjoyment of film to their school learning and to reflect this in their Film Notebook.

	Being social, being safe	Students relate emotionally to characters on screen and can use them as the basis for discussion and sharing their own experiences, as well as listening to the opinions and experiences of others in a safe and respectful environment.
Working with others	Co-operating and respecting difference	Students enjoy film as a shared viewing experience.
	Working with others through digital technology	Students engage in a collaborative project by making their short film and working together at all stages of the filmmaking process, accepting others' views and input. Students reflect upon on their ability to work within a group and accept peer assessment. They work together to devise safe practice on set.
Being Literate	Exploring and creating a variety of texts, including multi-modal texts	Students enhance their media literacy skills by reading and understanding film language as well as using this language to create their own film project. Students explore different types of film text and film reviews, creating their own reviews for their Film Notebook.
Being Numerate	Seeing patterns, trends, and relationships	Students use spatial awareness to plan film locations and shoots. Students problem-solve using mathematical reasoning to plan and film scenes out of sequence and re-sequence them during the editing process. Students take responsibility for managing a budget for their filmmaking equipment or a class cinema outing.

Overview: Course

The specification for this junior cycle short course focuses on developing students' critical engagement with film and enhancing their creativity and self-expression through filmmaking projects. The short course comprises two core strands *Exploring* and *Creating.* A third strand, *Sharing,* which includes presentations of work, is divided between the other two strands, occurring at the end of each. The specification offers certain flexibility in the films chosen to watch and the project that students will make. However, teachers are asked to teach the strands in the order outlined.

The course is designed for approximately 100 hours of student engagement.

Strand 1: Exploring (40 hours)

Using their enjoyment of film as a starting point, students embark on an exploratory journey through different films. They learn to analyse and interpret film and develop insights into filmmaking processes, acquiring an understanding of film language. They reflect on the types of films they enjoy, how they respond to narratives, characters and settings, and how they access and consume film and digital media. They respect choices and opinions of others. In groups, they plan and participate in a cinema outing. They record their reflections, inspirations and explorations in a Film Notebook and analyse a scene of their choice, using the language of film.

Strand 1a: Sharing (5 hours)

Students plan to share their chosen scene with the class and to create an ambient, shared viewing experience. They present their scene to their peers, either in pairs, groups or individually. They accept teacher and peer feedback and reflect on their learning in preparation for Strand 2.

Strand 2: Creating (45 hours)

Students apply their understanding of filmmaking processes and the language of film to a collaborative filmmaking project. Their film project could include experimenting with different shots, creating or designing sets, or developing ideas for a screenplay in a particular genre. They may work to different themes or film genres, inspired by the films they have seen in Strand 1. Within the time allocated, students may choose to work towards a scene or a complete short film around an agreed storyline. Each student will have responsibility for different roles in the filmmaking group, developing an understanding of the whole process, while being aware of their own contribution, and they will use their own innovation and enterprise to find creative solutions to challenges on set. Each group will edit their short film through a shared process of reflection and refinement and prepare it for presentation to their peers.

Strand 2a: Sharing (10 hours)

Students will organise an in-class festival and present their completed film to their peers in groups, outlining their creative choices and contributions. They will each select one piece from Strand 1 of their Film Notebook and write a reflection note summarizing their learning in the course as a whole.

Students also have the option of submitting their film to Ireland's Young Filmmaker Competition[1] (although this will not form part of the assessment).

Film Notebook

Each student is asked to keep a Film Notebook for the duration of the course, documenting their inspirations, the development of their ideas and their experiences of participating in each strand. Students are assessed at the end of the course on the basis of their presentation, supported by selected material from the Notebook. Throughout the course, teachers may draw on the Film Notebook as assessment for learning (AfL), asking students to critically respond to the films they watch, to recognise how film language is used and to develop their ideas for the filmmaking project. They are also asked to use the Film Notebook to document their role in each stage of the film project, and to describe their responsibilities and their experiences. They are asked to reflect upon their participation in the group and the final presentation of the film in the class festival. The Film Notebook should comprise samples of work from each strand (See Appendix 1).

Course Duration

The course has been designed for approximately 100 hours of student engagement.

Strand 1 – Exploring - 40 hours	1a – Sharing - 5 hours	Total: 45 hours
Strand 2 – Creating - 45 hours	2a – Sharing - 10 hours	Total: 55 hours

The Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) outlined below reflects students' learning throughout the course.

The learning outcomes in the course are aligned with the level indicators for Level 3 of the National Framework of Qualifications (Appendix 1).

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[1] See www.freshfilmfestival.net

Expectations for students

'Expectations for students' is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work. Some student work from schools who participated in our pilot project will be made available on our website. Further samples will be made available as schools undertake this course.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and values which students should be able to demonstrate having completed this junior cycle short course in film. The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all who take the course and represent outcomes for students at the end of their period of study (approximately 100 hours). The outcomes are numbered within each strand. The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves.

Strand 1: Exploring

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about…	Students should be able to…
Critical engagement with film	1.1 adopt a positive attitude toward exploring new films
	1.2 watch, discuss and compare a whole range of film both from within and outside of their usual film experience
	1.3 use their Film Notebook to respond to film, express their ideas, and immerse themselves in film culture.
Elements of Film Language	1.4 interpret what meaning is conveyed by film language in different scenes, including camera angles, mise-en-scène, lighting and sound
	1.5 create their own camera shots to demonstrate understanding of the different elements of film language
	1.6 identify with a character or scene through a personal response to a favourite film
Viewing film	1.7 organise a class cinema visit, research film programming and classification, and compare the experience of watching in different locations/on different formats
	1.8 discuss the importance of copyright and online safety when accessing and/or sharing film content
	1.9 consider the ways in which films are marketed and exhibited
Irish film, filmmakers and their themes	1.10 identify common themes and features in a number of Irish films
	1.11 examine the work of one Irish filmmaker
Films from different cultures and their themes	1.12 discuss aspects of different cultures using examples from European and world cinema
	1.13 consider the differences in experience of watching film in L^1 and film in another language

Strand 1a: Sharing

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about…	Students should be able to…
Sharing film	1.1 select a scene from a they have enjoyed to present to their peers, explaining the context, the filmmaking processes involved, and their interpretation of the scene
	1.2 prepare a venue for their presentation, anticipating any sound and vision issues
	1.3 select one piece from their Film Notebook which best reflects their exploration of film
	1.4 incorporate teacher and peer feedback in their preparation for Strand 2.

Strand 2: Creating

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about…	Students should be able to…
Pre-production	2.1 generate ideas for a short film project in groups; agree upon one idea to work on as a filmmaking group.
	2.2 create a short screenplay based on your film idea and storyboard, demonstrating an understanding of film language
	2.3 plan a film shoot with cast, props, costumes, locations, set design, lighting and shooting schedule
	2.4 organise roles and responsibilities for the film shoot and take responsibility for assigned roles on set
Production	2.5 rehearse scenes and set up for filming
	2.6 demonstrate an understanding of shots, movement, sound and soundtrack
	2.7 identify the health and safety issues that can arise at all stages of the shoot
	2.8 communicate respectfully as a team
Post-production	2.9 plan and organise the film edit
	2.10 demonstrate understanding and awareness of copyright issues in relation to the use of soundtrack and sound effects

Strand 2a: Sharing

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about…	Students should be able to…
Sharing their work	2.1 identify festival opportunities for young filmmakers in Ireland
	2.2 plan an in-class festival and take responsibility for their own role
	2.3 schedule the festival, and prepare the venue for the screening
	2.4 present their short film, describing their inspiration, their individual roles and any key creative decisions
	2.6 evaluate their personal film journey, selecting a piece of work from Strand 1 and writing a reflection note for Strand 2.

Further Option (not part of assessment)

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about…	Students should be able to…
Entering Ireland's Young Filmmaker Competition at Fresh Film Festival or other festival	3.1 assign roles and responsibilities for entering and / or attending the festival
	3.2 compile a budget and fundraise, if necessary, to cover transport
	3.3 research rules in order to prepare the submission of a film to the festival
	3.4 demonstrate an understanding of the full implications of attending the film festival by seeing the visit through from planning to your attendance.
	3.5 participate in the festival through viewing others work, meeting other filmmakers and evaluating each film in the festival programme

What this course might look like in schools

This course offers students an exciting opportunity to explore, create and share film. Beginning with watching, interpreting and discussing films they enjoy, students embark on a journey exploring the elements of film through a variety of critical and creative approaches and different films, before planning and ultimately shooting their own short film.

Strand 1: Exploring

In Strand 1, students watch and interpret a range of film. Teachers use students' existing knowledge and enjoyment of film as a starting point, before choosing a selection of films and learning activities that will further students' knowledge and understanding and enable students to meet the learning outcomes. The selection of films should include a minimum of three feature films (one mainstream, one Irish, and one from a diverse country or culture), alongside short films, scenes and trailers in class. After watching a film in its entirety, students will have opportunities to analyse scenes through close analysis of different elements of film language such as camera, lighting, sound, mise-en-scène, before creating their own examples of film language such as filmed shots and short scenes. Students also consider film marketing and classification before working together to arrange a trip to a local cinema or arts centre to see a film.

Film Notebook

Students are encouraged to examine films, filmmakers, and film culture independently using a Film Notebook. A student's Film Notebook might include reviews, analyses, sketches, and other aspects of film culture or fandom that appeal to them, as well as their ideas for their own film project in Strand 2. By adopting a 'scrapbook' approach to their notebook, they can become more self-determined and expressive in their film exploration. Students select a piece from Strand 1 items in their notebook to submit for the Classroom Based Assessment at the end of the course.

Strand 1a: Sharing

In Strand 1a, students select a scene from a film they like and present this scene to their class, analysing how one particular element of film language is used in the scene. This can be done in individuals, pairs or small groups. They can contextualise this by considering the director, genre or style of the film, and by expressing their reasons for the choice.

Strand 2: Creating

In Strand 2, students use their understanding of film language to work in groups and create a short film project. The film project can be a short fiction piece, or other type of short film such as advertisement, music video, documentary or art piece. The film project can be inspired by students' own ideas, or by other films, poems or short stories. After groups have agreed an idea, students should script and storyboard their film using film language to tell their story. Students can choose their shooting location (in or outside school if permitted), and decide what props, costumes, set design, and equipment are needed. Students can shoot film on a phone, tablet, or digital camera. While each student will pick a different role in the process, they should be encouraged to adopt a co-operative approach to many of the tasks, and to come up with creative solutions to problems that arise. The editing process should be collaborative where possible.

Film Notebook

Throughout the filmmaking process, students are asked to keep a record of their own role at each stage of the filmmaking process, and to record their sketches, ideas, and attempts to plan and problem solve as they go.

Strand 2a: Sharing and Classroom Based Assessment

In groups, students present their film project through an in-class film festival. They should detail their inspiration and experiences of making the film and screen the film to their class. Individually, using a Reflection Note, each student reflects upon their role in the film project and their experience of the course. Students also submit one extract from Strand 1 of their Film Notebook.

Assessment and reporting

This short course supports a wide variety of approaches to assessment. While each learning outcome does not need to be assessed, each learning outcome chosen by the teacher can allow for assessment. Teachers are encouraged to tailor ongoing assessment tasks to suit the needs of their particular class and to note that some learning outcomes can be assessed in groups as well as individually.

It is envisaged that students will provide evidence which can be used for the assessment of their learning in a variety of ways, including in-class presentations and discussions, material gathered for their Film Notebook such as examples of film language (e.g. film shots/settings etc.), analysis of a favourite film scene, a range of critical responses to films, photographs/images or any other written, oral or audio-visual form which best helps students to achieve their learning outcomes. Students can reflect on their learning through features of quality (see below), to set clear goals and targets based on the feedback they receive. Feedback from the teacher and their peers helps students to evaluate the progress they are making in achieving their goals and to decide how to improve their future learning.

Assessment tasks can be used by the teacher to prepare students for the **Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA).**

Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA)

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBA) are the occasions when the teacher assesses the students in the specific assessment(s) that are set out in the subject or short course specification. Junior cycle short courses will have one CBA to take place at the end of the course.

Classroom-Based Assessment: Film Project

Students will present their film project as a group through an in-class presentation. This will be supported by an individual Reflection Note from **each** student outlining their experience of the course as a whole, and an **individual** piece from their Film Notebook chosen from Strand 1. The combined pieces should indicate the skills and knowledge acquired throughout the course and are assessed according to the features of quality below.

Features of Quality

The features of quality support teacher judgement of the CBA and are the criteria that will be used by teachers to assess the student's final project.

Inclusive assessment

Inclusive assessment practices, whether as part of ongoing assessment or the CBA, are a key feature of teaching and learning in schools. Accommodations, e.g. the support provided by a special needs assistant or the support of assistive technologies, should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year.

Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations may be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in the CBA. Accommodations which enable all students to access curriculum and assessment are based on specific needs. For example, a student who cannot physically type may use free dictation software to complete ongoing assessments. Equally, a student who cannot speak may sign/draw/write/type/create visuals and subtitles to present and communicate ideas. A student with a specific learning difficulty may benefit from having learning tasks and activities presented in a different way. Comprehensive guidelines on inclusion in post-primary schools are available [here](#).

The Film Project Features of Quality

Exceptional

- Student shows an excellent understanding of film and film culture, and this is reflected in their individual piece chosen from Strand 1 and their Reflection Note.
- The student's film is of a very high standard and fully realised; it has a fully cohesive narrative and it demonstrates a highly proficient use of technology and excellent understanding of film language.
- The student made an exceptional contribution to the group film project.

Above Expectations

- Student shows a very good understanding of film and film culture, and this is reflected in their individual piece chosen from Strand 1 and their Reflection Note.
- The student's film is of a high standard and is mostly realised; it has a very cohesive narrative and it shows a very proficient use of technology and a very good understanding of film language.
- The student made a very good contribution to the group film project.

In Line with Expectations

- Student shows a good understanding of film and film culture, and this is reflected in their individual piece chosen from Strand 1 and their Reflection Note.
- The student's film is of a reasonable standard; it has a fairly cohesive narrative and it is partly realized; it shows a proficient use of technology and a fair understanding of film language.
- The student made a good contribution to the group film project.

Yet to Meet Expectations

- Student shows a little understanding of film and film culture, and this is reflected in their individual piece chosen from Strand 1 and their Reflection Note.
- The student's film is incomplete; the narrative is not cohesive and it is apparent they have not fully grasped the extent of the project or made effective use of film language or digital technology.
- The student made some contribution to the group film project.

Appendix 1: Sample content for Film Notebook

Strand 1 & 1a: Exploring & Sharing

- reflections on films they have watched; their own personal response to films they have seen, and films that inspire them ; film diary;

- their own examples of film culture, fandom, according to their own curiosity and interest – interviews, images, trivia of film stars, directors, genres or franchises.

- their own examples of film language, expressed through drawing, photos, or videos and sound recordings if their Film Notebook is digital

- notes on planning their cinema outing, their choice of film, marketing materials and classification information

- reflection sheet or preparatory work to accompany the presentation of their film scene in Strand 1a

Strand 2 & 2a: Creating & Sharing

- ideas which they can contribute to their group's film project, and explanations where necessary

- evidence of problem-solving for aspects of the filmmaking process

- examples of scripts, storyboards, costume designs, or other preparatory work in advance of their shoot

- details of their role and responsibilities on the shoot

- a copy of budgets, schedules, equipment lists for their film

- reflection on the students' individual contribution to the filmmaking process, e.g. diary entries, or plans

- research into film festivals, in particular the Fresh Film Festival

- planning for their in-class festival

- reflection sheet to accompany the presentation in Strand 2a

Appendix 2: Sample tasks for ongoing assessment

Strand 1: Exploring

- Create own examples of elements of film language, including camera angles, movement, mise-en-scène, sound and soundtrack, set, lighting and costume. Examples can be made in a variety of formats including selections of stills, images, audio recordings, or short film clips.

  Learning outcome – 1.5

- Conduct a survey or poll to find out about your class' viewing habits

  Learning outcome - 1.7

- Create a presentation or write about an Irish film director. Research the director, their body of work, the themes explored in their film(s). Give an example of how they use aspects of film language to express their theme. Discuss what appeals/does not appeal to you about this director's work.

  Learning outcome – 1.11

- Discuss aspects of another country's culture using examples from film/films they have seen. Aspects could include music, costume, food, art, and customs. Highlight how film language is used to showcase / explore aspects of a country's culture.

  Learning outcome – 1.12

- Compare/contrast the experience of watching films in different languages.

  Learning Outcome- 1.13

Strand 1a: Sharing

- Present a scene from a film of your choice to your class, explain the filmmaking processes involved, and your response to it.

  Learning Outcome 1.1

Strand 2: Creating

- As a member of your group, write a screenplay based on the group's film idea

  Learning Outcome 2.2

- Design a storyboard for your film. The storyboard should explain how you will shoot the film, demonstrating an understanding of camera angles, movements, and mise-en-scène.

  Learning Outcome 2.2

- Publish a shooting schedule, distributing to all members of the filmmaking group.

  Learning outcome 2.3

- Design a site survey sheet and carry out a risk assessment of the film location prior to shooting, giving recommendations to the group on how best to ensure their personal safety on set.

  Learning outcome 2.7

- Create a final edit of the class film.

  Learning Outcome 2.9

- Create a Soundcloud file of a possible original soundtrack and sound effects for a selected scene.

  Learning outcome 2.10

- Design an awareness campaign around copyright issues and/or film classification guidelines in Ireland.

  Learning outcome 2.10

Strand 2a: Sharing

- Create a printed programme for the in-school film festival, including location, films, their running order and screening times.

  Learning Outcome 2.2

- Research examples of festival promotional materials to create promotional materials for the in-class event.

  Learning Outcome 2.2