



MMCC1025

Screenwriting

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2022

Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Karen Pearlman karen.pearlman@mq.edu.au
Credit points 10
Prerequisites
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit introduces writing for screen media. Students encounter strategies for generating, researching, and developing their own creative ideas. They work on particular aspects of screen storytelling such as character, world, and cinematic metaphor. Students may choose to develop scripts for fiction, non-fiction, animation, interactive narrative, or hybrid forms. This unit combines creative writing projects with critical analysis of selected screenworks and screenplays. Students do not need prior knowledge to do this unit, and is relevant to those interested in screen and sound media, writing, and the creative process.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- ULO1:** analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- ULO2:** generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.
- ULO3:** apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.
- ULO4:** evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- ULO5:** demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

General Assessment Information

Please note that the University and the Faculty of Arts have launched a new assessment policy effective as of 1 July 2021. This new policy particularly affects LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENTS.

The Faculty policy in relation to late assessment submissions is as follows:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – 10 marks out of 100 credit will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted seven days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests, etc.

To be very clear:

- Unless you have applied for special consideration and had your application approved, for each day your assignment is late, 10 marks will be deducted. For example, if you submit your assignment 7 days late, 70 marks will be deducted, which means you will fail that assignment.
- If your assignment is more than 7 days late (including weekends), you will get 0 marks for your assignment.

These are serious penalties that will substantially alter your final grade and even determine whether you pass or fail this unit. Please make every effort to submit your assignment by the due date.

If you find you cannot submit your assignment on time, please apply for Special Consideration through AskMQ. Make sure you read Macquarie University's policy regarding Special Consideration requests before you apply: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration>

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Weekly Online Quizzes	15%	No	ongoing weeks 1-11, Wednesdays 11am
Script Outline	35%	No	11:59 pm on Sunday 03/04/2022
Script, Synopsis & Reflection	50%	No	11:59pm on Sunday 29/05/2022

Weekly Online Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 11 hours

Due: **ongoing weeks 1-11, Wednesdays 11am**

Weighting: **15%**

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of material covered in the unit through online quizzes. Further information can be found on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

Script Outline

Assessment Type ¹: Plan

Indicative Time on Task ²: 37 hours

Due: **11:59 pm on Sunday 03/04/2022**

Weighting: **35%**

Drawing on material generated through weekly tutorial and iLearn exercises, select two ideas, one fiction, one documentary. Write short outlines for each of them. Details on assessment scope and examples will be discussed in tutorials. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.
- apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.
- evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

Script, Synopsis & Reflection

Assessment Type ¹: Creative work

Indicative Time on Task ²: 50 hours

Due: **11:59pm on Sunday 29/05/2022**

Weighting: **50%**

Consolidate your work and learning this semester into a script for a short fictional or documentary screen production. Details on assessment scope and examples will be discussed in

tutorials. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- analyse a range of screenwriting approaches and methodologies.
- generate story ideas and material suited to screen media.
- apply independent research and script writing skills to a creative project.
- evaluate screenwriting and creative work in progress.
- demonstrate the ability to reflect in action.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures, tutorials, readings, and screenings are all core modes of delivery of the content of this unit. Active engagement with these is facilitated through weekly quizzes that support consolidation of learning. The assessment tasks are scaffolded to support application of knowledge and insight you develop through this active engagement with all four core modes - lectures, tutorials, readings and screenings. Lack of engagement with any of these is likely to have a detrimental effect on your learning and achievement in the unit.

Lectures

Lectures will be via Zoom. Recordings of the Zoom lectures will be made available via ilearn after they are delivered live, however, live attendance is strongly encouraged! Being present in the 'room' energises the dialogue with your lecturer, tutors and peers, gives you a chance to do quick exercises, comment and respond to questions via chat or verbally, and ask questions. This participation makes the learning more immediate and rewarding. Attendance at lectures is not assessed and there is no need to request special consideration if you miss one.

Tutorials

Tutorials are designed to give you live, in the moment, opportunities to develop knowledge via exercises, and dialogue with tutors and peers. Attending gives you opportunities to try things out, get informal feedback, learn by sharing your responses to other's work, and develop your assessment tasks. Every tutorial is directly aimed at improving your screenwriting ability and is directly relevant to an aspect of your assessment tasks. Attendance is not assessed and there is no need to request special consideration if you miss one, however repeated or consistent lack of

attendance will mean missing core learning and is likely to impact on achievement in the unit. Tutorials are NOT recorded.

Readings

Readings for this unit will be available through ilearn. Comprehension will be tested via weekly quizzes.

Videos:

Key videos relevant to assignments will be available through the MMCC 1025 iLearn page. They form part of the unit content and your observation skills will be developed through weekly quizzes asking questions about them.

Technologies/resources required:

Students will be required to use their own computers for research, development and writing of assignments in this unit. It is recommended that MMCC1025 students become familiar with Celtx (free script software) or other industry standard script formatting tools, which will be discussed in class or in information on ilearn. Microsoft Word can be used for scriptwriting, however it is not as effective a tool.

Students are **encouraged to consider downloading and exploring one or more of the widely available free screenplay formatting tools before the start of semester**, so that you are familiar with the principles. Because these are automated processes when using the free, widely available software we do not spend a lot of time in class on them. Rather, our focus is on ideas and content. Students are not assessed on formatting however, tutors do often note that using formatting software improves legibility and gives students a better understanding of the ways that scripts work dramatically and logistically.

Unit Schedule

The outline below may be subject to some variations.

Week 1: generating ideas

week 2: character

week 3: storyworlds

week 4: structure/plot

week 5: theme & research

week 6: containment

NB: Comprehension and application of principles from ALL of the first six weeks of the unit is

expected to be demonstrated in the Outline assessment task due at the end of week 6. This includes the principles of 'containment' which will be discussed in the lecture in week 6.

week 7: genres

week 8: writing & formatting for documentaries

week 9: scene writing and fiction script formatting

week 10: dialogue

week 11: summation and application

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.