

CANDIDATE 2

[AS Project \(Film Opening\)](#)

[A2 Project \(Music Video\)](#)

1a Describe a range of creative decisions that you made in post-production and how these decisions made a difference to the final outcomes. Refer to a range of examples in your answer to show how these skills developed over time.

My foundation portfolio was a film opening titled 'Exceptional'. It was in the superhero genre, focusing on a teenage boy with telepathic abilities. My advanced portfolio was a music video for the fictitious band 'the Storm' performing a drum and bass style song called 'witchcraft'. The narrative, interspersed with performance, featured the bassist of the band being followed by a supernatural girl who becomes progressively aggressive and disappears at the end after being kissed by the bassist.

The creative decisions made in the post-production of 'Exceptional' were limited by our organization during filming. Due to time constraints, we filmed in a rushed manner, getting one successful take of each storyboarded shot then moving on. During editing, we realized our creative decisions couldn't be made outside of set parameters. For example, a shot/reverse shot conversation appeared limited as we had no wide shot to cut to. Taking this experience into consideration during the filming of 'The Storm', we made sure to work outside the storyboard once we had the shots we knew we needed. For example, the creative decision to feature an intimidating ECU running shot of the supernatural girl's face was only made possible by experimenting with camera techniques during filming.

'Exceptional' was a superhero movie and as such we wanted a great deal of special fx. We wanted at one point to include a pencil flying while the hero was using his psychic powers. During post-production, we decided to use premiere pro, the software we were using, to achieve this effect. However, after this, I visited the production company Prime Focus and helped on the editing of a Vodafone advert. I saw how the video was sent to various specialists to achieve optimum results in colour correction, SFX and basic editing. To emulate this in 'The Storm' video, we used various software in post-production to achieve the best results. Using After Effects to produce a CCTV shot and Color to colour correct gave us a lot more control over our desired effect and made a more professional feel than if we were to use purely Premiere pro.

The creative decisions in 'Exceptional' were a team effort; for example, the animated character drawn by the hero during class. However, when implemented during post-production, only one person would ever try to bring

the desired effect to life. When editing 'The Storm', we made sure to all attempt the effect, for example one fight scene involved a punch and all three members of the group worked on it to make it seem realistic and at the same time not too brutal. The combined effort in the acting out of creative decisions as well as creating them meant a wider success for the finished video.

Creativity is the most difficult part of any media process and portraying those ideas on screen no easier. But throughout the process, I believe I have developed my skills alongside my peers to produce fantastic final work.

COMMENTS

The opening paragraph makes clear what the candidate has made as the main task for both the AS and A2 projects. This is a good start. The second paragraph immediately makes reference to the question, showing the relevance of pre-production to the limitations of post-production possibilities. There is reference to editing terminology and specific detail from both productions to illustrate points made. In the third paragraph, post-production detail is expanded upon with reference to specific effects in both projects. Examples of software and the candidate's skills development outside of the course are also referenced. In the fourth paragraph, there are some useful reflections upon the role of the group and its impact upon creative decisions within post-production. The fifth paragraph rounds off the response nicely.

In the 30 minutes available, this response is a good blend of reflection, discussion of skills development and progression, reference to software, terminology and the decisions made in the creative process. Overall it is just into level 4.

1b Explain how meaning is constructed by the use of media language in ONE of your coursework productions.

The coursework production I have chosen to talk about is the music video made as my advanced portfolio for the fictitious band, The Storm performing the song 'Witchcraft'. The construction of meaning in a music video is fundamental to its success due to the lack of dialogue to portray emotion and explain the narrative. Meaning is constructed through the editing, mise-en-scene and also the mode of address of the characters featured.

Vernallis is a media theorist who presented the idea that while films should be linear and constructed naturally, music videos should be disjointed and juxta. Our music video conforms to this idea with sections repeated and others completely missed out before being returned to. This non-linear convention of editing of the narrative and cross-cutting between narrative and performance meant that meaning had to be constructed clearly to keep the audience engaged. We did this through colour correction, making performance sections an orange hue to contrast starkly with the blue colour correction of the narrative.

The genre of music was drum n'bass and when creating our video we knew we had to use media language to connect to our intended audience. Research into the genre showed us that fans of the drum n bass scene are predominantly associated with drugs parties and clubs. The mise-en-scene of the performance section was claustrophobic, being filmed in a tight space. The intended effect on the audience was to make them feel like they were in a club atmosphere. We also included drink and cigarettes in the narrative section, in the hope that this would endear our target market to the protagonist.

Looking at the ending of our music video, you often see the protagonist in close-ups, full focus and in the centre of the frame. By contrast, the supernatural girl chasing him is often out of focus, distant and covered by her hair. Applying Levi-Strauss's theory of binary opposites, stating that conflict is most greatly connoted through characters that are opposite in every way, we can see the message we attempted to portray. The emotional protagonist relates well to the moody teenage audience we were trying to connect with and the emotionless antagonist opposite in every way provides the audience with a clear sense of who the enemy is.

We also deliberately left many questions unanswered, for example, it's never fully explained if the girl is a figment of the bassist's imagination or a real phantom. Applying Barthes' enigma code we see that the video deliberately avoids constructing meaning in some places in order to create suspense and keep the audience guessing. One example of enigma is when the bassist is cornered, about to be grabbed and after the suspense has built, the shot goes out of focus and she disappears. Whether the audience chooses to believe the lack of focus represented the phantom transversing to the other side or representing the bassist's mind clearing and focusing on reality is up to them.

Media language was used in numerous ways to construct meaning in our music video, due to format, but most importantly it was used to keep the audience enthralled and I think resulted in a professional and entertaining video.

COMMENTS

The first paragraph gives a clear introduction on the project to be discussed and on the interpretation of the question as being about meaning-making. In the second paragraph, there is reference to theory which is explained in relation to the task undertaken. There are some references to different elements of media language and their interaction. The third paragraph constantly relates back to the audience and in both third and fourth paragraph, there is very specific reference to the text and analysis thereof. The fourth and fifth paragraphs both touch upon theoretical references to support points. The last paragraph is a good summary.

Overall, this is a very well structured response, which makes good use of theory, albeit only briefly applied. There is very good reference to the candidate's own text and a consistent attempt to relate back to media language and how meaning is made for the audience. Overall a low level 4.