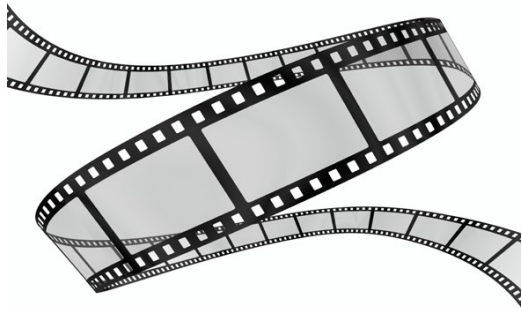


Film Modules for Visiting Students 2026/27



These film modules cover the historical development of cinema from its origins in photography right through up to the digital age.

CW5005 *Adaptations* examines the adaptation, as both industrial process and creative practice, of various kinds of cultural works into other forms. This focuses on cinematic adaptations of works of fiction.

Through a series of case studies students will explore the history of cinematic adaptation and key ideas through which adaptation has been framed, including fidelity, medium specificity, authorship and intertextuality.

Updated March 2026/PJW

Entry requirements: GPA of 2.75 or above (out of 4.0) or equivalent.

Pre-requisites:

- There are no formal pre-requisites for Level 4 modules
- Level 5/6 modules require prior study of film/film writing

Taught at: Penrhyn Road

The following film-based modules will be available in 2026/7:

MODULE CODE	LEVEL	MODULE TITLE	SUITABILITY
HA4307	4	From Pre-Cinema to Post-Cinema	1, 2, 3
CW5004	5	Screenwriting	1, 2
CW5005	5	Adaptations	1, 2, 3
HA6310	6	Power and the Image	1, 2, 3

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

1 The University makes every effort to ensure that module availability & content is correct at the time of publishing, but it cannot accept responsibility for subsequent changes, as part of the University's policy of continuous improvement & development.

KEY TO MODULE DESCRIPTORS

Key to Module Descriptors and Suitability:

Please note that virtually all Kingston modules are whole year in length running over both teaching semesters. In many instances, two previous single-semester modules had been combined. Consequently, each module in this directory has an indicator as to whether it is suitable for single-semester study, as shown below:

- 1** - Indicates module is suitable for students on Study Option 1 (Whole Year)
- 2** - Indicates module is suitable for students on Study Option 2 (Autumn/Fall)
- 3** - Indicates module is suitable for students on Study Option 3 (Spring)

Notes:

1. All modules are at undergraduate level only.
2. Students enrolled on Study Option 1 are required to study the entire module.
3. Whilst the University makes every effort to ensure that this information is correct at the time of updating (March 2026), it cannot accept responsibility for omissions or subsequent changes. Module availability and content may be subject to change, as part of the University's policy of continuous improvement and development.
4. Details of assessment for students enrolled on either Study Option 2 or 3 where provided are indicative only and may also be subject to change as part of the above policy.

LEVEL 4 – INTRODUCTORY

Module Code: HA4307

Module Title: From Pre-Cinema to Post-Cinema

Level: 4

Prerequisites: None

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

2

The University makes every effort to ensure that module availability & content is correct at the time of publishing, but it cannot accept responsibility for subsequent changes, as part of the University's policy of continuous improvement & development.

Credits:

- Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS)
- Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)

Suitability: study options 1 or 2 or 3

Content:

This module examines the rich and diverse history of film, from its origins in photography, science and optical toys up to the modern day, multi-platform landscape of digital cinema. The module's focus is both historical and technological, and the main case studies for the module will be drawn primarily from the American narrative cinema of Hollywood, which has ultimately been responsible for introducing mass audiences to the majority of key technological developments that have driven the history of film.

The module will be broadly chronological, starting with the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century as the pioneers of cinema began experimenting with joining shots together, turning narrative into narration. From there the module will be organised by a series of case studies which focus on specific technological developments and their impact on cinematic storytelling. The module begins with the silent era and introduces visual elements such as performance, editing, and set and costume design before adding sound, colour, widescreen, special effects and finally CGI and digital cinema. Many of these technological developments are rooted in mainstream American cinema, from which many of the case study films will be drawn, but alongside this the module will also highlight alternative forms of storytelling, from documentary to animation, independent cinema to world cinema.

➤ **Autumn Semester: *the Silent and Sound Eras***

❖ ***The Silent Era***

The Silent Era of Cinema is largely unexplored, despite representing more than the first 30 years of cinema history. This first section of the module will examine the formative years of the birth of the industry, from the optical toys and scientific developments that preceded it, through crucial events like the shifting of the industry west to California, the origins of genre, the development of key elements in the look of cinema, finally reaching its most perfect form in the silent blockbusters of the 1920s.

Topics:

- Origins of Cinema & the Birth of Hollywood
- Comedy in the Silent Era
- Telling Visual Stories 1: Narrative and Melodrama
- Soviet Cinema & Montage
- German Expressionism

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

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The Sound Era

This really began in the late 1920s, and the conversion to sound was complete in Europe and America by the early 1930s. The coming of sound made seismic changes to the ways in which films were shot, acted, written, and enjoyed, and thus the early sound era represents one of the most tumultuous periods in cinema history. This section will consider this era, running from the late 1920s to the end of World War II, through a number of key elements.

- Early Sound Cinema
- Guilty Pleasures: Glamour vs Realism, Vice vs Morality
- French Poetic Realism
- Film Genre Theory
- Hollywood Genres: The Western

➤ **Spring Semester: *Post War and New Waves; New Cinemas, New technologies***

❖ ***Post War and New Waves***

- Italian Neorealism
- European Influences & Film Noir
- Documentary Cinema
- European Art Cinema
- Melodrama & Dissent 1950s

❖ ***New Cinemas, New technologies***

- Third Cinema
- New Hollywood, Genre Revisionism
- American Independent Cinema
- The 1980s Hollywood Teen Film
- Digital Technology & Post-Cinema

Teaching: weekly two-hour lectures

Assessment:

➤ **Study Option 1:**

- 1,000-word film analysis (40%)
- 2,000-word essay or 4-6 minute video essay (60%)

➤ **Study Option 2:**

- 1,000-word film analysis (100%)

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

➤ Study Option 3:

- 2,000-word essay or 4-6 minute video essay (100%)

Note: methods of assessment and weighting are indicative only and subject to change

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Module Code: CW5004
Module Title: Screenwriting
Level: 5
Prerequisites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous study/interest in film/film-writing at university level • high standard of literacy and expression
Credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Suitability: Study Options 1 or 2
Content: Screenwriting is about how to come up with ideas for screen stories and characters to inhabit them; how to develop these ideas into strong, compelling narratives; and how to present them in a way which turns words into images on a screen. Unlike a novel or a poem, a screenplay is both a creative text and a technical guide - a set of instructions to director, actors and crew as to how to visualise and realise the action. A good script must be economical, precise and clear. Learning how to write in this way is a special skill - one students will acquire on this module. The module begins by looking at some successful films and how they're constructed. This includes one or two turkeys and ask why they went from celluloid to Christmas dinner. Also use movies from the US and the UK (mostly) will be used , the occasional TV show and a range from features to shorts. Some will be older than you are used to watching (trigger warning: some may even be in black and white!), but they will be excellent examples of the screenwriter's craft or offer a particularly good demonstration of a topic.

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
 Study Option 2 = Autumn
 Study Option 3 = Spring

This module requires a passion for film, and a preparedness to watch and read widely to supplement lecture materials from research.

➤ **Overall Topics:**

- Story Structure – examination of the narrative principles of classical cinema, and show how and why they work, with a specific focus on Three Act Structure.
- Characterisation and Character Development – exploration of the relation between character and structure, and how characterisation and narrative are interdependent.
- Genre - genre from comedy to horror and everything between, and explore how genre defines story.
- Dialogue - the economy and style of screen dialogue, and look at some of its important functions, such as hidden exposition.
- Screen language – consideration of writing for a visual medium, through visual storytelling devices such as active cuts, the use of key objects and on-screen exposition and reincorporation.
- The Short Film - a range of short films and scripts are screened, including an examination of the variations between final draft and final cut.
- Formatting a script - study of industry-appropriate methods of presentation.
- Narrative development - use of classical structure to develop students' own ideas from first premise to working narrative.
- Protagonist and Antagonist – examination of the differences between these two pillars of story structure.

➤ **Autumn Semester:**

A focus on the key concepts of dramatic narrative – examining structure in a range of genres (straight drama, romance, comedy, science fiction, horror) and ‘blended’ genres (romantic comedy, comedy horror etcetera). This is based on a series of screenings followed by analysis in class. As the semester progresses, students undertake practical exercises (some as homework) in which they work with the same concepts. By the end of the semester students will be able to a) apply key principles of dramatic structure; and b) demonstrate a working knowledge of the craft of writing for the screen.

➤ **Spring Semester:**

In this semester, the emphasis is on developing an original story, characters and subsequently, a short screenplay. The format remains a weekly two-hour class, allowing for use of selective screenings and script samples to explore the craft of writing for the big screen, combined with practical exercises and workshopping of ideas. Students collaborate on dialogue, character and storylining. As students develop their own work, more class time is given to workshops and feedback received from fellow students and tutors on their individual projects.

Teaching: two-hour weekly workshops and individual tutorials

Assessment:

➤ Study Option 1:

- Analysis of a feature-length screenplay (1,500 words) (40%)
- Portfolio: short screenplay and evaluation (2,500 words) (60%)

➤ Study Option 2:

- Analysis of a professional screenplay (1,500 words) (100%)

Note: methods of assessment and weighting are indicative only and subject to change

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LEVEL 5 – INTERMEDIATE

Module Code: CW5005
Module Title: Adaptations
Level: 5
Prerequisites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous study in film/film writing at university level
Credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Suitability: Study Options 1 or 2 or 3

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

Content:

This module examines the adaptation, as both industrial process and creative practice, of various kinds of cultural works into other forms. The first half of the module focuses on cinematic adaptations of works of fiction. Through a series of case studies students will explore the history of cinematic adaptation and key ideas through which adaptation has been framed, including fidelity, medium specificity, authorship and intertextuality.

The second half of the module examines more diverse types of adaptation: literary engagements with previously published works of fiction; adaptations of comics and theatrical works to screen; and the more recent transports between video games, fiction and television. Students explore the commercial, creative and political imperatives that shape such adaptations, as well as the reasons for why some cultural texts and forms remain unadapted or have been deemed unadaptable.

➤ **Autumn Semester: Exploring Adaptation**

In asking 'What is adaptation?' we must think more widely about a range of issues of authorship, canonicity, transmediality, politics, history and more. The process of adapting a text is a complex process in both practice and analysis and extends far beyond simply translating one text into a different format.

❖ **Topics:**

- Defining Adaptation
- Adapting The Canon (case study George Orwell, *1984*)
- History and Adaptation: Adapting History and the Historical Novel (case studies: *I Claudius* (BBC, 1976) and *Wolf Hall* (2015))
- Crime and Adaptation (Case study: Sherlock Holmes, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*)
- Crime, Detection and Adaptation (II): Women Crime Writers - Agatha Christie
- Adapting The Gothic (I): Edgar Allan Poe *The Fall of the House of Usher* and Roger Corman *The Masque of the Red Death*
- Adapting the Gothic (II): *Frankenstein*
- Adapting the Unfilmable (II): JG Ballard and *Crash*
- Adaptation Race and Gender
- Songwriting, Folk and Adaptation: Bob Dylan
- Transmedia Storytelling: digital folklore and videogames

➤ **Spring Semester: Legacies and Innovations**

In this semester, the emphasis is on developing an original story, characters and subsequently, a short screenplay. The format remains a weekly two-hour class, allowing for use of selective screenings and script samples to explore the craft of writing for the big screen, combined with practical exercises and workshopping of ideas. Students collaborate on dialogue, character and storylining. As students develop their own work, more class time is given to workshops and

feedback received from fellow students and tutors on their individual projects.

❖ **Topics:**

- Adaptation and Fidelity
- Structuralism and Narrative
- Post-structuralism and Intertextuality
- Case Study: *The Great Gatsby*
- Screenplays, Storyboards, Pitches
- Adapting graphic novels *Watchmen*
- Lost in Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*
- Austen Translation *Bridget Jones* and *Bride and Prejudice*
- *One Day*

Teaching: three-hour weekly workshop lectures

Assessment:

➤ Study Option 1:

- 1,500-word essay (40%)
- 2,500-word creative project (60%)

➤ Study Option 2:

- 1,500-word essay (100%)

➤ Study Option 3:

- 2,500-word creative project (60%)

Note: methods of assessment and weighting are indicative only and subject to change

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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

LEVEL 6 – ADVANCED

Module Code: HA6310
Module Title: Power and the Image
Level: 6
Prerequisites: Substantial study of film at university-level
Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Suitability: Study Options 1 or 2 or 3
<p>Content:</p> <p>This module explores the concept of power in film and visual media, from a range of critical approaches including post-colonialism, post-modernism, and post-humanism. A variety of films and other media texts such as TV, video games and comics are studied as a way into thinking about dominance and resistance, and the representation of race, gender and disability.</p> <p>Students will examine political, sexual, and bodily conformity, as reflected in the aesthetics and themes of contemporary mainstream and European cinema, including Science Fiction and neo-noir. The module will consider the screen itself as a space of disruption and subversion, including the place of digital images in capitalist hegemony and consumer culture, and their potential for transgression. There is examination of the role of the digital in destabilizing conventional notions of production and consumption, alongside film cultures as both propaganda and anti-propaganda, as mainstream and independent, and as hegemonic and counter-hegemonic.</p> <p>The module further deals with issues of postmodernism, asking whether pastiche results in a redundant recycling or increases the potential for playful remixing and fan creativity. There is also discussion of ideas of carnival in relation to popular entertainment, and – through the work of Foucault – examine the ways in which visual discourse constructs our cultural understanding of identity around minority groups.</p> <p>Throughout, students are encouraged to critically examine the hierarchies of power that govern media production and representation, and to question the cultural privilege that structures popular media texts.</p> <p>➤ Autumn Semester topics:</p>

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

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Hollywood, geopolitics, techno-muscularity & spectacles of power
Introduction to a theory of Power
The Body of hegemonic masculinity
Surveillance & belonging
Technologies of Race
Black Cinema & Race satires
Sexual Politics: Power & the Gaze
Gender, Women & Cinema
Queer Approaches
Body: Provocation
Surveillance & Conformity: explorations through Horror & Satire

➤ **Spring Semester topics:**

- Introduction - Cinema and Post-Optical Realism
- Hauntology and the City
- Evidentiary Realism and Forensic Archaeology
- Speculative Realism and the End of Metaphysics...
- Surveillance Capitalism
- Gender and the Workplace
- Cinema and Refugees
- Cinema and Protest: from Selma to BLM

Teaching: weekly 1-hour lecture and 3-hour screening

Assessment:

➤ **Study Option 1:**

- 2,500-word essay (50%)
- 2,500-word essay (50%)

➤ **Study Option 2:**

- 2,500-word essay (100%)

➤ **Study Option 3:**

- 2,500-word essay (100%)

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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring