

# Candidate A assignment

**Please Note:** The short film produced as part of this assignment with filename *Assignment A.TenPoundsvideo.mp4* is on SQA's secure website and can be accessed through your SQA Coordinator.

## Section 1: Planning Stage

### Creative Intentions in Response to the Brief

#### Stimulus

I have chosen to make an advert using the stimulus which has the title "Ten Pounds". The reason I chose this option is because the title can be interpreted in many different ways. I considered several different ideas, and then came to the decision that I would use the title to refer to a sum of money, as in £10. I thought it would be good to make an advert for a charity in which I would try to persuade people to donate £10 to a worthy cause. I would have a voice over which would say something like, "your donation of only ten pounds could help." I also plan to edit it so that on-screen text will appear saying, "Donate £10". This will meet the stimulus very well because the whole focus of the film is to persuade people to donate 'ten pounds'.

#### Form

I have elected to make my film in the form of an advert. The reason I have chosen this is the time limit is only 3 minutes, and I feel that it would be difficult to make a fiction film as it would not be very realistic and it would be a struggle to generate a storyline. Making an advert will be much more straightforward, I think, because there is not the same requirement to create and develop characters in an advert as there is in a film. I also think that as adverts of this kind are based on a real-life situation, there would be no need for complicated costumes or scenery, as there might be in films or film trailers. Adverts of this kind, which are called public information films, all follow a similar structure where they start off by presenting the problem, and then show how the viewer what they can do to help to solve it. This is a clear and simple structure and I will ensure that my advert follows this.

#### Purpose

The purpose of my advert is to persuade people to donate £10 to a charity for young homeless people. I will focus on one particular individual's plight and will try to get sympathy for him by using techniques such as filming him at high angles to make him look like a victim. I will also play sad, slow music in the background to appeal to the viewers' emotions. I think this will be effective as the viewer will then empathise with the homeless person and it will make them want to donate to the charity - which is the whole aim of the advert. Furthermore, at the end of the advert I will show how their £10 can help a homeless person so that they will be encouraged to donate as they will feel that they are making a real difference. I will do this by including exterior shots of a building where someone who is homeless can get help, and a woman sitting down with a homeless person and talking about their situation, helping so that people can actually see what their money would be doing in real terms.

### Target Audience

The target audience will be adults with a disposable income who will be able to spare £10 to donate to the charity. In order to appeal to them, I will include emotional scenes of a young teenager who is clearly homeless and in a bad situation. This will be combined with sad music to pull on the heart strings of the audience to persuade them to donate. I am going to make my victim look really vulnerable by filming him from high angles and making his clothes ripped and his face muddy to show that he does not have very much and doesn't even have facilities to keep himself clean. This will get adults with a disposable income to donate as they will feel sorry for the character and want his situation to improve.

### Genre

I would like my film to be in the realist genre, as it is based on a real life situation. It is a charity appeal to help homeless people, so it is essential that it is as credible as possible. Conventions of this genre that I will use are everyday settings like car parks and play parks so people can relate to these places and therefore connect with the message of this advert. I will also use some conventions of the drama genre to emotionally appeal to the viewer. I will use low key lighting, sad music, and I will make the character look really impoverished through costume and make-up in order to emotionally connect with the audience. These genre conventions are commonly used in charity adverts and I will do the same in mine to make it successful.

### **Content Research 1: Narrative and Categories**

I watched a "Save the Children" advert to take notes on how charity ads achieve their purposes. The advert started with a picture of the charity logo which many people could probably recognise, and which also showed that this was an official organisation. There was a lot of on-screen text in the advert, including phrases such as, "We need your help". There were lots of still images of a cute, healthy child accompanied by on-screen text saying, "I need your help"; this was effective as it made it seem that the little child was directly addressing the viewer. There were then lots of stills of ill children with thin, bony bodies and hospital equipment around them to show what could happen to a healthy child without help from the charity. All of these techniques are extremely persuasive and achieve the advert's purpose of convincing their audience to donate money to the charity. The techniques that I will plan to replicate from this advert are using personal pronouns to address the reader and to make it seem like it is a conversation between the person who needs help and the viewer. I will say things like, "Just ten pounds a month will provide me with shelter and food". The use of the word "me" will give the impression that the homeless person is talking directly to the audience about their individual situation, and so it will be good for persuading the viewer into donating because they will think that the actor is a real person in genuine need of their help.

Another persuasive charity ad that I watched during my research was Brighton Housing Trust's Christmas Advert 2015 which shows a family becoming homeless at Christmas time. It uses little

children to tug on our heart strings, as children have connotations of innocence and vulnerability, and Christmas is a time of year we associate with families and happiness. We see the children in their pyjamas, in their school uniform and in normal clothes, showing us that they are just typical children who are leading normal lives. Therefore, I am going to use this idea in my advert, by initially shooting the actor in normal, everyday clothes and then shooting him in old, dirty clothes to show how his life has changed through becoming homeless. This will help to achieve my purpose of persuading the audience to donate as they are sympathetic.

I considered the narrative convention of using a voiceover, so to research this I watched the Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity TV Advert. It had a voiceover to tell the audience what the charity does, as from the images it initially just seems to be a normal hospital, and so the voiceover is effective in giving us a greater understanding of the work which is done there. Therefore, I am going to use a voiceover in my charity advert to ensure that the viewers fully understand what is going on, and that my message comes across – I will use the voiceover to introduce my character by name, explain that he's homeless and encourage viewers to donate.

I also researched some of Barthes cultural and symbolic codes to consider ways of conveying meaning. The Great Ormond Street Hospital advert shows us some children's drawings and it has some of the on-screen text written in children's writing. The writing acts as a cultural code and creates a sense of innocence and it reminds us that these sick children are missing out on a part of their childhood, which makes us upset on their behalf. The images of the children's drawings anchor the idea that it is the children who need the help. Therefore, in my advert, I plan to use a childish looking font, which is sans serif and in a script style such as *MV Boli*, which will make it seem like a young person wrote it. I think this will work well because it is young homeless people that the appeal is specifically designed to help. I will also use babyish colours such as pink or peach for the font as they develop the idea of innocence more.

### **Content Research 2: Language**

I studied a range of charity ads and found that they often open with an establishing shot of the setting. This was true in Oxfam ads which begin with shots of impoverished countries, or something closer to home like the British Heart Foundation ad that opens with a shot of a hospital ward. Based on this trend, I have come to the decision that for my opening shot I will use an establishing shot which will help to set the scene. It will be set on some waste ground behind a shop. I am going to film it from far away as it will help to show where the film is set and how bad the conditions are for the homeless person. I will make sure that the big skip is in the background as it is disgusting and will make us feel sympathy towards the homeless person as he has to live in those conditions.

All charity adverts I have seen include music and sound effects to match the tone of the ads. For example, in the Sick Kids ad there's an uplifting song which matches the motivational tone of the ad, and they use relevant sound effects too such as the beeping of heart monitors to anchor the setting of the hospital. In my advert, as well as using sad music to match my sad tone, I will also use some sound effects. I will get the homeless person to do some heavy breathing when the camera zooms in close to them. This will be effective as it will make it seem that the person is exhausted and having a really hard time, so the viewer will feel for them and will want to donate money to help them. I will

also add in sound effects of rain and wind to make the conditions seem even worse, which will create even more sympathy and will also encourage donations.

The charity ads I've watched use a range of camera shots. For example, in the Sick Kids VS ad, there's long shots to show entire families which suggest how many people are affected by cancer; and there's close ups to show emotion in the families or the show specific operations taking place. When I am filming I will also use different camera angles. When I am filming the homeless person I will often use a close up. This will emphasise his sad looking face and will draw in the audience so they feel sorry for him and want to donate. I will also use a long shot when I am filming the scene between the lady from the charity and the homeless person. They will be seated at a table and the long shot will show her open body language as well as taking in some of the setting so it looks a safe and cosy place for the homeless person to get help. This will make people think that their donation will have an impact and will make a difference, so they will be encouraged to make a donation.

Costume is vital in charity ads. In Sick Kids, the children were dressed in hospital gowns to connote vulnerability, and the wrestlers and boxers were suitably dressed in gloves, leggings, masks etc to immediately inform the audience that they are powerful. As a result, I will use different costumes for each character, to make them look realistic and clear representations of someone in their position. I will have the homeless person dressed up in old clothes with a few holes and rips in them to show that he doesn't have very much money and lives in difficult circumstances. I will get the helper to wear smart clothes: dark trousers, a smart top and a smart jacket and shoes. This will make her look professional which will be reassuring to people as it will make people believe that their money is in safe hands and that the charity is reliable. It will be good at creating a contrast between the two different lives that the people lead, and it will highlight how bad the homeless person's life is.

Finally, the domestic abuse ad 'Break the Routine' uses low key lighting to create a sense of fear and horror, directly matching the content which is a horrific example of domestic abuse, as the advert attempts to shock us into raising awareness. I thought this was very effective so in my advert I am going to use low-key lighting at the start. This will create a sense of fear and a negative mood, as it is a cold night and the homeless person is sheltering behind a building. It also creates a sense of mystery and it will make the audience want to watch on because they will wonder what is happening.

### **Production Roles**

I will appoint myself as the location scout for my film. I will do this because I feel that I have a clear idea in my mind of what kind of place I am looking for and it would be too tricky to explain to anyone else about my idea of an ideal place and too time consuming. According to the Creative Skillset Scotland website, the role of a location scout is: "Finding ideal locations for a film shoot and managing the location during the shoot". For the first role there, I know I need to find unclean, worn-down looking places to shoot my homeless person in. Thankfully, because I live in an area where there is a lot of poverty, I won't have much bother finding such places. As a result of this finding, I have decided to schedule in two recce trips, one to a couple of parks in my own village and the neighbouring ones, and one to find the perfect spot in the cemetery for shooting my final scene.

My second finding for the location scout's job is that their duties include "Negotiating fees, terms and permissions." As most of my film is to be shot outside in various public areas across West Lothian (car parks, play parks, the cemetery), I will need to contact the relevant department of the local authority to ensure that I'm allowed to film in these outside spaces. I don't anticipate a problem with this as my film is for non-commercial purposes but if I run into issues I will have to find more appropriate locations on private property owned by my family and friends. However, when I film the scene in the school I will need permission. I figured out that the room I want to use is the nurture room as it has soft chairs and a kettle which looks more like an inviting meeting room at a charity HQ. As a result of my research into location scouting, I will seek permission from my headteacher and the staff members who use the nurture room so I know my production has the right to film in there.

Thirdly, according to Creative Skillset Scotland, the director of photography or cinematographer, has responsibility for "Creating the visual identity, or look, of the film". I have already considered some ways that I will do this – for example with my lighting and the music. However, as cinematographer, I will need to match up my shots with these ideas. I will ensure that each time I shoot the characters I use the angles I've mentioned, but I will also ensure that I use camera movement cleverly. For example, each time I film the homeless guy I will keep the camera in a fixed position, suggesting that his life is currently fixed in his pitiful condition unless the viewers donate. Then, when he begins to get help, I will try to include some kind of panning or tracking movement with the camera, because it will appear that his life is changing with the donations.

After the cinematographer plans the visuals, I found that they then have to communicate these ideas with the camera operator. According to Creative Skillset Scotland, this job involves "preparing and operating the camera and all its equipment and communicating with the actors". As I am making a film all by myself, I will need to be the camera operator as well. I am not too confident with the tripods and iPhone clips so I have decided to schedule a time with my teacher when she can take me through a demonstration. This action will help my ability to fulfil the role of camera operator. To carry out the other side of this job, I will make sure I'm really clear with my actors where I want them to stand and what their body language etc should be like. I have decided to enhance this communication by typing up the shot by shot plan and providing them with the storyboards. This will help me to better achieve the other side of the camera operator's role, communicating clearly with my actors.

Another important role that I will need for my film is an editor. The role of the editor is to take all the individual bits of a film and put them all together along with the sound and any special effects that are required. They need to be skilled using the software and be able to make the film look professional. The editor is important and I read an article called 'The Editor as Storyteller' which claimed that editors are often called the 'third story teller' after the writer and director – editing can change the entire story as the editor puts all of the pieces together into a coherent text. I will work hard as editor to sequence my shots in the way that I think most appeals to the audience's emotions. I will also edit the voiceover carefully over the images so that the sound is cued up to the visuals, as this adds to the coherence of a text and will anchor my messages well for the audience. An example of where this will happen is the first thing the voiceover says, which will be 'This is Billy' – I will ensure that the close up of Billy is cued up to this opening statement by the voiceover, so the audio and visuals are in sync with each other.

### Audience Research

While planning my advert, I carried out audience research to establish whether my ideas would tie in with audience expectations of a charity advert. I asked people if they thought that it was important to have a voiceover in a charity advert; 100% of the people I asked said that it was important as it is sometimes hard to show fully what is going on in just a short video, so it's better if someone explains it as well. They also said this would be an opportunity to pull on the heartstrings of the audience. Based on this feedback, in my charity advert I am going to script my voiceover carefully to say something like, "Just ten pounds can make a massive difference to a homeless person's life. I think using direct and emotive language like this will cause engage the audience and they will therefore want to give money if they feel they are helping the homeless without having to do very much.

I also asked people if they thought that on-screen text was important in a charity advert. 80% of the people I asked said that they thought it was important that this featured in adverts like this. They gave reasons such as it tells us the name of the charity, it tells us how much to donate, and it also provides other vital information such as phone numbers and website links. For this reason I am going to ensure that the on-screen text in my advert includes phrases such as, "Donate now", which suggests that immediate action is required. I will also include the name and logo of my charity, as this is something that is commonly used in adverts and will build up a sense of my charity's identity.

I asked people if charity adverts should include music and if so, what style of music would be appropriate. 100% of people said they thought it should include music. People suggested that the music should be sad and emotional. They also suggested music played on a solo piano or acoustic guitar, as they felt that vocal music would distract from the message of the advert. A few people also said that they thought the mood of the music should change and have a "happy" feel when it showed the charity helping out, as this would be effective in showing the positive impact a donation will have. I think this is a good idea, and one which I am going to use. I will probably put a solo piano piece in the background, maybe one that I have played before, so that if needed, I can play it myself to get the timings exactly right.

Another question I asked when carrying out audience research was if people thought it was necessary to have genuinely homeless people in my charity advert. 80% said they thought such an advert should feature real homeless people. Most of them said this was because it would make viewers want to donate more readily because they were actually seeing what was happening in real life and it would have more of an emotional impact on them. In contrast, 20% said that it should just include actors because they thought it was a shame if we filmed real people as we would be invading their privacy, and also some people might not want anyone to know they were homeless. For this reason, I am going to use actors because I don't think it would be fair to ask a homeless person to film them, especially as the advert I am producing is not genuine and so will not actually help them in any way. My plan is to ask one of my classmates to dress up as a homeless person and make it look as realistic as possible by providing him with torn clothes and using SFX make up to make him look dirty and penniless.

The last question I asked people was if charity adverts should include a website at the end. 60% of people said they thought it should, and 40% of people said they thought it shouldn't. The people in favour of including this information said it would be good for viewers who were genuinely interested in helping the charity as they could go on to the website to find out more information and this would

perhaps lead to them donating additional money. They also said that if people were not sure if they should donate or not, then they could use the website to find out more about the charity. Therefore, I am going to include a fake website at the end of my advert to make it more realistic. I will also get the person doing the voiceover to read out the name of the website to anchor this point and to instruct viewers to visit the webpage.

### **Institutional Context Research**

To research industry guidelines I used the ASA website to make sure my advert would fit the regulations. The website says, "Ads targeted at or featuring children must not contain anything likely to result in their physical, mental or moral harm (rule 5.1)". I need to be careful with this rule because my advert targets young people. I need to make sure that I don't contain any distressing images that could affect those in this age bracket. I still need to make it as realistic as I can though, so to overcome this I will use mise-en-scene cleverly to show the homeless person's clothes are ragged. Most homeless people have a traumatic story of how they became homeless but I will not include this as it may be too upsetting and distressing for some of the younger members of my target audience.

The budget of £0 will affect my advert as it means that I will not be able to buy anything to use in it such as props. This means I will have to acquire all the props myself. I researched the cost of the clothing and props required, e.g. costumes and the tea and shortbread etc. for the scene with the charity worker. If I bought everything I needed it would cost me upward of £50 which I don't have. Instead I will use some of my old clothes for the homeless person as they will be effective as they are worn and it will make it look realistic. I will ask one of my actors, Shania, if she can bring in some of her every day clothes to wear in the film, and I will bring in the food from my kitchen cupboards. This will be in the scene when the homeless person is speaking to the helper at a table. This will help me to overcome the problem of the budget by making use of what myself and the actors already have, and relying on the good will of my family who I'm sure won't mind that I took some biscuits from home.

I need to make sure that I follow school rules at all times when I am making my film so that we don't get in trouble or cause any problems. The only rules that I think I could possibly break are that we might make too much noise when walking about the school, and also we need to have full permission to leave the school building during school time. I researched into this and discovered that if filming during school time, I'd need to take a teacher or PSW with me and get proper permission forms from the council, as the school is liable if anything happens to pupils during the school day. This is quite a problem as my Headteacher is unlikely to let us go up the street with a staff member during the day, as the staff are all busy with their own timetables. I think the best thing I can do to overcome this constraint is to schedule times with my actor to film all the scenes in town outside of the school day, so I don't get caught up with all the red tape that comes with leaving the school premises.

I will need to make sure that I have permission from all of my actors to appear in the film. I found that: "Under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), it is not illegal for individuals to tape conversations provided the recording is for their own use. If a person intends to make the conversation available, they must get the consent of the person being recorded." As my film is not just for my personal use, I will need permissions to avoid breaking this law. The two actors that will

be in my film are Billy Wight and Shania Lawrie, and before I film them I will need to make sure that they are happy to allow themselves to be filmed and also that their parents will allow them to be filmed. I have already asked both of the actors and they have no issues with being filmed. I am going to compose letters that their parents need to sign in order for them to feature in the film. This means that I will have the approval of everyone involved.

In my film I would like to use a song called “Nuvole Bianche” by Ludovico Einaudi. I need to make sure I am allowed to use it in my film, as there may be copyright issues. I researched this I researched this on [www.copyrightuser.org](http://www.copyrightuser.org) and found out that I will be able to use it as long as I do not publish the film for commercial or promotional use. If I did I would be breaching copyright and would need to pay money to whoever owns the rights to the song, or else I could be sued. I will use therefore the music in the film because I am only going to be sending it to the SQA, but if I decided to publish it in the future then I would need to either remove the song from that edit of the film, or else complete all the correct procedures and request the right to use it to avoid breaching copyright law.

## **Section 2: Development Stage**

### **2a: Institutional Context and Production Roles**

In my production role as editor, I faced a couple of problems in using the technology available to me, as I could only use my phone for this task. I used iMovies to edit my film as all of the other editing software I could find cost money, and I had a budget of £0. I would have liked to use software such as Serif Movie Plus as I could have edited my film a lot better on this, but due to the budget I was unable to, as it would cost £100 and also it isn't compatible with an iPhone. I was using my phone to film, so the screen was quite small and this made it difficult to edit the music to tie in with the action. When I had to cut short some of the scenes due to the three minute time restriction, such as the one within the forest and the one at the rubbish skip, it meant that I could not always get it to cut to the precise second as the software was too awkward to work with on my phone. This meant that the cutting of the scenes was not as clean as I would have liked it to be. In addition, because I was using my phone, it meant that it was difficult to get the music that I wanted. I had always originally planned to use an Einaudi song called Nuvole Bianche as I felt that it would tie in effectively with the film and create an appropriate mood. However, because I had a budget of £0 I could not buy the song from the iTunes store as it cost £0.99. I considered playing it myself, but couldn't do this because I didn't have recording equipment that was advanced enough to pick up a good sound and I couldn't go to a recording studio, so I was unable to do this. I overcame this by getting my teacher to download the YouTube link for the song and email it to me so that I could still use it. I felt that I dealt with this issue well as I still got to use the song that I had originally planned to include in my advert, and it was no different from the one from the iTunes store which cost money. The song was effective as it tied in really well with the film and it was really emotional which was good as it would capture the emotions of the viewer and make them feel sorry for the homeless person, thus encouraging them to donate to the charity.

I also faced some issues in my role as cinematographer. The equipment that I had access to for this job wasn't very good. I needed to use a ladder from home to get a high angle shot. The shot was supposed to be a bird's-eye-view, but I found that it wasn't safe enough to stand right at the top of the ladder to get the shot as it was snowing, the ground was uneven, and the ladder wasn't quite big enough as well. This meant that I had to include a high angle shot instead, as this was as high up I



could get on the ladder. I had previously planned to use some high angle shots anyway to make Billy look like a victim and so encourage people to donate to the charity, and this simply meant that I was adding one more. I was really happy with this as it still provided the same general effect that I wanted it to. I actually think that using a high angle shot was a bit better than a bird's-eye-view one as it meant that the audience could actually see Billy properly, whereas if it had been a bird's-eye-view shot then you would have only seen the top of his head and so it might have been difficult to work out what it actually was. The only other alternative to doing this would have been to source another ladder; however, there could still have been safety issues as the ladder would have been unstable on such rough ground.

I worked hard in the role of sound technician too, and in this role I faced issues as well. I had to use the microphone on my phone which didn't record very clearly when I was doing the voiceover. I had to try not to include any background noise or else it wouldn't sound very professional. I had schedule a time when everyone in my house was quiet so that I could sit with my dad and record the voiceover; this was quite difficult as I have a younger sibling who struggles to be quiet. It would have been better if I had been able to get a higher quality of sound in my film, but the school mics had an old-style headphone jack which wasn't compatible with my phone. Whilst initially disappointed at this, I think that I overcame this issue well as I managed to plan my timings well and record it late at night when my sibling was in bed and when there was little noise outside, so I got rid of all background noise as best as I could. If I had been making a film with a reasonable budget which was going to be broadcast to a proper audience, then I would have got a recording studio with soundproofed walls so that there would have been no background noise at all, or I would have bought an adaptor to use the school mics so it would sound even better. However, given the constraints I faced with budget and equipment here I think the sound quality of my voiceover sounds as good as I could possibly make it.

Another institutional factor that affected my film was the weather. I had originally planned to get mud to put on Billy's face to make him look more destitute. However, as I shot the film in January, the ground was frozen and so I couldn't get any mud. However, the weather was also an advantage as there was snow on the ground which made the homeless person's life look a lot harder as it showed the harsh conditions that he had to endure. This was good as it would help to get more sympathy as people would see how genuinely cold he was and how hard it would be for him, so they would be encouraged to donate. Also, Billy got hurt in a football match at the weekend before the main filming and he had a black eye. This was really lucky for me as it meant that it looked like he had got hurt as a result of his living conditions and the people around him; this would make viewers feel sorry for him as it would seem that he wasn't safe, and so they would feel more sympathetic towards him and this would encourage them to donate more. The extreme winter weather made it hard for me to get all of the shots I wanted, as it was very snowy and icy underfoot, and so all of the cast and crew had to be careful not to hurt themselves. Overall, I was happy with the finished product as I felt that the snow was effective in gaining sympathy for the homeless person because it showed the harsh conditions he had to endure. I think the black eye was really effective as well as it also would gain sympathy for him as it looked like he had been getting hurt. As he had the black eye I actually think it was good that we didn't put mud on his face as well as this would have probably looked a bit over the top and the audience may guess that he is not really a homeless person.

I fulfilled the role of location scout well in my opinion as I didn't just wander about aimlessly until I found a good spot. This would have wasted my time and my actor's time and so to avoid this inconvenience I spoke to my parents who have lived in the area for a longer time, and also used Google Maps to look for the right kind of areas I was hoping for. For one of my scenes, I settled on the location of a park in the next village over as it had a roundabout, and when I saw this I thought it'd be perfect for my shot of the homeless person on the roundabout to symbolise the endless cycle of poverty he is in. I also planned which car parks to use and my parents informed me that there was a skip in one of these car parks, which I thought would be perfect for the symbolism of the homeless person who feels that their life is rubbish. Therefore, I could inform my actor to meet me at these places and really cut down on the amount of his time that I took up. I definitely think that taking on the role of location scout and research locations properly was an effective part of my film-making process because I believe it allowed me to use the best places possible and maximise my productivity during the process.

### **2b: Achieving My Creative Intentions**

Between 0.00 and 0.20 - At the start of the movie there is a long shot which helps to set the scene as it shows the homeless person sitting beside a rubbish skip. This positioning suggests that he lives a squalid life and may have to rummage through rubbish for food. The snow was effective as it creates a gloomy mood and emphasises how cold it is, making the viewer feel sorry for the homeless person. His black eye shows that he has had a hard life and that he is going through bad times. The second shot is a high angle shot which makes him look like a victim: it is as if we are looking down on him and have power over him. This makes us feel sorry for him, so the audience will be encouraged to donate to the charity to help him. I haven't included any music in this shot because I just wanted the visuals to speak for themselves. I think this is effective at setting the scene as it makes the audience focus on the homeless person. They will initially wonder what someone is doing sitting out in the snow, and then they will realise that he is homeless. They will feel really sympathetic towards him, and will also wonder what kind of text it is going to be, as it could be telling a story or it could be an advert, and so it creates an enigma code right at the start and people are likely to continue watching it. The silence is also effective because it sets a sombre, mournful mood and really engages the viewer in this poor boy's plight.

Between 0.20 and 0.38 the camera pans to show the setting of the park and the snowy scene. The homeless person is shivering which shows he is cold and having to endure freezing conditions; this effectively makes us feel sorry for him, as nobody should be stuck outside in such a harsh environment. The camera zooms in to show that the homeless person is the main focus. An extreme high angle shot is used to make the audience feel as if they are looking down on the homeless person. This makes the homeless person seem like a victim and so the audience will feel sorry for him. The scene when the homeless person is on a roundabout is used to symbolise his life throughout the advert. It appears three times and it is going round and round. This effectively represents the homeless person's life, just going on and on in a never-ending cycle. I think this works really well as a piece of symbolism in my advert and I'm really happy that I captured the shot so well and it creates a strong message. At the end of the advert, the homeless person just gets up and walks off which shows that he can no longer continue in this way and is just giving up because it has been

going on for so long. Overall, these camera shots are effective as they highlight the vulnerability of the homeless person. The snow is effective in showing the hard conditions that he has to endure and the park is a stereotypical setting for homeless people as you hear about homeless people on park benches all the time.

At 0.55 to 1.03, the camera zooms in to show the emotion on the homeless person's face, so the audience feels for him. His clothes make him look poor as they are an old pair of joggers, an old hoodie and a pair of boots which are also very worn. As well as being old and tatty, they also show that he is isolated from the world as no one would wear clothes like that, especially in snowy weather. The wall in the background is very dirty and it has graffiti and an egg stain on it. This shows us that he is living in a rough area and has connotations of thugs and violence. This mise-en-scene is effective as it is good at showing the rough area that the homeless person is living in which will suggest just how hard his life is. It was really lucky that the mess was on the wall as I hadn't originally considered the additional effect that surroundings like this could have, but then when I saw it when I was out filming, I realised it would add to the overall mood of the advert. There is then a close up of the homeless person's face to show the emotion in it. This will make the audience feel like they are being appealed to directly by the person as he stares right into the camera a few times and we connect with him through this. This is effective as it may make the audience feel guilty if they do not do anything to help and so they will feel more obliged to give money. This is because they are being forced to look at the homeless person as an individual, rather than a statistic. I am happy with this shot, and I think that Billy's blank and hopeless expression is really effective and would help to gain a lot of sympathy. I think that the direct mode of address was good as it directly appeals to the reader and is an image which is likely to be memorable even when the advert has finished.

A close up of £10 is used at 1.39, which is effective in reminding the audience of how much they have been requested to donate. As they actually see the money, and probably have a £10 note in their purse or wallet, they can relate to it in real terms and may be inclined to want to donate more. The scene after the one with the £10 note, in which I filmed the outside of the building, wasn't as effective as I would have liked, as there were a lot of cars in the shot which was a distraction, and so the focus wasn't fully on the building. I feel that the scene in which the homeless person is getting help from the female actor is very successful. I was going to use a long shot but tried it and realised it wasn't so good because you couldn't make out the warm facial expression and open body language as well as I would have liked. So I changed it for a mid-shot which I thought was better. Using a mid-shot shows the positive relationship between the two characters. The high-key lighting and cups of coffee and the plate of shortbread is effective as it creates a warm and homely atmosphere which shows that the homeless person is now being looked after and well cared for by the charity. This may make viewers inclined to donate as they can see how the money they donate will be used and that it has a positive impact on the homeless person. I feel that this sequence was effective as the £10 is followed by the shots of Billy getting help. This clearly suggests that the £10 has been the key factor in providing a solution to the homeless person's problems, and the sequencing of the shots connects the two in the audience's mind. I think that this is really effective as it will make the audience see what their donation is directly doing and so they will be encouraged to donate because of this.

In the final scenes, it returns to the roundabout symbol, which is followed by a shot of a graveyard. This creates an eerie atmosphere as it suggests that if people do not donate money then the homeless person might die, making the audience feel guilty and more inclined to give money. I think

this is an effective way of highlighting the seriousness of the issue in a very direct and visual way. There is then an extreme close up of a candle, which symbolises the homeless person's life. It is flickering to show that fact that their life is in a fragile state and may come to an end if people do not donate to help them. The candle is then blown out, symbolising death and bringing the film to a very final and dramatic end. I filmed this scene in portrait, but all the others were filmed in landscape. This was because I wanted to really focus in closely on the candle to show it going out, and in landscape I found that I wasn't able to include both the candle and the flame, and so the main message wouldn't have been conveyed as effectively. Overall, I would have preferred to have been able to use a landscape shot, as this would have flowed more naturally with the rest of the film; however, including the whole image was more important, and I don't feel that it looks too out of place because the background is so dark. Placing this image and the idea of death at the end means that the advert ends on a very serious note. This is placement effective in ensuring that it leaves the message fresh in people's minds: homelessness is a serious issue and unless people like the viewers are prepared to donate to charity, it may lead to someone's death. I think it rounds the advert off in a successful way showing the cyclical nature of homelessness and highlighting how drastic a situation it is, so I'm pleased with how I decided to conclude the ad.

## Candidate B assignment

**Please Note:** The short film produced as part of this assignment with filename *Assignment BMurderMysteryvideo.mp4* is on SQA's secure website and can be accessed through your SQA Coordinator.

### Higher Media Assignment Section 1

#### 1a) Creative Intentions in response to the brief

##### Content

I am going to make a short film opening as this will end on a cliff hanger and will be effective as the audience will want to keep watching the rest of the movie. I have chosen stimulus 2 because it gives me the freedom to choose what I would like to do in my movie. My film opening is a murder mystery as I enjoy murder mysteries and feel like it would be good to create a murder mystery as I can create many enigmas and use a lot of the murder mystery genre conventions such as have a series of suspects. There is going to be 4 people round a dead body as I want to create an enigma of "who done it?" Each person is going to react differently to the situation because it will make the audience question who could have done it and also it shows that they might have not done it together as they all react differently. The audience won't know if they killed the person or if they found the body because I want to create a mysterious tone and an enigma of "what happened?" At the end, there will be somebody watching but the audience will not know who as I want to create an enigma of "who are they?" This will make the audience want to watch the rest of the film as they want to know who the person is that is watching them.

##### Target Audience

My movie opening is targeted at male and females aged 12-40 so that it attracts a wider audience. It will also be aimed at people who enjoy murder mystery films. My movie will appeal to this group as I am going to include genre conventions such as a death and suspects. This is because my characters are going to be a variety of ages so that all of my audience can relate to certain characters. Like one of my characters is going to be a girl called Amber. She is going to be really upset that she has seen a dead body. The female audience will be able to relate to her as she is a female and also that she is really upset and they could react in the same way as she does. There is also going to be boys in my movie which will attract a bigger audience as it will attract the male audience cause they will be able to relate to the male character Hunter who tells Holly and Amber to shut up cause someone is going to hear them. It is important that I attract both genders because it will make a profit more easily. I have chosen this so that more people can watch my movie and enjoy it.

##### Form

The form is a movie opening. I have chosen this because I want to create a cliff hanger and also enigmas such as "who done it?", "who is the person watching them?" and "what happened?" as the audience will not know what happened to the person that's dead and they also won't know who is watching them. This will make people want to watch the rest of the movie as they want closure and they want to know how they got to the woods, who the person died and how they find the dead person.

## Genre

The genre of my movie is murder mystery. Some of the genre markers that I am going to use are the murder. I will include this in my movie by having 3/4 people around a dead body and my audience aren't going to know how the person died so they are going to presume that they were murdered. I am going to use this as it the the most important part of my film. This will be targeted at all of my audience as this is the biggest part of the plot. The next genre marker I am going to use is the victim. I am going to cast the victim as a female teenager. This is because most female teens can identify with the victim as they are female teenagers themselves which means that they will feel sorry for the victim and may think that they could be them. Another genre marker is mystery. I am going to include this in my film by having the film opening with the audience seeing the person dead and the people around her. The audience aren't going to know what's happened or how she died which will create mystery as it is a mystery about what happened.

## Purpose

The purpose of my movie is to entertain my audience and make them want to watch the rest of the movie. I am going to do this by creating enigmas. I am going to create the enigmas of "who done it?" And also "who was the person watching them?". I am going to create these by having the opening scene as a birds eye view of the body on the ground with the four people around it. This will create the enigma of "what has happened?" as the audience will not know what's going on and they will only know that the person is dead. This is going to catch the audiences attention and make them want to watch the rest.

### 1b) Content research 1: genre and narrative

To do my content research I watched scenes from murder mystery story lines in Eastenders, Emmerdale, Coronation Street. I watched these as they all have a murder mystery genre which is what my movie opening is. I researched language, genre and narrative. I chose these as they are the two pieces of content that would impact my movie opening the most.

In 'Eastenders,' the narrative of the murder-mystery starts with the disruption instead of normality, when we see a birds eye view of the character dead. I like this as the audience see that she is dead as she is lying in an awkward position and her eyes are closed and they get to see the countryside like surroundings which is full of grass and flowers. This is an interesting way to start the story as it is not the usual normality, introducing the character to the audience before the disruption. Starting with the disruption will grab the audience's attention. I am going to use this and has the opening shot of my scene where we see the dead body with the 4 characters around them. I am going to have mine set in a woods so the surroundings in my movie are going to be trees and grass. I am going to use this as the beauty of nature will contrast with death. I am going to achieve this by going up to a high place where I will be able to record the scene but I will also have to make sure that the place is safe and will be easy to record the scene from.

In 'Eastenders,' starting the story with the dead body creates enigmas for the audience. They hook the audience who will have to keep watching to find out the answer to enigmas like who killed her? Why? How did they do it? I want my opening shot to create enigmas too, as this will make the audience want to watch the rest of the film. To do this I will have a long shot that will pan round my four main characters in the dark forest. I am going to have the scenes in low-key lighting to emphasise that it is dark outside and also that something dark has happened. I am also going to have anchorage saying "20:48" in the middle of the screen so that the audience notice it. I will have this in a serif font to emphasise that it is serious tone and not humorous. This will create an enigma of "What are they doing in a forest at this time of night?" as people in a forest at night is suspicious but it is also stereotypical of the murder mystery genre for people burying a dead body to do it at night time in a forest. This will keep the audience watching as they will want to know what has happened and what will happen next.

In 'Coronation Street' there is a scene where Ken is walking up the stairs. We know that something bad is going to happen as you hear the backdoor opens and no one answers when Ken asks "who's there?" I like this because it creates enigmas and makes the audience want to know what that noise was and who is there. When the audience see Ken at the bottom of the stairs we hear loud, fast classical music playing. I like this because it gives the scene a lot of tension and the music confuses the audience as they don't know what has happened and they don't know how it happened, which is important in the murder mystery genre. I am going to use this idea in my movie opening at the end of the sequence where the audience see that someone is watching them. The use of the music changing when the audience see the stalker will grab the audience's attention as they will notice that the music has changed but it will also confuse my audience as they don't know who it is and will create the enigma of "who is watching them?"

In 'Coronation Street' and 'Eastenders' there are multiple shots of different characters just before or just after the murder and they look angry/guilty as they all have tension with the person that was killed. This is typical of the genre as it creates suspects for the audience who are trying to guess who

could have done it and every character shown has a motive to do the crime as they all look guilty. I am going to use this by having close ups of the people around the dead body so that the audience see the characters face and their different reactions, such as crying, silence and extremely worried, with all of them looking at the victim being dead. This will make my audience think about who could have done it, which is an important convention of the genre.

As I've mentioned, my sequence is the opening for a full feature film. In my research, I've found that the narrative structure I plan to use is a *circular narrative*, where the action begins and ends at the same point. The scene I'm planning is from near the end of the action of the full-length film, but is being shown at the start to intrigue the audience and make them want to watch the film to find out how the characters ended up in this situation. To emphasise this, I want to find a way to show time going backwards so I want to film with two layers – a top transparent layer of a clock with the action being shown behind it. I want to have a clock that is going backwards in slow motion and this will be layered over footage that has already been shown, but the footage will now be going backwards. I will do this by combining all the previous shots into one and speeding them up 10x so that is really fast but also put them in reverse so that it looks like we are going back in time. This will let the audience know that we are going back in time. This will help the audience understand that we are in the present day but going to the past so that they understand what is going on and that they aren't confused and they stop watching the movie. I will finish the sequence with the title screen of the movie. This would then go into the rest of the movie which would be about the build up to the event.



### 1c) Content 2: Language

In 'Emmerdale' when we see the woman is falling off the building the audience hear birds cheeping. I like this because it creates a contrast of life and death of the birds cheeping and the woman falling to her death. The contrast is created as the woman falling is wearing white and you see her falling down but as you see her falling the audience hear birds tweeting and that is usually associated with spring and life whereas the woman falling to her death is the opposite. I am going to use this in my movie at the start when it is a birds eye view of the people around the dead body, but I am going to use crows instead to symbolise death as my audience will automatically think of death when they see the body lying there and hear crows. I will have the crow sound when the music is building up so that the audience will hear it and it will grab their attention.

In 'Emmerdale,' there is a scene where a man pushes a woman off a balcony during a fight. The scene ends with a close up on the man's shocked face, and silence is used to emphasise his shock about what he's done. In my sequence, I want to have a close up of one of the characters crying as she looks down at the body, but instead of silence I want to have the sound of a gunshot or screaming. I am going to do this by finding sounds of gunshots and screams and edit them into the scene after. This is going to emphasise that the character is thinking about what has happened as the character is going to be very upset and it will hint that she is reacting to the situation and might be feeling guilty. This will intrigue the audience and make them want to keep watching as they want to know more as the audience don't know what's happened and why is she crying and the sound effects will make them want to find out more.

When I was watching scenes of murders in 'Emmerdale' I noticed that they don't use music but normally have silence and just the background sounds, like the murderer's shocked breathing. This makes the scene feel more real and tense for the audience. In my scene, I will start with silence and the sound of crows, while the camera pans round the characters around the bodies. This will create a feeling of realism, but then I want to have slow, sad background music gradually fading in, and getting more intense or louder when there is the close up of the person's face that's watching them. I will do this when editing by increasing the sound at the part where the audience see the person watching them. This will create tension by getting louder or more dramatic and it gives the scene more tension as it hints that this character is important and it makes the audience to pay attention to this part and it will make the audience question who that person is as the audience haven't seen this character before and that character is just standing watching them.

In 'Eastenders' when Archie is getting killed, the camera cuts away from the action to focus on the large statue of queen Victoria's head falling from the bar. I like this as you don't see it hit and kill him as Eastenders is a pre-watershed show so they cannot show too much violence and they also want to create the enigma of "is he dead?" by not actually showing him die. This fits with the conventions of the murder mystery genre, where someone has to be murdered, but without showing lots of gore or violence. I am going to use this idea but in a different context as I am going to do it so that the murder isn't shown, only the a body. The audience will assume they are dead because of the reactions of the other characters, but there will be no blood or sign of injury because my film is going be a PG and the BBFC states that "violence will usually be mild. However there may be moderate violence, without detail, if justified by its context." This would help with the certification of my film opening.

When I was watching 'Eastenders' and 'Emmerdale', I noticed that most of the characters wear thick jackets and things like hats when they are outdoors, to show that the scenes are happening in wintertime. I want to use this in my sequence, as it will be happening in autumn at nighttime so would be cold. I want to have at least 1 of my characters in a warm padded jacket with a good quality hat, scarf and gloves on. This will give the audience an impression that this character is well kept and cares about their health by keeping warm and this might suggest they are a careful person. It will also emphasise that it is cold outside as my character is wrapped up and keeping warm. Another one of my characters is going to be wearing no jacket or hat or any kind of protection from the cold at all to show that they don't really care about anything else apart from what's going on at the moment and will suggest they are a more spontaneous personality.

## Section 1d): Production Roles

## Producer:

One of my roles is Producer. One thing that I will have to do is create a production schedule to make sure that everybody knows what scenes are being filmed each day. To make sure the schedule runs smoothly, I will have to carefully plan how and when to get my actors together to film my movie as they may not have a lot of time to film. This could be difficult as my actors are very busy with school work, jobs and their social lives, so I will create a doodle poll to see what times my actors are available, and from that I'll identify suitable times to film. Then I will confirm the times on the production schedule and will give everyone involved in the shoot a copy, and I will create a group chat to send reminders to the people needed each day. I'll use this instead of a call sheet as this is not a professional shoot and I think my actors and camerawoman are more likely to check their phones.

Another thing that I will have to do is find a location to film the exterior shots of my movie. The main scene is set in woods, so I will have to find suitable woods and make sure that they won't be too busy at the times I want to film. I am hoping to use the woods near the school, so I will go on a recce to make sure that the location is a suitable and safe space to film. I will also need to make sure that all my actors know where we are filming and how to get there. I will use the group chat to confirm this information as I can send a link to Google maps. I will also have to check that the place is safe to film as I will have one actor lying on the floor. This means that I will have to fill out a risk assessment form and plan how to overcome any potential problems.

## Director:

Another role I have is Director. One thing that I will do to create my artistic vision is create a storyboard. I will have to make a detailed plan for how my sequence will be filmed e.g. what sounds I want and what camera angles I am going to use. One part I will find simple about this is coming up with camera angles and the location as my movie is being filmed in one location and I have a rough vision in my mind of what I want the scenes to look like. One thing I may find difficult is trying to explain my scenes as I know what I want to have but trying to achieve that is very hard, so I may have to tweak my ideas so that they are far more possible as I don't have any money for my film.

Another thing that I will do is take to my camerawoman before each shot to make sure she knows what she is doing and what I am hoping to achieve. In the first shot of my movie the camera angle is going to be a bird's eye view. This means that I will have to make sure that my camerawoman is able to hold the camera high enough so that it looks like a bird's eye view but also make sure that my camerawoman is on the ground as I want her to be safe. This may be difficult as it will be hard to make sure that the camera is high enough, so we will need to plan this out before (maybe I will take her with me when I go on the recce) as we need to make sure we can get the camera high enough so that it is looking down on the actor. I'm hoping we can extend the tripod and maybe balance it against a branch, so it is stable enough, but that may not be possible, so we may have to find a ladder to use.

Another thing I will need to do as director, is to use the script to make sure that my actors are prepared each day and know what to say and do. I will try to speak to them the day before a scene is

filmed to talk through what I want them to do, and how the character should be feeling or behaving in the scene. I am hoping they will take it seriously and practice beforehand as we won't have much time to rehearse once we are on set. For example, there is a scene where the hidden girl is watching the people around the dead body. I will make sure that my actors know they need to look like they are arguing in the shot and I'll ask them to talk to each other and agree how they will do this so that it looks like they are arguing over something very serious. Because they will be in the distance, the audience won't be able to hear them, so they will need to use body language to show they are arguing. This may be difficult as I will have to make sure that my actors know what to do and I will need them to practise the and actions before we film to make sure it looks right.

### 1e) Audience research

My target audience are Scottish males and females aged 15-40. I carried out a survey on a variety of people to get an understanding of what my target audience would like to see in my movie opening.

In my survey 60% of people said that they would like to see the victim be a male as it is different and they would like it to be a male as it shows that all males aren't strong and that they can be killed too. I like this idea, however, as I want my film opening to be true to the classic conventions of the murder-mystery genre (and it is typically that the victim is female), I am going to have my victim as a female. I think that it will be more effective in my movie as the audience will be more sympathetic and I also think it will make the movie more sad as people tend to feel more sympathetic towards female victims.

In my survey 46% of my audience said that they would prefer the victim to be aged 15-20 as it is different and my audience that are aged 15-20 would be able to relate to them. However another 46% of my audience said that they would prefer the victim to be aged 20-30 as my older audience could relate more to the victim. As a result of this, I am going to make my victim about 20 years old. Hopefully this will satisfy the majority of my audience. It will also make the audience sympathetic towards the victim as they are young and still vulnerable. I will emphasise this by having an over the shoulder shot of the victim so that the audience see that she is young.

In my research I discovered that 30% of my audience would prefer the characters reaction of seeing the dead body to be sitting in the corner in silence as they think it's different and that the audience would think that the person is suspicious. Another 30% of my audience said they would prefer the characters reaction to be standing staring at the dead body as it would be a realistic reaction. I am going to do both of these as there will be 4 characters around the dead body so I will make two of the characters have these reaction as it will give each character a suspicious look so it will create an enigma of "who done it?". This will please most of my audience and attract them to come and watch my movie.

In my research I asked what time in the day would they like the movie to be set at. I discovered that 46% of my audience would like my movie to be set at sunset because it is unusual and it would create a lot of tension as it would get darker the further the opening went on. This will be quite tough as the sun sets early so we wouldn't get all my movie filmed while the sun is setting but what I will do is start it at sunset but my movie opening will finish when it is darker. This will give my movie opening a better effect as it will be tough to see everything and add more mystery to my movie. It will also create a meaning of when it gets darker throughout the movie it means that it is getting more mysterious and more sinister as we find out more as it goes on.

In my survey 43% of my audience said that if somebody was watching the people around the dead body they would want it to be a creepy stalker as it makes the movie opening more interesting and will want to make the audience keep watching. I am going to keep the identity of the person a secret. I am going to show the persons face as in the rest of the movie the audience will look out for the stalker but the audience aren't going to know who the person is or what relation they have to the people. This will create more mystery and an enigma of "who is this person?" Which will make the audience want to watch the whole movie.

### 1f) Institutional context research

My first institutional research is into the location of my film. I want to set my film in the woods at the back of the school. I went to the woods and did a recce of places where I could film the scenes. I have found a suitable place there - it has a part where the ground is flat and clear (it doesn't have lots of leaves or sticks etc) and has trees surrounding so that it gives a real wood area effect. I have to make sure that I can get permission to film out of school time. I will do this by asking the janitors of the school to see if the school grounds will be open. I also have to make sure that the school grounds will still be open when I want to film my scenes as I may want to film during the weekend as my actors will have time to do it then and also have to wait until it's dark as I want my movie to be set at nighttime.

In my institutional research I found out on the BBFC that a PG can have "Mild bad language only. Aggressive or very frequent use of mild bad language may result in a work being passed at a higher category." In my film, I am going to have my characters arguing over what they should do with the dead body but it will be from a distance so I will film it so the audience will just hear mumbling. This is also because it creates an enigma of "what will happen next?" as they don't know what they are going to do with the body. I will have to make sure that no bad language is used (in real life it would be used as it is a very disturbing situation) in case the audience will be able to hear the argument quietly.

My third institutional research I found out from the BBFC that in a PG "Violence will usually be mild. However there may be moderate violence, without detail, if justified by its context (for example, history, comedy or fantasy)." I am going to have sounds of the murder scene play when the audience see each of the characters' reaction as it will create a sense of mystery as the audience are going to hear the characters' situation so it will make them all suspects as each character will have screams or some sounds that suggest harm or murder and this will emphasise the enigma of "who done it?" I have to make sure that there is no sound of extreme violence e.g. stabbing or extreme murder. This shouldn't affect my plans as I'm just going to have sounds of screams and other people screaming the victim's name as it will suggest that the people around the dead body knew the victim and were there when they were murdered. It will be ok to include this in my movie as there is no violence shown. Violence is just hinted by using screams etc.

My fourth institutional research is into health and safety into my actor lying on the ground in the woods. I had to complete a risk assessment form as I want to have one of my characters lying on the ground and make sure that it looks realistic, but that it's also safe for her. The possible risks are that my character could get cold if the ground is cold as I want to film during the night and in Scotland during winter it does get very cold when it is dark. Also my characters could get hurt if there is anything sharp on the ground like glass or thorns. To reduce the risk I will clear the ground and pick leaves up from the ground and place them separately on the ground so that it is safe but still looks realistic. To reduce the risk of my actors getting cold, I am going to have the actor that is on the ground in a large jacket or have a blanket under them.

My fifth institutional research is that I want to have two layers (one on top of another) of video as the last shot. I will have a clock going backwards played over all the scenes in reverse as it would show the audience that we are going back in time and it would help the audience understand instead

of just jumping from one to another. So I explored iMovies and looked at what effects you can have and I found out that I can have scenes in reverse but I don't think iMovie can have two layers of video one on top of the other. This will affect my plans as I might have to do the last scene as a split screen or just not have the clock in this scene at all which would still work as the audience will see that we are going back in time but I feel like it won't be as effective as having the two layers. I am hoping I will be able to find a way to sort this when it comes to editing.

## Higher Media Assignment Section 2

### Section 2a

One of my roles was producer. As producer, one thing I did was come up with the plans for getting my actors together to film my movie, and also to find a time to shoot the movie when everyone would be available to film. This was difficult as my actors were very busy but I created a doodle poll which worked really well as it made it very easy for me to see who was available when. From that I decided that we would have to film during PE in school as none of the times I had suggested in the evenings suited all the actors, and because of the shots I had planned, I needed everyone to be on set for the whole shoot. This meant that we didn't have a lot of time to film as we only had roughly 2 hours for PE and our PE teachers didn't want us to miss more than one week of PE. Thankfully we managed to film in this time and I got most of the footage I wanted. The only thing I was disappointed about was that the time when the scene happens wasn't the right time that I wanted as I wanted my film to be filmed at night but my actors weren't free anytime at night. This did have a negative impact on my film as I feel it would have been more effective if it had been filmed in the dark. However, the one positive thing is that I think it makes it easier to see what is going on in the shots where the girl is watching the group from behind a tree. In the dark this might have been confusing for the audience. As a producer, filming in the day time also meant there was less of a health and safety risk for the actor who had to lie on the ground, so I was pleased about that, even if it doesn't look exactly as I had hoped it would.

Another role I had was a director. One thing that I did was create a storyboard. One part I found simple about this was coming up with the framing for different shots as I knew what I wanted each shot to focus on. Because my whole scene took place in the same location, I was able to draw out a full storyboard and that really helped me communicate my vision to my camerawoman and actors. One thing I found difficult as director was trying to explain the action I wanted to happen in each shot as I knew what I wanted but as my actors weren't professionals they didn't always know how to perform so my creative intentions would work. One thing that I did was make sure that everybody knew what scenes were being filmed and made sure that my actors knew what to say/do. For example in the scene where the characters are standing around the dead body I had to make sure that each of my actors knew what emotion they were meant to be showing, as I wanted it to be clear to the audience that they were all potentially guilty, but were having different reactions to what had happened. This was difficult as I had to make sure that my actors knew what to do and I made them practise the lines/actions, but I found it was hard to explain to my actors what I wanted them to specifically do as I couldn't get it into words. In the finished film, I think the quality of the acting is something which lets it down as some of the reactions don't look very realistic, and I also feel that they all look quite similar apart from the girl who is crying. If I were to film this again and I had more time, I would try filming separate close ups of each character so I could work with the actor separately to try and make sure they really understood what I wanted them to show.

One institutional constraint that I had was with the technology. I filmed a scene where my actor walks up to a group of people but after I had filmed this scene and was looking back on all of the scenes, I noticed that the scene had disappeared and I could not find it at all on my iPad. This was an important shot and it was a big problem that it disappeared as I feel the film isn't as effective because without it the continuity is bad from the one scene to another. The previous scene is where



Amber, Hunter and Holly are arguing about what to do with the body. The scene that went missing was when Roux is getting up from the ground to join in the argument and give her opinion about what they should do with the dead body. The next scene is that Roux is behind Amber and Hunter telling the others what they should do with the body. To solve this problem, I found an outtake where my actor that plays Roux walked to my other actors. I used this but removed the audio and made the clip very short as she was only walking towards them for a short period of time. The only problem with the clip was that the actor that plays Roux was behind Amber and Holly. This makes the continuity very bad and I feel like this had a negative effect on my movie as it goes from one scene where people are talking to a scene with no sound apart from the background music. It still works but I feel that the scene doesn't look right and it is out of place. I couldn't have done anything else to make this better as my actors couldn't find any other time to reshoot this scene and I couldn't find any other audio to put in the scene.

One other thing that worked well was that I managed to find a way to include a clock at the end of my movie opening to show that my movie was going to go back in time. As I couldn't think of a way to easily film this myself, I had to look on YouTube at clocks going backwards and choose one of them which wasn't copyright protected. However, I wasn't able to fully carry out my plans for this shot due to another institutional factor which was that iMovies didn't have the capacity to have two layers with the top layer that is transparent. In my planning I wanted to have the final scenes of my movie to be two layers which were the back layer having a clock going backwards and the top layer with all the previous scenes going in reverse. I wanted the scenes to go in reverse to show that my movie is going back in time. When researching I couldn't find a way to do this but hoped once I got to the editing stage I would find a way, but unfortunately when I started editing my movie I discovered that iMovies does not have the layers feature I was hoping for. Because of this I had to improvise by cutting the footage of the clock into 3 parts so that my audience knew that we were still going back in time whilst having the previous scenes in between the parts of the clock in reverse. (1:32 – end). This had a positive impact on my movie opening. I feel that it still has the effect I had hoped to achieve through the layers. My test audience said they understood that the sequence is going back in time and leads into the rest of the film. To anchor this I also included text saying "3 days earlier" which appears and I feel this is effective as it means that the audience definitely know that the narrative of the film has gone back in time.

## Section 2B

In my film the background music goes very well with the movie as the song is slow and has a sad tone to it as its talking about death which helps make the audience feel sad that somebody has died. I feel like it goes well with my movie as when my movie starts it fades from black and the music starts quiet and gets louder along with my movie and I like this because it goes with my film opening and it grabs my audiences attention as the music gets louder. Another part that goes well is when the shots change from one character to another. It goes well with the music as the lyrics say 'kill em' when the shots change of each characters close up. I feel like this made my movie more effective as it has more of an impact on the audience and makes the film have a pessimistic tone as it starts to create suspects and suggests that the victim has been murdered. This is effective as my film is meant to make the audience feel sad but it is also meant to make create an enigma of "who killed her?" and "how did she die?" as the audience hear 'kill em' when it's the shots of the people around the dead body. I feel like it makes the audience feel sad as the lyrics are very pessimistic and I asked my test audience if they had any questions at the end of my film and they asked me "how did the person die?"

Near the end of my movie opening (1:34) I included a clock that goes backwards in with the scenes where the previous scenes that are in my movie, like when they are arguing over where to put the dead body, are in reverse. I feel that having the clock in the movie is good as it stands out as it is bright orange and is glowing and it also helps the audience understand that the movie opening is going back in time. I decided to choose an analogue clock as it gives an impression of time moving more slowly as u see the tick tock which adds more suspense to the scene. Something that is good about having the clock in my movie is because it helps the audience understand that it is going back in time which is important as they can understand the rest of the film and the audience can get to know the characters so that they can build a relationship with them and can start to have their own suspicions about who the killer is. I know that it helps them understand as I asked my test audience if they knew what was happening at the end and they said "the movie was going back in time." Then I asked how they knew that and they said "because the clips were in reverse and the clock was going backwards." This is good as my audience know what is going on and it means that they will want to watch. This has a positive impact on my movie as it grabs the audiences attention and helps them understand this part of my movie which is important as they will want to keep watching the rest of the movie.

At the start of my movie (0:00 – 0:10) there is a Birdseye view of the 3 characters around the dead body. This is so that my audience see all the characters around the dead body and they immediately question "what has happened?" which makes them want to keep watching to find out what's happened. The quality of the scene isn't good as it it blurry and pixelated. This was due to the lack of equipment so we had to lift the tripod up so that the camera is above my cast and the shot looks like a Birdseye view. This had a bad effect on my movie as the opening wasn't strong as it was pixelated so it looked low quality so the audience may think that the quality of my movie is bad throughout and may not want to watch the rest of my movie. If I was going to do this again I would either not

include a birds eye view or make sure that there was equipment available to carry out this scene. The Birdseye view does still create the meaning that I wanted as the audience still see my characters and it does still create a sense of mystery as my audience are just being shown people round a dead body and they know nothing about what happened or who done it.

In the first 5-7 shots of my movie (0:00 – 0:40) the transition between the shots are fade to black to create suspense and make the scenes more dramatic as the audience don't know what's happened and are just seeing sudden shots of different things like the people round the dead body faces. This has a positive effect on my movie as it shows the different characters and their reactions to seeing a dead body. The scene where the audience see the characters reactions such as Ambers tear and Holly's face that doesn't really look like she cares that the person is dead makes the audience question "who done it?" as we see the different reactions and it creates a sense of mystery as all the characters have a completely different reaction to the situation as one is paranoid, one is sad and one is not really bothered and it shows a bit about the characters personalities as the one that doesn't care is a bit of a rebel. This is effective as it creates a mysterious tone by using fade to black which makes the audience feel tense as implies that the narrative tension or emotions have transitioned to the next, even if they aren't easily shown in the next scene and it makes my audience question themselves about "who done it?" as there are many potential suspects as they all look suspicious.

In my movie there is a scene where amber is crying to show that she is upset about seeing a dead body. This suggests that she knew the person that is dead and could possibly have something to do with the persons death. This has a positive impact on my movie as it has more of an impact on my movie. This is because the audience see that she is crying so it adds more of a sad tone by having a close up of the tear on Ambers face. My audience know that it is something really upsetting that has happened as she is crying. This is good as it shocks the audience by showing how upset she is especially if she has killed the victim and it makes them want to keep watching as they want to know what's happened and it creates the enigma of "what has happened?" This is an effective moment as the audience are shown how much of a distressing moment this is for somebody who has just seen a dead body.

Near the end of my movie (1:11 – 1:17) the audience see the stalker hiding behind the tree. The person watching them says "oh my god" as she has come across a bunch of people standing over a dead body but the audience don't hear the person watching them saying oh my god as they say it too quietly for the microphone to pick it up. I feel like this has a negative impact on my movie as the audience are a bit confused about what the person watching them says and they may be confused about who the person is. This is good as the audience are meant to ask the question "who is that person?" But the audience are meant to hear the person saying "oh my god." so that the audience know that she is shocked about seeing people around a dead body and that she thinks that they have killed the person. If I was going to do this again I would either make a voice recording of them saying "oh my god" or I would make my actress say it loud enough that the camera would pick it up so that my audience would be able to hear her say that as the audience would think that she's saying anything that's good or bad towards the situation. This would have made a difference on my movie as my audience would have been able to know what she had said and they wouldn't be confused about what she was saying.

## Candidate C assignment

**Please Note:** The short film produced as part of this assignment with filename *Assignment CSupernaturalvideo.mp4* is on SQA's secure website and can be accessed through your SQA Coordinator.

### Higher Media Assignment: Section 1

#### Creative Intentions in response to the brief

The purpose of my short film is to entertain the audience. The short film will have the genre of Fantasy, Supernatural, Sci-Fi and some Comedic tropes. I chose these genres because they are popular amongst the majority of my target audience which should attract them to watch the short film. I would like my film to be between 2-3 minutes as this is enough time to tell a full captivating story without losing the interest of the audience. My target audience is teenagers around the age of 11-18. One reason for this would be because they are more likely to have an interest in Sci-Fi and Supernatural. My short film will also be targeted towards those who enjoy short films that focus on the idea of greed (like the Greek Mythological story of King Midas and his golden touch) and the consequences associated with it. Due to the genre of Sci-Fi and fantasy my short film will be Fiction.

In order to portray the genre of Supernatural and Sci-Fi I will need to create a mysterious and enigmatic tone. One of the main tropes in the supernatural and fantasy genre is magic because of this I have decided to add some aspects of magic into my short film such as when the main character accidentally fires an 'Orb of Energy' out the end of the wand this will be done in editing after shooting the film.. Furthermore, one of the main tropes in Fantasy is non-human creature/presence - because of this I have decided to add an overlooking mysterious being watching the character. As a result the short film should create a mysterious and surreal tone.

I would like my short film to have an underlying subliminal message showing the ramifications associated with greed and having a lack of generosity. In order to do this whilst keeping the supernatural genre I have decided that I will use the wand that is found to show the famous phrase "everything comes with a price" In order to achieve this I will try to show how when the character misuses the wand for personal or immoral gain there are consequences for example when the character uses the wand to create himself a bottle of water when he is tired from being on a run. This should also create a direct, straight to the point tone.

I would also like to create a comedic tone via some light hearted humour. The main aspects of Comedy as a genre would be the idea of slapstick-style humour which is a comical theme, which is generated through intentionally clumsy or embarrassing events happening to the antagonist or other character. A potential in my story example of this would be the character

being unable to control the magical item (the wand) that is found which ends up in the antagonist crashing into a wall. This should help create a light hearted tone without contracting from the supernatural and mysterious style.

During the production stage of my assignment I have decided to use my own equipment, I will be using a Nikon D7200, rode video microphone, handheld stabiliser and Adobe's Creative Cloud Editing Suite via my laptop. I have chosen to use my own equipment because it is better quality than the schools iPads and because I am familiar with how they work and will find it easier to get my desired shots. I will probably film most of my short film outside of school as there is a better selection of settings and I will have more time to film out of school hours however, I may decide to use the school building for some shots in my production.

### **Content Research 1 - Language**

After watching the short film 'The Seraphim Prophecies' as it is in the 'supernatural' genre. I liked how the filmmakers used an orange tint on the film as it creates a sense of unnatural and even other worldly which links in to my intended supernatural genre and tone, because of this I have decided that using colour grading, after shooting my film I will make the orange colours more dominant.

Another aspect of the short film that I liked was the subtle movements of the camera, this helped sell some of the special effects as they too were moving in the camera. I will use my tripod with a fluid moving head to help created similar moving shots.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=si2MNuy5cDA>

Another short film in which I have decided to take inspiration is "The Curse". I liked how the film makers cut to a shot away from the character in the car, this takes the viewer out of the situation with the character and informs them of the tone of the surroundings. I have decided that I would like to use a few long shots in my short film to bring emphasis to the supernatural setting for example at 00:26 we see a long shot of the car as it drives through the dark street and past the camera. I also liked how the filmmakers used fast paced close up shots as this increases tension and suggests a supernatural ending to the film.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bellFbnnlBc>

I also got inspiration from 'Don't Be Late' I liked how the film makers used a close up shot of the kid's alarm clock to instantly set the time in which the film starts, the alarm going off shows that it is a normal morning and the alarm is set to begin the character's pre-planned, typical day. I have decided that I will shoot a close up of an alarm clock going off as it helps establish the short film. I also liked how the film makers used various shots cut up to show the passing of the morning and emphasize the rush and efficiency of the character. At the start of my film I will show my character getting up and getting ready for his run, this is where I will try to implement this fast-paced technique.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkDfCEp38Y>

'Trapped' is another short film that I watched for inspiration before filming my film. I like how the film makers used various close ups of what the character is doing, this shows in detail what the character is doing, the camera also follows the movement of the character which creates a sense of urgency after he thinks that the door is locked. I have decided to add some close ups of what the character in my short film is doing because it shows the passing of time or in my case the passing of my character's morning. I have decided I will use some close-up shots of the wand that my character finds as this should switch the audiences focus from the character to the wand. I will also show some close-up shots of my character's morning routine as this will create an emphasis to the idea that the morning run is a normal everyday occurrence. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDCt6fUE9-o>

Finally another, film that I obtained inspiration from was 'Shutter' I liked how the filmmakers used a shallow depth of field to draw the viewer's attention to the character amongst the busy background that is the woodland area. I have decided to do something very similar when I shoot my film as I would like to shoot the character's face as he is out on his run through the woodlands as this will focus the film on the character until the shot where he comes to find the wand where I will switch to a close up of the wand in the bush. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRFpH26FiRE>

## **Content Research 2 - Narrative**

After watching some fantasy films I have decided that my short film will follow Tzvetan Todorov's theory of narrative structure. 'The Seraphim Prophecies' uses this structure well and as my film is in the same genre I think it will be effective to use the same structure.

In 'The Seraphim Prophecies' the equilibrium shows the young girl sitting in the woods with her books, and wide shots, slow-moving camera and dissolve edits all help to create a calming atmosphere. At the start of my short film the audience will see the main character wake up in his normal life and go for a run. This is the 'Equilibrium' of the short film as this is before anything unusual happens in the world of the film. I would like to film a close-up shot of the character's alarm clock going off as this will help inform the viewer that it's a normal 7:00am morning and not a one off. I would like the sequence to also show the character opening his curtains as this will further the idea of a normal morning. I have also decided to use a fast pace cuts in the sequence as this will create a sense of hurry as the character tries to stick to his normal morning routine/schedule. At the beginning of the film I would like to use a drone to get a sweeping establishing shot to show the title of the film and inform the viewers roughly where the character lives. We will hear a loud diegetic clatter from the curtains as they open. I decided to do this because it shows that the character has gotten out of bed and is now getting ready, this is furthered by a close-up shot of the character's

phone pressing play music button this helps bridge the morning routine into the daily run helping show the character is well practiced in these morning 'tasks'.

Following this will be the 'Disruption' of the equilibrium which is when the normality of the film world is disturbed which sets the protagonist off onto their adventure. In 'The Seraphim Prophecies' the disruption happens when the girl traces the magical shape on the rock and it is emphasised by the vfx as she traces it and by the way the music gets more dramatic. In my short film my protagonist finds a magic wand out on a run which leads to the protagonist's misuse of this magical item, this the character's interest in the wand progresses the story through the narrative structure. In order to emphasise the disruption of the equilibrium I would like to show a few seconds of the wand before we see the character run into the frame I will do this because it will let the audience see the oddly shaped stick which should create a minor hermeneutic code of what the object actually is. I would also like to show the character run past the wand and then have to run back to view the object that he saw whilst passing, I would like to do this because it visually shows that the character is deviating from his normal morning run.

The next stage in Todorov's theory of narrative structure would be the 'Recognition', this is when the character recognises the disorder in the film's world. In 'The Seraphim Prophecies' this happens when the girl looks up at the sky and sees flaming objects shooting across the sky. During my short film this will be when the character realises the side effects of using the wand. To help show that the character's normality has been 'shaken up' I will shake the camera as the wand fires the 'Orb of Energy'. I will also show a shot of the character dropping the wand in fear and running away, during this shot I would like to show a low angled close up shot of the wand falling to the ground as this will symbolise the dangerous nature of the wand whilst also showing the facial expressions of the character.

Furthermore, the next stage in the narrative structure is the 'Attempt to Repair' this is when the protagonist attempts to bring the film's world back to normality. In 'The Seraphim Prophecies' this is when the girl goes back into the woods with her dog and finds the standing stone on a hill where she summons what she thinks is an angel. The film uses a low angle shot of the girl running up the hill to emphasise the importance of her task. In my short film the attempt to repair comes when the protagonist attempts to destroy the wand – which ultimately fails. In order to show this I would like to show the character's attempt at throwing the wand away and then after it fly's back to him I would like to show a close-up of the character snapping the wand and throwing both pieces in different directions I will try to use a variation of low and high angles to show the potentially dangerous item fighting to keep its power. Another way in which I will attempt to show the 'Attempt-to-repair' is by using long shots of the character trying to destroy the wand as this will hopefully suggest that the character now sees the full image and danger of the situation if the wand got into the wrong hands such as his own initially.

The final stage in the narrative structure is the 'New Equilibrium' this is when the disturbance is solved however, there is often a change in the normality. 'The Seraphim Prophecies' ends when the girl has been possessed by the demon and has disappeared. This is a dramatic ending, but I do not want my film to end with my character's death as I want my film to show my character learning from his mistakes. In my short film the new equilibrium is when the protagonist eventually is free from the side-effects of the wand and returns home only after realising his greed and materialistic tendencies. I will use straight angles once the character has gotten rid of the wand as this will show that the dangerous and powerful wand has now been hidden and the world's normality had been restored. I have decided to digitally fade out the end of my film as this will emphasize that the world will continue from now on in its new normality. I decided to add the theme of greed to my film as I would like to symbolically show the idea of karma and how if you abuse a power that you gain then it will eventually come back and backfire on yourself.

### **Production Role(s)**

As I am making my film on my own I will need to undertake several production roles in order to finish it. One role I will take will be DP / camera operator. I researched the role of a DP and found that in a professional production the DP (director of Photography) is responsible for the way the film looks, making decisions about the correct lenses, lighting and framing required for each shot, and giving directions to the camera operator in order to achieve this look. Because my film is a fantasy, I want to try and achieve some intriguing camera shots, even in the equilibrium phase when my character is getting ready for his day. I plan to try and show the shower turning on shot from underneath, so that it appears that the camera is directly underneath the shower-head. I want to do this because I think it will help contribute to a stylish opening sequence and help the viewer feel directly involved with the action.

As DP, it will be my responsibility to make sure that every sequence in the film is visually interesting, so when my protagonist is leaving his house I want to try and capture some interesting angles to stop the sequence being boring. I would like to use a low level shot to capture the protagonist's feet as he runs, with the camera moving alongside him as he runs, as I think this will make the sequence much more dynamic and exciting. I will need to look into ways I can achieve this shot as I do not have access to a Steadicam or a dolly and I think using hand-held camera would be too unsteady.

Good cinematography can use framing and angles to create really effective scenes and tell a story without the need for much dialogue. As DP, I want to use framing to anchor the importance of the disruption in the narrative of the film. To do this, I want to have a low-angle close-up of the wand before the protagonist sees it. The close-up of the object will show the audience it is important, and the low angle will suggest that it is powerful. In order to do this I will need to find a place where I can place the camera on the ground lower than



the wand, so I will need to find a slope, perhaps with some long grass that I can use to prop up the wand.

I will also be the director for my film. The director of a film is responsible for making sure that everything in a film works together to achieve a successful result, and one of the most important ways this is done is through directing actors. In my film, there will be no dialogue so it will be very important to make sure my actor's face and body language express the right emotions. When he discovers the wand and fires the 'orb of energy' I want his facial expressions and body language to express his shock and surprise at what has happened. To do this I will need to make sure the actor realises how important the moment is, and I will get him to role-play the scene before we film so that he has some practice in creating the right emotions.

As director, I want to achieve a lively, action-packed effect in the opening montage sequence, and I have looked at the work of Edgar Wright to see how to do this. In 'Shaun of the Dead' he works with the editor Chris Dickens, and they use a series of smash cuts and rapid edits to create a spoof action-movie effect when the characters are making breakfast. By using a series of rapid cuts and dramatic music I want to achieve a similar effect in the waking-up montage in my film – hopefully it will seem dramatic and slightly tongue-in cheek and give my audience a lively introduction to the world of my film. One way I would like to do this is by having my character hit 'play' on his phone at the start of this sequence and syncing that to the start of my upbeat non-diegetic music, so that it seems like the character is kickstarting his day with the music.

### **Audience research**

For my audience research, I decided to create a survey on survey monkey and ask my target audience to answer various questions that link to my production. I decided to do this because there were some aspects of my production that had not been confirmed and needed improvement.

Whilst analysing the results of my survey I have concluded that 14/19 (73.68%) of my respondents would expect a short story with an effective narrative to last from two to three minutes long. I agree with the majority of my respondents, during my brief I stated that I was going to aim for a two to three minutes for my short film. This information has confirmed my initial plan for the length of my short film.

Another result I found whilst conducting my survey was that only 15.79% of my respondents stated that supernatural was one of their favourite genres in short films, this causes an issue because my planned main theme was supernatural, however, I also learned that 52.63% of respondents enjoy the genre comedy. Due to the fact that my narrative is based on the theme of supernatural I have decided to integrate more comedy into my short film. One way

in which I plan to introduce comedy in my film will be when the character shoots an 'Orb of Energy' you will see a person in the distance being hit by it making them fall to the ground.

During my audience survey, I found that 47.37% of my respondents felt that mysterious music was a key aspect of a supernatural/fantasy short film. 26.32% also stated that eerie music would best suit the genre of my short film. Due to these results, I have decided to primarily use mysterious and eerie music with some upbeat music at the start to show normality of the film world. The upbeat music will be loud rock music and will represent the character's normal world, and I will try to find some slow orchestral music that I can use to signal the magical disruption of his world when he finds the wand as I think slow orchestral music will create the eerie effect my audience said they would like and will emphasise the fact my character is leaving his normal world behind him

Whilst conducting my survey I also found that 26.32% of my respondents stated that they would like to see an ending where after something goes wrong the protagonist fails to solve the issue. Equally another 26.32% of respondents state that they would like to see the protagonist getting greatly injured but eventually defeats the antagonist. Using this knowledge I have decided that it would be best for the protagonist to (after a long struggle) eventually solve his issue losing/destroying the wand in the process.

Furthermore, whilst analysing my survey I found that 78.95% of respondents would say that woodland setting would be best for a fantasy-themed short film, 42.11% of respondents stated that the best setting would be outside. Using this information I have decided that the majority of my short film will be in a woodland area and some other locations outside, however, for the story I will also have to shoot a small sequence inside a house, which will create the normality for my character. I agree with my audience that a woodland setting is most appropriate for a fantasy film – Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit are often set in woodland settings – so I will need to find a woodland area near my house which looks mysterious enough to be a fantasy setting. I think this will satisfy my audience as the contrast with the normal house will make the woodland setting seem more magical.

### **Institutional Context Research**

Unfortunately I do not have a budget for creating my short film. This means, I will have to either find somebody I know who writes music or I could use royalty free music from the internet as I cannot use music that has been written due to the Copyright, Designs and Patents act of 1988. This is an external institution because it is a factor out with the production.

I will also have to use friends/volunteers as actors as I have no funding to pay them. I have enlisted two friends to help with filming and acting and in return I will help out in their short films. This is an internal institution because it is the result of internal factors. This will affect

my film as I will need to use people who are not very experienced at acting which could lead to poor quality acting.

The lack of funding will also mean that I will have to use locations that are free and easily accessible to me and my actors as we will not have the time or means to travel to further away shooting locations. This is also an internal factor because it is a factor that comes from within the production. The lack of experienced actors will probably also have impacts on my film because I will need to adapt the story of my film around the strengths of my actors for example my actor, Craig, is reasonably athletic so the role of a reasonably athletic character would be easier for him to play than if I asked him to play an introverted teenager who sits in their room all day playing video games.

My target audience is from teenagers to adults. In order to ensure the target audience is allowed to see the film, I need to ensure that my short film fits the BBFC's guidelines for at most a 12 as my film does not have any graphic violence or gore; this is also convenient as my target audience is teenagers. One of the limitations this creates is that strong language should be avoided fortunately; this doesn't cause any issues as I had not planned on implementing any into the narrative of my short story. I do plan to show my character accidentally blowing someone up with the wand, so to make sure I keep to a 12 certificate I will need to make sure I show this from a distance and don't dwell on any blood or gore – I plan to use After Effects to create the 'explosion' so I think this will keep the film to a 12.

Another internal institution that must be considered would be the lack of time to shoot my short film as I cannot film during prelim times however, since I am using my own personal filming equipment I will be able to film out with the standard school filming times. I will have to ensure that on the day of filming I have a properly thought-out shot list and storyboard to make the production process as efficient as possible.

Due to the fact that I have decided to use my own filming equipment there are some issues or complications that will come from doing so for example, both the filming and editing stages will take a lot longer as the better equipment takes more effort to understand and use properly such as ensuring the correct exposure by adjusting the camera's Shutter speed, ISO or Aperture. However, one of the shots in particular that I am planning on filming would not be possible with a school's iPad as these are smaller and oddly shaped which makes them more difficult to use without creating shaky-looking footage. School iPads also mean that I would not be able to use a tripod which would ruin the effect of the still alarm clock shot that I plan on using at the start of my film. Using my own equipment will also allow me to use more advanced editing software such as Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects which let me use interesting special effects such as the 'Orb of Energy' that shoots out of the character's wand and the explosion that it creates as it hits the character in the distance.

## Higher Media Assignment: Section 2

### Task 2A)

As director and DP, although I was able to use some high-quality equipment such as my Nikon D7200, I found some difficulties getting the shots I had planned. An example of this in my production would be when we see a close-up shot of the character's feet as he runs. Ideally, if I was a real director / cinematographer, I would have liked to use a dolly or a stabiliser, however, those pieces of equipment were not available to me. I decided the best way to get the shot that I wanted was to place my camera upside down on a tripod and hold it with the legs together and run along with the character. I did this because the weight of the camera would be pulled down due to gravity which should, in theory, stabilise the shot. I am pleased with the result of doing this as the shot is reasonably smooth and although it was difficult to see through the viewfinder of the camera the character stays in frame. One issue this created was the footage too, was upside down, however, this was easily corrected in post-production. Overall, I think I successfully fulfilled my roles as director / cinematographer in this scene as I thought creatively and came up with a plan to achieve the effect I wanted and I think it looks reasonably professional in the finished film.

Another issue I had to work around as director was the lack of good or experienced actors. This had a clear impact on my film, especially in a few shots. During the shot where the main character leaves the house if we pause the film at 00:25 we see that the main actor looks directly at the camera, this breaks the illusion of the film world being real and creates a less authentic atmosphere. The lack of high-quality acting also restricted my film in that my actor felt more comfortable not speaking as when they did it sounded false and unnatural. Due to this, I decided that my film didn't need dialogue as there is really only one character. I also decided that given that there was a deficiency in high quality and experienced acting it would be best for my film to make use of more long shots as any mistakes are less likely to be noticed by the average viewer. Moreover, another example of when my film's quality is impacted by a lack of an experienced actor would be when the main character accidentally fires an 'orb of energy' out of the wand that he finds. In this shot, it is difficult to tell that the 'orb of energy' was fired unintentionally as the actor's facial expressions remain the same, as a result of this I decided to digitally add a wiggle/camera shake to try to further create a sense of shock. Unfortunately this did not completely compensate for my actor's inexperience as if we saw the character's facial expressions we would get more direct and clear evidence for the character being shocked by what had just happened. As a director, I feel I did not really manage to get my actor to display the emotional depth needed for the role, and if I was to film again I would spend more time working with my cast in order to improve this aspect of the film.

Furthermore, another problem I encountered was ensuring the safety of my crew helping me film, as I was in charge of the production outside of school anything that went wrong would have been on me. This added responsibility encouraged me to ensure the safety of

my crew. An example of this affecting the production would be the explosion from the wand, in order to actually make an explosion it would have cost too much and it would also be unsafe for the actor who gets hit by the 'orb of energy'. There would also be a legal issue as the film was mostly not filmed on my personally owned property. As a result of this, I decided that it would be easiest and actually possible to create an explosion in post using After Effects. The effect did not turn out as well as I hoped as you could probably tell that the explosion has been digitally added however this may not be visible in a first view of the short film. Additionally, another example of ensuring the safety of my crew would be during the shot where the main character jumps over a gate going into a large field, I had to make sure that both my actor was able to make the jump and also happy enough to do the jump and didn't feel like I was forcing him into it as there was some risk involved.

Moreover, another factor that I had to consider during both the production and post-production of my film was the restrictions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act. This impacted my film a few times throughout the process, for example, the music I was going to use originally required a paid license which I could not use, however, I did manage to find a website with a soundtrack that fit my film well and allowed me to use the music in my film. I did, however; have to credit them at the end of the film which you can see in the end credits of my film. I am pleased with the music that I eventually decided to use as I believe that it fits well into my character's morning run and sounds like the kind of music that he would listen to which I think makes the link of music and the run more realistic. This would normally also affect the assets that I have decided to use in my production but fortunately, I already own an Video Co-pilot's 'Action Essentials' effects pack that contains a library of stock footage such as 'Dark\_Smoke' which I used for the explosion effect and other assets for use in my films, as I purchased the stock footage I am not required to credit the creator.

### Task2B)

My production effectively follows various media codes and techniques, an example of this would be Tzvetan Todorov's Theory of Narrative Structure. At the beginning of my film we see a montage where the character gets up, makes coffee, and eventually, goes out on a run. During this sequence the Equilibrium of the film world is created as we see the normality of the character's morning we also see a close-up on the character's phone on the table following this, the character knocks the phone over to stop the alarm, this is a Proairetic Code as the event initialises the character's morning which ultimately links to his run. Shortly after, the character runs out of the street the camera fades to black, cuts to a shot of a plant, and then back to the character. The purpose of this was to show the passing of time and to tie the Equilibrium to the next stage of the Narrative Structure, The Disruption. The aspect of the montage scene that I am most pleased with would be the shot where my character is in the shower, I wasn't sure how I would be able to make this shot but fortunately I was able to borrow my brother's GoPro Hero 4 which is waterproof and allowed

me to get the shower shot. I think this clearly showed that the viewers were seeing the character's normal morning and that the use of language effectively helped 'sell' this to the audience.

Following the Equilibrium is the Disruption, in my production this is when the character finds the wand amongst some stones in a field. Initially we see a close up of the wand on the ground; this creates a hermeneutic code for the audience as they question what the oddly shaped object in the grass is. Fortunately for the audience this minor enigma is resolved shortly after as the character accidentally fires the 'Orb of Energy' however, this creates further unanswered hermeneutic codes such as 'What happened to the character in the distance that was hit by the Orb of Energy?' and 'Where did the wand come from originally?'. Finding the wand disrupts the normality of the film world and the character's day, during the close-up shot of the wand I effectively used a shallow depth of field to switch the audiences' focus over from the character running to this new, almost supernatural object found by the character. I am glad that the scene turned out how it did because I felt it successfully showed that the character was oblivious to what the object actually is and it also causes the audience to wonder what the dangers of using the wand actually are for the character. I also like how the 'Orb of Energy' emphasizes the supernatural theme.

In Todorov's Theory of Narrative Structure after the Disruption of the Equilibrium comes the Recognition of the Disruption this is because currently in my film the character doesn't know how dangerous the wand could be. The recognition in my film does not come until after the character shakes the wand that he has found and it fires the 'Orb of Energy'. I decided to add a digital shake of the camera as this symbolises that the character is being shaken into recognition on the dangers of the wand. We then see an over the shoulder shot of the character where the character backs away and drops the wand. This shot was supposed to show the shock of the character however; due to restrictions on high quality acting I was unable to create this effect as it just looks like the character continues with his normal daily run. That being said as the character runs away he cries "no" which does help to create my desired effect. The dropping of the wand is a Proairetic Code as without this happening the character would still have the wand and would not have continued his run, this would also lead to the return of the wand following the disruption. I believe that the digital shake that I added helped effectively creates the idea that the world is changing and that the character is finally realising the danger of the wand. I also think that the characters weeping does a good job at showing the shock of the character.

Following the Recognition should be the 'Attempt to Repair' however this is when my narrative structure begins to fall apart. I intended for the character to try again to get rid of the wand however, with the character keeping the wand and then using it to create a bottle of water this effect was not successfully created. One way in which I could have improved this stage would be by showing the character trying to destroy the wand, this would even work if he did not manage as this would visually show the character trying to destroy the

wand to bring the film world back to normal. This sequence does on the other hand create some Hermeneutic codes, for example a minor hermeneutic code would be 'What the character will use the wand.' And a major hermeneutic code that is created would be 'What consequences will come from the character keeping the wand?' this unfortunately is not answered which leaves the users with a cliff-hanger. I think that this does not do the best job as we do not actually get to see the character trying to destroy the wand or prevent it from being used again. This makes the sequence less effective because without this we don't actually get to see the character trying to repair the damage that was caused by the wand making the 'Attempt to Repair' less clear to the audience.

At the end of Todorov's Theory of narrative structure we have the New-Equilibrium; this is the new normality of the film world. At the end of my film we see a shot of the main character sitting at the top of a hill, the character still has the wand and is continuing his normal life, this creates the idea that although things have calmed down and the wand hasn't caused any more damage the character still have the capacity to do more harm. This is emphasised by contrast from the first shot in which we see a high/straight angle facing the character and the final shot looking up or using a low angle to frame the main character, this shows how the character has changed from a normal person to a person carrying a powerful and dangerous device. I think this does a good job of showing that the character has converted from being an everyday person to a powerful and dangerous person who would potentially kill somebody or destroy buildings. I am pleased by the fact that this leaves the audience with an unresolved Hermeneutic code or enigma as this let's the audience use their own creative ideas to what the wand is actually capable of and wither or not the character will further misuse it.

Overall, I think that my use of editing helped sell various tones and ideas that I aimed to create. For example my use of colour grading the film to create a supernatural or almost extra-terrestrial orange glow throughout the film as I think this effectively shows the audience that the seemingly natural world is actually not as natural as we expect after seeing the normal routine of the character. Some of the shots that I found were particularly effective at doing this would be the close-up shot of the coffee being poured and the shot of the character opening his curtains. I also feel like the use of fast paced cuts helped show the audience that the character was hurrying to keep his schedule. Having the ability to add music to the film was also effective at showing the natural aspects of the film world as it is something that you would expect somebody to do whilst going out on a run. I am also very happy about how the music turned out during the first sequence of the film as I am pleased with the shot where my character presses play on their phone and the music is matched up to give the impression that the character is listening to the same music that the audience is and how it kickstarts the action of the character on his run again listening to music.

# Candidate D assignment

## Production Roles

Throughout the posters, I plan to use high key lighting which allows the audience to clearly see everything within the posters, without creating mysterious or frightening tones which would appear misleading. To do this, I researched the role of a photography lighting assistant. According to the website 90seconds.tv, 'Knowing where to run cables and how to check to make sure all the equipment is working properly is a major part of the job.' Considering this, I decided to go and practice with the school's photography equipment before I arranged any photoshoots. I couldn't just move the lighting set up anywhere I wanted as the equipment is expensive. When I went down to the photography department I found that the 3 point lighting was already set up in the studio and the teachers had tied down all the cables already. From this discovery I decided to simply use the school's entire studio for my photoshoot, as moving the lighting and all the cables would be too complicated. However, according to the same website, another role of the lighting assistant is to test all equipment and become up to speed with how to use it. Therefore I arranged to visit the photography department twice after school so I could familiarise myself with how to set up the key light, backlight and fill lights appropriately. In this way I am confident that I can fulfil this part of the role and create the high key lighting I'm seeking in my posters.

As well as having high key lighting using the 3 point lighting set up I have mentioned, I want my posters to contain very bright and vibrant colours, many of which will have connotations of 'Christmas' to tie in with the festive theme of my posters. For inspiration, I looked at various posters promoting Christmas themed comedy films such as 'Home Alone' and 'Elf', both of which use very vivid colours like red, green and white. During my research into the role of a lighting assistant I discovered that managing colours and filters can also be part of their job description, but that many colours and filters can also be added post-photoshoot, with editing software. From all of this research and to achieve my aim of having brightly coloured posters, I thought I'd make the most of the green and red filters we have in the photography studio to take some photos with the filter, and some without. This will allow me to play about with both forms of colouring and decide whether or not to use the colouring from the filters in the photoshoot itself, or from the editing software, depending upon which of these I think looks best at the time.

When considering the role of poster designer, I studied a website called gnomon.edu where they had published a blog from an experienced film poster designer named Tomasz Opasinski. There were a number of interesting points but the main one was: "A poster is a selling tool...It's artistic, but it isn't a piece of art. Your abstract poster may be beautiful, but if no one gets it, it goes nowhere." He followed this up by saying that posters should be grounded by their purpose, and should feature a clear USP for example the movie's star. This research into the role of the designer has led to my decision to feature the main character of my film as the biggest image at the front of the main poster. As she is such a charismatic teacher in the school, I think she will act as an effective USP and by drawing attention to her on my main poster, I will achieve my purpose of advertising the film well.

For my role as poster designer, I was interested in Opasinski's work after reading this article, so I looked at a range of his own posters. Two of his most famous ones are posters for I Am Legend and



Oblivion. In both of these, the setting takes up the most space – his I Am Legend poster focuses only on the destroyed city and his Oblivion poster has a small figure on a massive bridge that seems to be falling down. These posters advertise their films well as they show that the setting is important to them. As I've decided to feature Mrs Gilchrist at the front and largest on my main poster, I will deviate a bit from Opasinski's designs but what I will take from them is the idea that setting should be displayed on posters, if it's important to the film. My posters all advertise a film called The Festive School and the school itself is therefore important to the plot – from this my plan is now, on my main poster, to set my large image of the teacher against a backdrop of the school stage and auditorium so the setting is pitched as important as well. This way I will follow Opasinski's design principles but put my own twist on them too. I will make sure the setting features in all of my posters in some way, to further conform to these principles.

My final roles will be photographer and editor. As the photographer, I will need to liaise with my model and communicate clearly with her what I want her to pose like. I looked at [photographyschools.com](http://photographyschools.com) and found a top ten list of desirable qualities for photographers. One was the ability to work well with any subject and communicate clearly. I will fulfil this role by taking along my mock ups for the poster and explaining them clearly to the teacher who is modelling for me. I will also demonstrate the pose I'm hoping she will pull if need be, and whilst this might be a bit awkward as she's the head of English, I will do so with a sense of humour as I think that this makes great people skills and puts subjects at ease, in line with what I have researched.