

BFI/ICO Programming Cultural Cinema course Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the course for?

This course is aimed at people interested in cultural cinema exhibition and those already working in the sector, in whatever capacity, who feel that a more rounded and comprehensive grasp of film programming would help them professionally. It does not offer work experience or specific on-the-job skills training, but it does offer a broad introduction to a range of tasks and processes involved in programming cultural film and in a number of different types of setting.

What does the course cover?

The course is structured into four Units:

- Cultural cinema infrastructures (venue types; distribution practice; technical issues; rights research)
- Marketing and PR (for both distributors and venues)
- Audience development (education; children; disability; diversity)
- Beyond contemporary fiction features (archive film; shorts; artists' moving image work)

How is it taught?

This is a distance learning course, making it ideal for people from across the UK whose work prevents them from committing to a full time course. It is conducted mainly online, with a two day face-to-face seminar at the start of the course to allow you to meet tutors and other participants. Students are provided with a set of written materials, CDs of audio interviews and discussions with industry personnel, and access to a password-protected website (you will therefore need Internet access). There will be three different types of tasks:

- Listening to interviews, reading and reflection - these serve as background
- Online discussion activities - "virtual seminars" around particular subjects
- Assignments - submitted to your tutor who will provide feedback by email

Distance learning can be an isolating experience, hence the provision of the seminar at the start of the course as well as an optional face-to-face meeting further along the way. It can be more convenient and flexible than attending classes, but you will need commitment and motivation to complete a course by distance. Do think carefully about whether this mode of learning is right for you – if not, the ICO does deliver a range of face-to-face courses too, including the two-week Cultural Cinema Exhibition course (for people who have experience in the sector). See the [training page](#) for further details.

What are the dates of the course?

4th February to 2nd June 2008. The course will begin with a compulsory seminar at BFI Southbank in London on 4th – 5th February. There will also be an optional second meeting further into the course for trouble-shooting and networking – dates will be confirmed nearer the time.

Is attendance at the seminar compulsory?

Yes. It is an essential part of the course and will include an introduction to UK distribution and exhibition, talks and screenings relevant to the course activities and assignments, as well as an opportunity to meet the tutors and other course participants.

Can I apply for the course if I live outside of the UK?

Yes, provided that you speak fluent English, are able to attend the seminar in London and are aware that the course focuses on the UK industry.

Can I apply if I am an undergraduate or am in full time employment?

Yes, as long as you are able to spend sufficient time on the course, can attend the compulsory seminar and can pay the fees.

How much work will be involved?

It is recommended that you spend around five hours a week on the course, although this will vary from week to week according to the task set.

Who are the tutors?

This year's line-up is yet to be confirmed, but tutors on the last course were:

- Mark Cosgrove, Programmer, Watershed
- Catharine Des Forges, Director, ICO
- David Sin, Head of Content Development, BFI
- Simon Ward, Head of Programming and Development, ICO

What contact will I have with my tutor?

As this is a distance learning course, contact between tutors and students will mainly be via email, with an opportunity for face-to-face contact at the seminar. Tutors will participate in online discussion activities and will provide individual feedback by email to the assignments. We do ask, though, that you don't bombard your tutor with emails outside of the supervision channels.

How do I pay for the course?

Participants will be invoiced and are encouraged to pay the full fee before the start of the course. If you are paying your own fees and cannot pay the full fee upfront, please contact us to discuss paying in two instalments.

Are bursaries available?

We will make a limited number of bursaries of up to 25% of the course fees available for individuals paying for themselves or applicants from small organisations. To be considered for a bursary, please include a covering letter with your application outlining your reasons for needing financial support, giving details of your organisation and its resources if appropriate. Bursary applications will be assessed according to this information together with the personal statement supplied in the application form. Applicants will be notified of the decision by 11th January.

What happens if I drop out of the course?

If you withdraw from the course before it begins, we will refund your fee minus a £50 administrative charge. If you decide to give the course up once it has started, we will be able to refund the fee minus £300 to cover administration, course materials and seminar costs. We cannot provide any refunds after the end of February, however.

How is the course assessed?

This course is not accredited by a university, but students will receive a certificate from the ICO and BFI upon successful completion of the assignments, according to criteria set by programmers (rather than academics). We recognise that students' level of participation varies according to their work and family commitments, so you will not be penalised for failing to complete all of the discussion activities. However, we would encourage you to do so in order for you to get the most out of the course.

If you have any queries that are not covered by the information above, please get in touch with Tilly Walnes, Training & Development Officer, on 020 7079 0477 or at tilly@independentcinemaoffice.org.uk.