



# **Moving Image Arts in Northern Ireland: A Longitudinal Cohort Study**

**Year 4 Research Analysis Report**  
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## **Introduction**

This report sets out the results from the second set of surveys with the Moving Image Arts Cohort in Northern Ireland. This Cohort is the first of its kind anywhere in the world in relation to Moving Image Arts and the Creative Industries. Longitudinal studies are conducted over a long period of time with data collection takes place at regular intervals throughout the life of the study. The purpose of this is to monitor or track changes or journeys over time. A Cohort Study is a form of longitudinal study that uses a specific group of respondents for the entire study. Cohort studies chart the development of these groups from a particular time point prospectively and can be used to gather opinion on specific issues in real time.

## **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this longitudinal cohort study is to chart the journey of GCSE, AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts students (over 5 years initially) and to gather information on their status, views, and perceptions on an annual basis. This report focuses on Year 4 of the study.

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment to the Cohort began in September 2019 (Year 1) but was quickly impacted upon by the global covid pandemic which made recruitment extremely challenging as schools in Northern Ireland were being used as gatekeepers. Due to lockdowns, school closures and schools having other more pressing priorities, recruitment to the Cohort was slow. Recruitment continued in September 2020 (Year 2) but with the pandemic at its peak, this was almost impossible. Recruitment strategies were broadened to include universities and social media commencing September 2021 (Year 3). From September 2021 and September 2022 (Year 4) recruitment continued through the 22 schools signed up to the study, the two Northern Ireland Universities and via social media and to date there are 400 members of the Cohort.

## Second Set of Surveys

As this is the second year of the Cohort study, surveys became more nuanced and targeted specific areas of interest that had arisen from the results of the first survey to the Cohort (January 2022).

In total, 100 new members were recruited to the Cohort in Year 4 and these new members were asked to complete the 'baseline survey' which is the same survey that the original 300 members were asked to complete in January 2022. This ensured that the maximum amount of data was being collected from the new members and also provided an opportunity to compare and contrast the results between the two baseline surveys one year apart.

The 'Baseline Survey' can be viewed at this link

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FirstSurveyMovingImageArtsCohortStudy>

As there is little value in repeating the baseline survey with the original 300 Cohort members, shorter, more targeted questionnaires were developed in key areas arising from the results of the first survey in January 2022. These key areas were:

- Resources/Equipment
- Teaching
- Changes to the Moving Image Arts Qualifications
- Screen Academies
- 

The original 300 Cohort Members were first asked to complete a 'Updating Survey'. This was to ensure that the Cohort can be described accurately and comparisons can be made year on year as to the growth and shape of the Cohort. This 'Updating Survey' was an essential survey and all original Cohort Members were asked to complete it.

The other surveys were considered optional surveys. Cohort members were asked to fill in as many as they could. To incentive the completion of the optional surveys, Cohort members were given the opportunity to enter a prize draw for each survey they completed. At the end of each survey, they could enter their email which would enter them into the



draw. Email addresses were not linked with survey responses in keeping with anonymity and confidentiality assurances.

The Teaching and Equipment Surveys were targeted at member currently undertaking a Moving Image Arts course to gather current and up to date data in these two key areas. The Screen Academies survey was targeted at those Members who had attended a Screen Academy within the last 3 years.

A 'Free Comment' Survey was also included at the end of the suite of surveys allowing Cohort members to comment on anything that they wished regarding the Moving Image Arts Qualifications or their journey with Moving Image Arts into the Creative Industries.

The links to each survey are as below:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Updating survey for existing members               | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023BaselineSurveyNewMembers">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023BaselineSurveyNewMembers</a> |
| Equipment survey                                   | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023EquipmentQuestionnaire">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023EquipmentQuestionnaire</a>     |
| Teaching survey                                    | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023TeachingQuestionnaire">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2023TeachingQuestionnaire</a>       |
| Changes to Moving Image Arts Qualifications survey | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ChangesQuestionnaire">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ChangesQuestionnaire</a>                 |
| Screen Academies Survey                            | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ScreenAcademies">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ScreenAcademies</a>                           |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Free Comment survey | <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FreeComments">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FreeComments</a> |
|---------------------|---|

The second year of surveys for the Moving Image Arts Cohort Study was launched on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 to the new and existing Moving Image Arts Cohort via email. The launch of the second year of surveys was also used as an opportunity for further recruitment to the Cohort, a strategy which worked well in the previous year. Schools were asked to send an email to all Moving Image Arts students with the news that the first survey had launched and providing them with the sign-up link should they wish to take part. New sign-ups were sent the survey link directly to their sign-up email address. Social media was also used to publicise the launch of the second year of surveys and provided the sign-up link should people who met the criteria wish to take part. Northern Ireland Screen and Ulster University also publicised the launch of the second year of surveys.

The link to all second-year surveys remained open for three weeks in total with two sets of reminders going directly to the Cohort’s own email addresses and also using social media for reminders. The first reminder was sent on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and the second on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023. The closing date for completion of surveys was Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

## Case Studies

Ten Cohort members were recruited from 38 volunteers in 2022. Interviews were carried out with all ten members about their journey with Moving Image Arts. Fifteen were current school pupils, ten were university students and thirteen were currently working in the Creative Industries. All interviews were transcribed verbatim. Initial profiles of the case studies are included later in this research analysis report.

## Results from Surveys

Across all surveys, 146 cohort members completed surveys. There were 100 new members signed up to the Cohort from September 2022 who were asked to complete the Baseline Survey.

### Baseline Survey for New Members

#### Demographics

- The age range for the new members who completed the survey was 15 years to 26 years.
- 83% were female and 5% were male. 11% indicated that they did not wish to indicate gender.
- 55% are at school, 11% at University and 11% in employment.

#### Current Moving Image Arts Status

- 11% currently undertaking GCSE Moving Image Arts.
- 44% currently undertaking AS Moving Image Arts.
- 11% currently undertaking A2 Moving Image Arts.
- 33% previously undertaken a Moving Image Arts qualification.

#### Previous Moving Image Arts Qualifications

Overall, 61% of new cohort members had previously undertaken GCSE Moving Image Arts, 38% had previously undertaken AS Moving Image Arts and 22% had previously undertaken A2 Moving Image Arts.

#### Reasons for undertaking Moving Image Arts Qualifications

Cohort members were asked about their reasons for undertaking Moving Image Arts qualifications. Reasons given fell broadly into two categories – love of and interest in film and wanting to work in the creative industries in the future – as the following quotes illustrate:

- *“I have always really enjoyed films and creative writing and I felt that MIA was the perfect avenue to explore both of those things in my studies.”*

- *“I am very interested in the subject and want to have a job in the film industry in the future. I thought moving image a level was a good place to start to see if I was really interested in having it as a career.”*
- *“I've been interested in working in the film industry in the future for a while but was never sure how to begin until I found out Moving Image Arts was an option at GCSE.”*

### **Usefulness of Moving Image Arts**

Cohort members were asked to identify what they thought was useful about undertaking qualifications in Moving Image Arts. The table below details some of the categorised responses.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Practical work                                | Editing                                       | Being able to create short films        |
| Understanding the basics                      | Communication skills                          | Exploring the different aspects of film |
| Learning different techniques related to film | Understanding the directors thought processes | Getting in touch with creative side     |

### **Suggested changes to the Moving Image Arts Qualifications**

Cohort members were asked if they would make any changes to the Moving Image Arts qualifications if they could. Responses have been analysed into various categories and quotes to illustrate these categories are detailed below:

#### **Length of film:**

*“The length of the Film we have to make. I prefer to do Animation and to make a full length 3-minute animation is very demanding with in the time frame.”*

#### **Timeframe:**

*“The timings of everything as there is lots of coursework, I wish I would have scheduled it better.”*

*“Need a little extra time for deadlines.”*

*“More time to work on and perfect my film and portfolio. Less of a strict reliance on early deadlines.”*

**Teamwork/Groupwork:**

*“I believe that teamwork is one of the main aspects of film/TV production and so, I think it would be beneficial for future students to be given the choice to pair up or get into groups to create their final films. Furthermore, the theory aspect of the course, to me at least, seems like it would stop some people from choosing it. Like if someone enjoys filming or planning to film something but isn't so good at writing essays or explaining why they used a particular technique.”*

*“I would wanted to have more group activities but I was also glad that I got to film alone as I was able to be creative.”*

**Working Closely with Classmates:**

*“I wish working closely with classmates was encouraged more. This subject is difficult if you don't have friends/family willing to help you out in regard to acting, and I worry this can put some people at a disadvantage.”*

**Recommending Moving Image Arts to Other Students**

Overall, 75% of new Cohort members, said that they would recommend Moving Image Arts qualifications to other students. Six percent stated that they wouldn't recommend the qualifications to other students and 19% stated that they didn't know if they would recommend them. The overall percentage who would be happy to recommend Moving Image Arts to other students is lower at 75% than in last year's survey, when 90% of the cohort members stated that they would recommend the qualifications.

|                     | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Would recommend     | 75%                     | 90%                    |
| Would not recommend | 6%                      | 6%                     |
| Don't know          | 19%                     | 4%                     |

### **Reasons for recommending Moving Image Arts**

- Unique and fun creative subject.
- Different to other subjects.
- Opportunity to explore the creative industries while at school.
- Gives you a wide skillset for preparing to work in the film industry.
- Great introduction to film theory.
- More relaxed subject.

### **Reasons for not recommending Moving Image Arts**

- Needs to be more in-depth.
- Teachers need to be interested in teaching it.

### **Choosing Moving Image Arts as a way into the Creative Industries**

Cohort members were asked if they chose to study Moving Image Arts at GCSE, AS and/or A2 because they wanted to work in the Creative Industries. Of the new Cohort members who responded to this questions, 100% stated that they chose it because they wanted to work in the Creative Industries. Compared with last year's results, this is a higher percentage. Last year's survey showed that 78% said that they chose Moving Image Arts for that reason.

### **Perception of Moving Image Arts Qualifications as 'easy'**

Cohort members were asked if they thought that Moving Image Arts GCSE, AS and A2 were perceived as 'easy' subjects. Only 18% stated that they felt that they are viewed as 'easy', a further 44% stated that they did not feel that they were viewed as 'easy' and 38% stated that they did not know. The table below shows the comparison with last year's results showing a much lower percentage of new cohort members feeling that the qualifications are perceived as 'easy.'

|                    | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Viewed as easy     | 18%                     | 59%                    |
| Not viewed as easy | 44%                     | 33%                    |
| Don't know         | 38%                     | 8%                     |

Cohort members who stated that they felt that Moving Image Arts qualifications were perceived as 'easy' were asked to explain why they thought this was the case. Responses included:

*"I think others may view the subject as easy because they think h can just go record something on your phone and consider it done, when in reality you have to do a lot of planning and reshoots."*

*"People think it's a silly subject without a lot of academic rigour."*

*"Very, very basic, need more practical work to improve skills."*

### **Satisfaction with Moving Image Arts Qualifications**

New cohort members were asked if they were satisfied with their Moving Image Arts GCSE, AS and A2 courses. Overall, 69% stated that they were satisfied, 13% stated that they were not and 19% stated that they did not know. The table below shows the comparison with last year's survey results. A lower percentage of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the courses than last year's respondents.

|               | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Satisfied     | 69%                     | 87%                    |
| Not satisfied | 13%                     | 9%                     |
| Don't know    | 19%                     | 4%                     |

### **Reasons for being satisfied with the qualifications.**

- *"I feel I got to achieve all that I wanted too. I got to learn much about the process of creating a film and got a deeper appreciation for filmmakers as I know how much work goes into a film project."*
- *"My teachers really clearly cared for the subject and worked so closely with us to make sure we not only understood the theory, but also understood the application as well."*
- *"I enjoyed doing the coursework aspects of the course a lot and being able to create my own film with my own story that I want to tell. The theory part of the subject is*

also very interesting, as we learn about different film techniques and genres.

Learning about other directors from the past such as Alfred Hitchcock is inspiring.”

- “I was satisfied by MIA because it was fun being able to come up with a story and see it come to life, even if it was in such a basic form. It helped me be a little bit more extroverted too as I had to go and ask people for help when it came to filming.”
- “I was able to explore different aspects of film. I learnt how to analysis a film. I was caught to choose wisely when it came to camera angle as each angle told a story.”

### Reasons for being dissatisfied with the qualifications.

- “Think it's a bit mad trying to make a short film in a year without any help and having to get friends/family to be your actors - it's not a very fair way to judge competence in an exam as you have to rely on others to do it.”
- “Teachers weren't passionate, didn't care about students who study in the creative arts”.

### Resources and Equipment

Cohort members were asked if they felt that there was enough resources and equipment at their school or college to enable them to undertake their GCSE, AS or A2 qualifications. Overall, 50% stated that there were enough resources available, 25% stated that there were not enough resources available and 25% stated that they did not know. The table below shows the comparison with last year’s survey results. Results from both years are very similar with around 50% of cohort members stating that there were enough resources.

|                      | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Enough resources     | 50%                     | 47%                    |
| Not enough resources | 25%                     | 35%                    |
| Don't know           | 25%                     | 5%                     |
| Other                | 0                       | 13%                    |



Those Cohort members who stated that there were not adequate resources at their school or college were also asked how this shortage of resources impacted on their Moving Image Arts course. Responses included:

- *“Made it more difficult to actually film and also made the value of the course less - what's the point learning without proper equipment.”*
- *“Having to share 3 tripods with a class of 15, caused lots of stressed and confusion. Equipment borrowing was only at certain times.”*
- *“There were a lack of camera stands as they were also being used by the photography students.”*
- *“It became very difficult to acquire the proper equipment to complete my final portfolio and thus put a lot of stress and difficulty on keeping to the recommended deadlines.”*

### **Teaching Skills**

Cohort members were asked if they felt that their teachers had the practical skills to teach Moving Image Arts GCSE, AS and A2. Overall 75% stated that they felt their teachers did have the practical skills to be teaching Moving Image Arts, 6% felt that they teachers did not have the practical skills, 13% stated that they did not know and 6% stated ‘other’ with one comment included *“We received basic practical training (proper settings for a camera/ experimenting with lighting) but most of our practical skills came from independent experimentation.”*

The following table shows the comparison with last year’s survey results. Results are very similar but less new members felt that teachers did not have the skills to teach Moving Image Arts than last year.

|   | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Teachers do have the practical skills     | 75%                     | 79%                    |
| Teachers do not have the practical skills | 6%                      | 14%                    |
| Don't know                                | 13%                     | 3%                     |
| Other                                     | 6%                      | 5%                     |

The Cohort members who felt that their teachers did not have the skills needed to teach Moving Image Arts courses were asked what skills they felt that their teacher was lacking in. Only one comment was included “*Passion, storytelling, technical knowledge.*”

### Effect of the Pandemic

Cohort members who had undertaken a Moving Image Arts GCSE, AS or A2 qualification within the last three years were asked if they felt that the pandemic had an impact on the course and on their learning. Overall, 50% stated that it did have an impact on the course and their learning and 19% stated that it did not. A further 19% stated that they didn't know and 13% stated 'other' but did not expand on this. In comparison with last years results, the table below shows that 95% of respondents last year felt that the pandemic has an effect on the course and their learning so the effect of that seems to be markedly reduced this year.

|  | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Pandemic had an effect on course and learning          | 50%                     | 95%                    |
| Pandemic did not have an effect on course and learning | 19%                     | 5%                     |
| Don't know   | 19%                     | 0                      |
| Other  | 13%                     | 0                      |

Of those who stated that the pandemic had an effect on their course and learning, they were asked to detail how that effect impacted on them. Responses included:

- *“We missed out on the topics of Animation and Stop motion. Our practical films were impacted greatly by this also and it is made harder as the requirements have gone back to normal.”*
- *“It has shortened the time period for work as well as quarantine encouraging laziness.”*
- *“Limited communications - I'd mainly prefer being in-person rather than working online/at home.”*
- *“The pandemic restricted me by not allowing me to have big groups while filming; I was only allowed to have 2-3 people (including me) on set; however, since my movie was so basic it wasn't all too bad.”*
- *“Being at home meant we didn't have access to the school's equipment. We missed out on opportunities to learn how to operate DSLR cameras, for example, which would've helped massively. However, during lockdown we were given filmmaking activities to do at home with our phones, which enabled us to continue learning important concepts.”*
- *“Certain forms of experimentation and filming were difficult due to the strict covid guidelines. We also missed a lot of valuable class time due to the impacts of covid and self-isolation both for teachers and students.”*

### **Sub-categories within the Cohort**

There are three distinct categories within the Moving Image Cohort due to the longitudinal nature of the study. These categories are:

1. Pupils currently at school or Further Education College studying GCSE, AS or A2 Moving Image Arts at present.
2. University students currently studying at undergraduate or postgraduate level who have undertaken GCSE, AS and/or A2 in the past.
3. People in employment who have undertaken GCSE, AS and/or A2 in the past

The second half of the baseline survey filters these members into these three categories and asks questions pertinent as to the stage of their journey with Moving Image Arts. The next three sections of this report will be structured in that way.

## **Pupils Currently at School or Further Education College**

### **Intention to study at University**

School pupils and Further Education College students were asked if they intended to go to university in the future. Overall, 55% stated that it was their intention to go to university in the future and 45% stated that they did not know. In comparison with last year’s results, as shown in the table below, a lower percentage in this years results have indicated that they intend to go to university. Intervening factors may include the current cost of living crisis.

|   | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Intending to go to University in the future     | 55%                     | 71%                    |
| Not intending to go to University in the future | 0                       | 10%                    |
| Don’t know                                      | 45%                     | 19%                    |

Degree courses that respondents were intending to go to University to undertake included Screen Production, Cinematic Arts and Film Studies/Film Production which was a narrower range of subjects from last years results.

### **Next Steps**

Cohort members who stated that they did not intend to go to university or who did not know at this stage, were asked what they thought their next steps might be after finishing school or Further Education College. Many stated that they were unsure. Most other responses were centred on going to University, gaining experience in the Creative Industries or undertaking an apprenticeship in film production.

### Career within the Creative Industries

Cohort members at school or Further Education College were asked if they were planning a career in the Creative Industries in the future. Overall, 91% stated that they were and 9% stated that they did not know yet. Comparison with last years results is shown below and it is evident that a much higher percentage indicated that they were planning a career in the Creative Industries this year.

|  | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Planning a career in the Creative Industries     | 91%                     | 63%                    |
| Not planning a career in the Creative Industries | 0                       | 7%                     |
| Don't know                                       | 9%                      | 29%                    |

The Cohort members who stated that they wanted to work in the Creative Industries in the future, were asked what job they were hoping to have in the Creative Industries in the future. Their responses included:

- Animator
- Character Design
- Director
- Graphic Designer
- Film Director
- Photographer
- Artist
- Camera Operator
- Screenwriter

### Awareness of Roles in the Creative Industries

A new question was included in the baseline survey this year which asked respondents what roles they were aware of in the Creative Industries. The roles identified are tabled below:

|                      |                        |                    |                         |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Director             | Producer               | Scriptwriter       | Animator                |
| Character Design     | Foley Artist           | Storyboard Artist  | Cinematographer         |
| Production Assistant | Actor                  | Extra              | Sound Technician        |
| Distributor          | Assistant Director     | Make Up Artist     | Costume Design          |
| Prop Master          | Editor                 | Sound Mixer        | Writer                  |
| VFX Artist           | SFX Artist             | Set Artist         | Art Director            |
| Sound Designer       | Early Concept Designer | Lighting Assistant | Director of Photography |
| Camera Operator      |                        |                    |                         |

### Moving Image Arts helping to Further Career

Cohort members at school or Further Education College were asked if they felt that choosing to do Moving Image Arts at GCSE, AS or A2 would further their career in the Creative Industries. Overall, 91% felt that choosing Moving Image Arts would help further their career in the Creative Industries and 9% stated that they didn't know. In comparison with last years results, as seen in the table below, more respondents this year felt that choosing Moving Image Arts qualifications would help their career in the Creative Industries.

|                                    | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| MIA would further their career     | 91%                     | 76%                    |
| MIA would not further their career | 0                       | 7%                     |
| Don't know                         | 9%                      | 17%                    |

## **University Students**

There were only 2 university students among the new Cohort members from this year which makes the sample too small to provide meaningful data or comparisons with last years results. Their responses in relation to Moving Image Arts were all highly positive. However, both of these university students will be full members of the Cohort and their responses represented in other questionnaires moving forward.

## **Cohort Members currently in Employment**

There were only 3 people in employment among the new Cohort members from this year which makes the sample too small to provide meaningful data or comparisons with last year's results. Similarly to the university students, their responses in relation to Moving Image Arts were all highly positive. However, these respondents will be full members of the Cohort and their responses represented in other questionnaires moving forward.

## **Screen Academies and ScreenWorks**

### **Attendance**

All Cohort members were asked if they had attended any courses or workshops at any of the Screen Academies. Overall, 38% of respondents had attending a Screen Academy or ScreenWorks. Academies attended included BFI Film Academy, Animation Academy and ScreenWorks within the last 5 years.

Courses and workshops taken included:

- Documentary Animation
- Storytelling
- Faking Reality 3D
- Storyboarding Art for Games and Film
- Animation

### **Usefulness of Attendance at Screen Academies**

Cohort members who attended Screen Academies were asked what they had found useful about them. Responses included:

- Insight into the film industry and jobs.
- Learnt new skills and gained experience in software.
- Pitching.
- Meeting like-minded people.
- Being able to try new things.
- Seeing how professionals work.

## Opportunities in Northern Ireland in the Creative Industries

New cohort members were asked if they thought that there were good opportunities to work in the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland. Overall, 33% felt that there were good opportunities, 8% felt that there were not and 58% stated that they did not know. The table below shows the comparison with last year’s responses.

|  | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Good opportunities to work in the Creative Industries in NI    | 33%                     | 59%                    |
| No good opportunities to work in the Creative Industries in NI | 8%                      | 10%                    |
| Don’t know   | 58%                     | 30%                    |

Those Cohort members who felt that there were good opportunities to work in the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland were asked what they felt those opportunities were. Their responses included:

- *“The film industry is growing in Northern Ireland with companies such as NI Screen.”*
- *“With films and series such as The Game of Thrones and Derry Girls etc. there is more opportunities opening up in the country for people interested in film and television. Also with the Titanic Studios opening there will be more job opportunities.”*
- *“Film festivals Online masterclasses Director & producer shadowing.”*
- *“Screen works/ screen labs, Titanic Studios Belfast.”*



Cohort members were asked if they felt that there were better opportunities outside of Northern Ireland to work in the Creative Industries. Thirty-three percent felt that there were better opportunities outside of Northern Ireland, 8% felt that there was not and 58% stated that they didn't know. The table below shows the comparison with last years results.

|                                 | New Cohort Members 2023 | Survey 1: January 2022 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Better opportunities outside NI | 33%                     | 51%                    |
| Better opportunities in NI      | 8%                      | 0                      |
| Don't know                      | 58%                     | 49%                    |

Those who felt that there are better opportunities outside of Northern Ireland were asked what they felt these opportunities were. Their responses included:

- *“I just think that Northern Ireland is such a small place compared some other places that are more well known.”*
- *“The industry is normally bigger in places outside of Northern Ireland.”*
- *“The film industry in Northern Ireland is considerably smaller.”*

Cohort members were asked if they wished to have a career in the Creative Industries but not to do this in Northern Ireland, what their reasons where for wanting to pursue this elsewhere. Responses included:

- *“Although Northern Ireland has more up and coming opportunities in the film and tv industry, I still think there is more chance of recognition if I was to move to another country where the industry is bigger.”*
- *“I'd rather work abroad for a change of my surroundings and atmosphere.”*
- *“I intended to move around the world a little bit as I have lived in Northern Ireland my whole life.”*
- *“There are better opportunities.”*
- *“In this matter my answer is biased since I just want to be able to travel and still be able to do my job.”*

## **Awareness of Film Related Activity in Northern Ireland**

### **Film Festivals**

All new Cohort Members were asked if they had attended any Film Festivals in Northern Ireland. In total, 6% stated that they had attended Film Festivals in Northern Ireland and 94% stated that they had not. The only Film Festivals attended were Belfast Film Festival and BFI Docs Ireland.

### **Made in Northern Ireland Database**

All new Cohort Members were asked if they had used the Made in Northern Ireland Database. No new Cohort Members had used the resource, 38% stated that they had not used it and 63% had never heard of it. The small percentage that had used it stated that they had used it to search for production companies and to see what was filmed near them locally.

### **Northern Ireland Screen**

All new Cohort Members were asked if they were aware of Northern Ireland Screen. Overall, 75% stated they were aware of Northern Ireland Screen, 19% stated they were not aware of Northern Ireland Screen and 6% stated that they had never heard of Northern Ireland Screen.

Cohort Members who were aware of Northern Ireland Screen were asked what they knew about the organisation. Responses included:

- *“I only know that they have helped make/provide new movies and shows.”*
- *“I vaguely know that they're a funding board based here in NI and that they run the NI Screenworks programme which help young people get into the Creative Industries sector of jobs.”*
- *“I'm familiar with the name but can't really explain what exactly they do.”*
- *“Northern Ireland Screen is the national screen agency for Northern Ireland. They are known for Game of thrones. Also, they do training.”*
- *“They are a screen production service in Belfast.”*

- *“Know they're a funder, support projects, support games industry and tv/film industry. Know they're supportive of the animation scene.”*
- *“They provide funding for creatives in Northern Ireland and advertise various skill building and trainee/job opportunities.”*
- *“They want to promote sustainable film making and hope to build a strong film industry in Northern Ireland.”*
- *“Industry professionals.”*
- *“They help produce films in Northern Ireland”.*
- *“I only know that they have helped make/provide new movies and shows.”*
- *“I vaguely know that they're a funding board based here in NI and that they run the NI Screenworks programme which help young people get into the Creative Industries sector of jobs.”*

## **Digital Film Archive**

All new Cohort Members were asked if they ever used the Digital Film Archive. No new members had used it and 38% stated that they had never heard of it.

## **Updating Questionnaire**

Existing cohort members (i.e., those who joined before September 2022) were asked to complete an ‘updating questionnaire’ and the results from this survey are presented below.

## **Demographics**

- Age range was from 16 to 29 years of age.
- 49% of the cohort identified as female, 43% identified as male, 3% indicated that they would prefer not to say and 5% identified as non-binary.
- 26% of the cohort are school pupils, 31% are university students, 37% are currently in employment and 6% were ‘other’ included currently unemployed, employed part-time and taking a gap year.

## School Pupils

Currently 50% of school pupils in the Cohort are undertaking GCSE Moving Image Arts, 14% are undertaking AS Moving Image Arts and 38% are undertaking A2 Moving Image Arts.

## Moving Image Arts Journey

School pupils were asked how their journey with Moving Image Arts had progressed over the last 12 months (since the last survey). Responses included the following:

- *“A considerable amount. Lots of new skills accumulated.”*
- *“It's come on leaps and bounds, I have got multiple credits on high end TV and short film productions and got experience in a rental house where I met loads of camera crews.”*
- *“I have learnt a lot over the last 12 months especially after attending the CCEA awards for moving image arts films and seeing the standard produced by other pupils.”*
- *“I have developed a lot more knowledge on using camera equipment and improved on a lot of my skills.”*
- *“I have grown more experience in preparing and making my own film, and I have learned more about the work of modern films makers such as Christopher Nolan.”*

## Creative Industries Careers

School pupils were asked if they intended to pursue a career in the Creative Industries in the future. Overall, 38% indicated that they do intend to pursue a career in the Creative Industries in the future, 38% stated that they did not intend to do so and 25% stated that they had not decided yet.

## Skillset

School pupils were asked how they felt that their Moving Image Arts course had increased their skillset. Responses included:

- *“It has given me enhanced people management skills and editing experience.”*
- *“It has given me a real understanding of cinema & design. Has taught me patience!”*

- *“I have learnt about equipment and tips and tricks on how to make your work as industry standard as possible on a low budget.”*
- *“It has definitely given me the basics which will help me pursue a role in the industry.”*
- *“Better organisation and time management, along with analytical skills.”*

## University Students

Overall, 33% of University students in the Cohort are first year students, 56% are second year students and 11% are third year students. Degrees being undertaken include those below. Not all students wished to specify their degree course.

|                      |                |                             |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Screen Production    | Sound Design   | Film Studies and Production |
| Broadcast Production | Animation      | Accountancy                 |
| Film Studies         | Cinematic Arts | Prop Making                 |

## Moving Image Arts Journey

University students were asked how their journey with Moving Image Arts has progressed over the last 12 months (since the last survey). Responses included the following:

- *“I have decided on my career path, I am going to be doing a placement year next year, I have developed several useful skills in the industry.”*
- *“I have completed modules that involve filmmaking, and entirely redubbing existing film clips. Independently I have started pre-production on my own audio drama podcast.”*
- *“Having studied MIA my references and my visual library are vast, which has been very helpful in progressing my assignments and my personal work. Skills I learned in MIA such as film and shot analysis have been instrumental in this too.”*
- *“I have worked on a Music Video as a runner at Abbey Studios in London, I assisted the camera team. I am directing a Kodak Competition Advert for Adidas....I am directing a short film....”*

## Awareness of Creative Industry Training Opportunities

University students were asked how aware they were of Creative Industry Training Opportunities after graduation. The table below shows their responses:

|                  | %   |
|------------------|-----|
| Extremely aware  | 11% |
| Very aware       | 33% |
| Somewhat aware   | 44% |
| Not so aware     | 0   |
| Not at all aware | 11% |

Those who were aware of opportunities were asked to specify what these were. These were broadly categorised as:

- Entry level jobs at smaller companies
- Internships

## Job Opportunities

University students were asked what job opportunities they were aware of in Northern Ireland for new entrants into the Creative Industries. These were categorised as:

- Placements and apprenticeships
- Junior and entry level roles
- Opportunities at Titanic Studios

Several university student respondents also stated that they felt there were “*no opportunities*” in Northern Ireland and that the opportunities in Titanic Studios “*lacked broader international scope.*”

## Usefulness of Moving Image Arts Qualifications

University students were asked if they felt that their Moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use to them in the current degree. In total, 78% of respondents felt that the moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use and 22% felt that they were not.

## Skillset

University students were asked in what ways they felt that Moving Image Arts qualifications had increased their skillset. Responses were all positive and included:

- *“Basic understanding of camera operation, 5 areas of film, shot types, working to a deadline, producing and creating a short solo film.”*
- *“I focused on sound design for my A2 MIA project, so that naturally carries over to my sound design degree.”*
- *“Studying moving Image Arts helped me develop my tastes and my analytic skills which has made certain parts of my assignments a lot easier than if I hadn't.”*
- *“Once my degree is finished, I will have had 7 years of film knowledge and experience which (by the age of 21) I feel is very strong for finding a job in the industry. I can only thank MIA for that.”*

## Employed Cohort Members

Cohort members currently in employment were asked to state their job title and a brief description of the role. Some examples are included below:

| Job  | Role                                   |
|--|--|
| Camera Trainee   | Freelance trainee in camera department |
| 3D Artist  |  |
| Camera Assistant and Operator                            |  |
| Trainee Casting Co-ordinator                             | Casting for background and small roles |
| Assistant Production Co-ordinator in Scripted Television |  |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Locations Trainee/Assistant      | Working on the ground on location, scouting, liaising |
| Part-time Retail Assistant       |   |
| Customer Interactions Specialist | Handling customer queries via live chat               |
| Insurance Sales Adviser          | Setting up new customers with insurance               |
| Sandwich Artist at Subway        |   |
| Youth Worker                     | Ensuring safety of young people                       |

### **Career Progression/Change in the last 12 months**

Cohort members in employment were asked how their career had progressed or changed in the last 12 months (since the last survey). Responses included:

- *“I am now in the WFTV mentorship programme leaning heavily into operating.”*
- *“I graduated from university in July and am doing freelance work but can't afford to do it full time yet.”*
- *“I am in the second year of an NI Screen supported trainee scheme. I hope to be hired directly by the company later this year.”*
- *“In March 2022 I moved from working as an Unscripted Entertainment Production Coordinator to a Scripted HETV Production Secretary. I recently stepped up to Assistant Production Coordinator in HETV.”*
- *“I only began working in the industry last April and not an awful lot has changed. I was out of work for 2 months over winter due to there being a lack of work - the same as many other NI film workers.”*
- *“I have become increasingly busy working in film and High-End TV over the last 12 months due to the busyness of the local industry. When it was quiet during the winter months, I have worked on short films, music videos and commercials.”*
- *“Moved from graduation placement to contract employee.”*



## Awareness of Creative Industry Training Opportunities

Cohort members in employment were asked how aware they were of Creative Industry Training Opportunities. The table below shows their responses:

|                  | %   |
|------------------|-----|
| Extremely aware  | 17% |
| Very aware       | 8%  |
| Somewhat aware   | 58% |
| Not so aware     | 17% |
| Not at all aware | 0   |

## Job Opportunities

Cohort members in employment were asked what job opportunities they were aware of in Northern Ireland in the Creative Industries. Responses significantly more positive than those from university student respondents and much more comprehensive.

Responses included:

- *“NI Screen calls for crew, NI Screen trainee schemes, word of mouth job roles, etc.”*
- *“Multiple animation and games industry positions.”*
- *“NI screen opportunities as well as posts for freelance work in Facebook groups.”*
- *“There are currently many researchers needed for Factual content.”*
- *“I’m aware of ones posted via NI Screen which are almost always for more experienced candidates. I’m aware of the CINE vacancies, AIM high programme and any freelance work posted on Facebook.”*
- *“A few friends and I have come through trainee schemes supported by Northern Ireland Screen. These are great opportunities for people who want to work in the industry while receiving real living wage and steady work for at least 1 year.”*

## Usefulness of Moving Image Arts Qualifications

Cohort members in employment were asked if they felt that their Moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use to them in their present job. Overall, 67% of respondents felt that the moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use, 17 % felt that they were not and 17% stated that they did not know.

## Skillset

Cohort members in employment were asked in what ways they felt that Moving Image Arts qualifications had increased their skillset. Responses were all extremely positive and included:

- *“I think it was a great introduction to different aspects of filmmaking and encouraged me to do a degree in Film Studies. I don't think any qualification prepares you fully for work in the film industry, but they are great for providing opportunities to network with other young filmmakers, get used to skills needed in film work and understand the different department roles.”*
- *“Gave me a good understanding of composition and framing. Edit, sound and visuals.”*
- *“The leadership qualities required to take on that subject have carried into my adult life. The use of the technology in the course has helped me greatly as well as the analytical skills.”*
- *“Had I not taken the MIA GCSE and A-level I wouldn't have been given the starting skills needed for story telling in film. I cannot express enough how grateful I am [teacher at school] for bringing in the qualification to the school because I couldn't imagine myself working as anything else now!”*
- *“I think they gave me a good overview of film but mainly helped me progress into my film production course at university. MIA laid the foundation for this.”*
- *“Being able to work with others and problem solve, also sharing knowledge and working against deadlines.”*
- *“It improved my knowledge of the industry, comprehension and also independent working.”*

- *“I feel it set me up with a base knowledge of understanding of which job roles take on which responsibilities.”*

## **Awareness of Film Related Activity in Northern Ireland**

### **Film Festivals**

All existing Cohort Members were asked if they had attended any Film Festivals in Northern Ireland. Forty-eight percent stated that they had attended Film Festivals in Northern Ireland and 52% stated that they had not. Of those who had attended Film Festivals in Northern Ireland, those attended are detailed below:

|                         |                        |                 |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Belfast Film Festival   | Foyle Film Festival    | Film Devour     |
| Cinemagic Film Festival | Belfast Media Festival | MIA Awards Show |

### **Made in Northern Ireland Database**

All existing Cohort Members were asked if they had used the Made in Northern Ireland Database. Only 3% stated that they had used the resource, 30% had not used it and 67% had never heard of it. The small percentage that had used it stated that they had used it to search for production companies and to see what was filmed near them locally.

### **Northern Ireland Screen**

All existing Cohort Members were asked if they were aware of Northern Ireland Screen. In total, 89% stated were aware of Northern Ireland Screen, 4% stated they were not aware of Northern Ireland Screen and 7% stated that they had never heard of Northern Ireland Screen. Those respondents unaware of Northern Ireland Screen were all school pupils.

Cohort members who were aware of Northern Ireland Screen were asked what they knew about the organisation. Responses included:

- *“They provide funding for certain film making endeavours.”*
- *“They offer placement opportunities, training and fund games, film and animation.”*

- *“As of writing this, I’m just finished a health and safety and first aid course run by them! I also know that they offer funding to large productions as well as short films.”*
- *“They provide opportunities for creatives and actors, workshops and the films they help fund.”*
- *“They fund local films, offer training and funding towards training and they offer incentives for high end TV and Film to shoot in NI.”*
- *“I know about their current strategy, most current productions, job opportunities and schemes.”*
- *“I know they provide placement opportunities and funding for local projects.”*
- *“They can help provide paths for funding, help people get education and experience.”*
- *“They post crew calls and hold workshops for people venturing into the industry.”*
- *“They provide workshops and other opportunities.”*
- *“They host opportunities to support young people getting into the film industry.”*
- *“I have had short films funded by NI Screen, my current trainee scheme is via NI Screen, and I have also attended many workshops.”*
- *“Screen Agency in Northern Ireland. Have previously used them for crew searches for previous production I worked on. I also have a profile on there with my CV available.”*
- *“I know they provide a lot of funding, are the main site that post job opportunities and run a lot of schemes/training/workshops etc.”*

## **Digital Film Archive**

All existing Cohort Members were asked if they ever used the Digital Film Archive. Overall, 19% stated that they did use it, 48% stated that they had never used it and 33% stated that they had never heard of it. Those who had used it stated that they had used in the following ways:

- To access archive footage
- Research purposes
- University work
- Documentary work

## Changes to Qualifications Questionnaire Results

All Cohort members were given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire asking about changes to the Moving Image Arts qualifications. Questions were based on suggested changes to the qualifications from last years survey results.

### Suggested Changes

One suggested change was to allow pupils to work as a group taking on different roles (e.g., camera operator, director, producer...). Cohort members were asked if they thought this would be a good idea - 68% of Cohort members thought that this was a good idea, 11% felt that it was not a good idea and 21% stated that they did not know.

Those members who thought it was a good idea were asked to specify why. Responses included:

- *“It would allow people to focus on key aspects of the curriculum and become specialised in it at an early age.”*
- *“Because its so complicated doing all these roles alone and means you have to rely on other people outside of your cohort to get your qualification - this isn't always practical. Also more relevant to what the actual industry looks like.”*
- *“It would allow students to focus on an area that interests them. It would also be more representative of the film industry.”*
- *“Breaks up responsibility and makes managing a project easier, also allows you to try different areas of the craft at a young age.”*
- *“Before there was no group work but collaborating is all you do in filmmaking, this would be a good skill to have before industry/further education. It would also let them try different jobs to see what they think.”*
- *“I think it could allow pupils to find their likes and dislikes when it comes to production.”*
- *“When you get a job in the film industry, you won't get to make your own film right away. I think it would be beneficial for students to get a taste of each role in the film industry to see what appeals to them and let them narrow down what role they wish to undertake when they enter the film industry. Also working as a group with my*

*class really appeals to me, a group of creative people exchanging creative ideas and opinions could be of benefit to any given class, helping students gain constructive criticism or affirmation of their work.”*

- *“I think working in groups also reflects the more collaborative nature of the film industry in the real world.”*
- *“This would help prepare people for real positions in the work place.”*
- *“As the film and TV industry is pretty much reliant on teamwork it would help teach the students what it'd be like to work in a proper film production company. As well as this, working in groups would help the students themselves make friends and help to prepare them for teamwork in the normal world of work too.”*
- *“It would teach valuable skills regarding working as part of a team that students would need to work in the industry.”*

Several comments were made by Cohort members on why they felt this change was not a good idea as detailed below:

- *“MIA, like all school subjects has a varied work ethic among students. Some are really keen and enthusiastic and others are just doing it to fill a space in their subjects. It would probably be unbalanced and without the group work (i.e. GCSE component 3 as it is) it allows students to experience all aspects of the world of Film.”*
- *“This subject, at this early stage of learning should be explored as an art form. The students, should they continue higher education in Film production, will have plenty of time to work in teams later on as adults. Let students individually figure out what they like about making films as an introduction to film making.”*
- *“It is good experience to have to work on every department.”*

Due to evident difficulties of implementing this change in the school environment, cohort members were asked how they saw it working on a practical level in a school environment. Responses were both positive and negative as below:

**Positive:**

- *“Teachers assign roles based on their skills and peer marking used. Teachers monitor how the team works throughout.”*
- *“Two projects a year for grading, super short films, gives each student an opportunity to try at least 2 separate roles.”*
- *“It would be very beneficial to the students.”*
- *“If classes are an hour, this film could go on for one full term. The first class could be idea generation, the next script writing, then pre-production, location scouting, test shoots etc... it would make each class more exciting too, getting to do something new each time.”*
- *“During class time an empty area could be creatively utilised.”*
- *“I believe with the right implementation this addition could work really well, with the addition of the groups swapping roles or even members so that everyone gets to experience how each different role would operate.”*
- *“It would relieve the workload and prepare students for the industry rather than doing everything themselves.”*
- *“I think having students being paired up or put into groups of 3 via drawings lots or some other way would be a good way of choosing what groups look like as I believe that having students pick their friends as team members would make them prone to messing about more. Each team would also have a single piece of coursework consisting of each student picking a film or two to write an essay about to show their inspiration off to the examiners. I also like the idea of experimental films from AS Movie Image Arts and believe GCSE students should also have to make one or two to show off and practice their filming techniques.”*

**Negative:**

- *“Not particularly well as groups could have a participant who doesn't do their share of the work and worsens the project for everyone else.”*
- *“Honestly, I don't think it would work. The main issues I see is that there will be too many students who want to do camera and directing and then some would have to be forced to do one of the other roles. Plus, if you're in a group with someone who*

*just doesn't do their work then that could really drag you down with them. Another edge case would be if there was a small class size or a number that didn't split nicely into the roles."*

- *"Because of the varying number of class sizes, I feel that some groups would have to double up on work/share work so that everyone is contributing the same. I feel that teachers would also need to have regular meeting with each groups and each individual student to ensure that the work is being shared appropriately."*
- *"It would be easily done however would stop everyone from having a chance at every role."*

Cohort members were asked what they thought the assessment should be if the task was groupwork and everyone had a different role. Many responses simply stated that the assessment should be a short film but gave no detail of how this would work. Other responses included:

- *"I think the short film idea should still stand, but this way pupils can put their all into a specific role that they are responsible for."*
- *"It should be to make a small sequence to emphasise a mood or atmosphere."*
- *"You are given a sample script/screenplay/storyboard and each member would have to work with each other on how they would carry out production, bouncing ideas off each other like something similar to a writer's room style meeting, possibly implementing some practical elements such as display of camera/ sound/ editing skills."*
- *"Everyone gets equal marks for contribution but it's peer marked for fairness. Log kept daily of who did what at each stage of the project."*
- *"I think it should be in-depth pre-production work for each of the roles which would make up the majority of the marks and some for the actual film production as well. I also think they should be marked on their teamwork and it should be integral that they pull their weight if you will."*
- *"Graded individually, a reflective essay can help back up a student's thinking/ development if not clearly represented on screen."*



- *“If they produced a film, the film would get a mark overall. Their marks could then vary in each department e.g. if camera work wasn’t great, the DoPs mark might be lower than the production designers etc”.*
- *“Individual assessment with group feedback forms perhaps.”*
- *“In university we all do our own bit and also help others if needed. I think that if MIA coursework was carried out in groups that the director's notebook should be kept (and possibly renamed) but each person has to contribute to it e.g., producer does slides on risk assessment/location hunting, sound operator does slides with sound experiments/influences etc. I also think contribution forms would be necessary, so no one is tempted to do less than others. And I think that everyone should do their own reflective essay.”*

### **Beneficial Additions to the Moving Image Arts Qualifications**

Cohort members were given a list of ideas, taken from last years survey results, of changes or additions to the Moving Image Arts qualifications which may be useful. They were asked to indicate if they thought each one was useful. Results are included in the following table:

| Change/Addition   | % who thought it would be useful |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Trip to see a television or film set                            | 92%                              |
| Opportunity to talk to industry professionals informally on set | 77%                              |
| Guest teaching from industry professionals in schools           | 77%                              |
| Teaching on each role in the Creative Industries                | 77%                              |
| Collaboration with Drama department in school                   | 58%                              |
| Increased focus on television as well as film                   | 69%                              |
| Education on freelancing including financial skills             | 50%                              |
| Set etiquette   | 53%                              |
| Postproduction  | 65%                              |

## **Additional Suggestions**

Cohort members were asked if they had any further suggestions to improve or enhance the Moving Image Arts qualifications that had not already been referred to in the questionnaire.

Several responses were offered as follows:

- *“More hands-on lessons which allow us to practice using a camera in school with a teacher to guide. It is difficult to create a film at home when we are only taught theory in class.”*
- *“Better training for teachers, it won't always be possible to take a full class onto a film set but it would be easier to bring a teacher on set to give them experience and an awareness of how the film industry actually works.”*
- *“From my experience, film sets are not a place for students to be. They are very dangerous. Uni students should be brought to film sets. I believe that, when I studied this course, it worked so well because it wasn't about being industry ready at the end of it, it was about finding a passion for story telling through film making. In the industry we each follow a career in our specialism, I wouldn't want the students to feel they were being taught just to be put in the industry as the industry cannot be captured in a classroom. Let the students enjoy the art of the subject, rather than the business side”.*
- *“No. I would have been glad to have all the above additions as a part of the course when I was studying the subject.”*
- *“There needs to be more in-depth teaching on entry level jobs and the paths you can take to break into the industry.”*
- *“More opportunities for the work experience or learning courses offered to schools earlier in the academic year.”*

## **Theory Practice Balance**

All Cohort members were asked from their own experience, what percentage of the Moving Image Arts qualifications did they feel should be Theory and Practice. The following table shows the results:

| <b>Theory Practice Balance</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 25% theory, 75% practice       | 39%      |
| 50% theory, 50% practice       | 48%      |
| 75% theory, 25% practice       | 0        |
| Other                          | 13%      |

The 13% that stated other, expanded on their answers which made up combinations including those below:

- 33% theory, 67% practice.
- 35% theory, 65% practice.
- 40% theory, 60% practice.

Cohort members were asked if the balance was more heavily weighted towards practice, in their opinion would the increased access to equipment be available to facilitate that. 65% felt that it would be available, 30% felt that it would not and 4% did not know.

### **Inclusion of New Topic Areas**

All Cohort Members were asked if they felt that the Moving Image Arts qualifications need to include new topic areas. 39% felt that the qualifications does need to include new topic areas, 39% felt that it did not need to include new topic areas and 22% stated that they did not know.

For those respondents who indicated that the qualifications should include new topic areas, they were asked to indicate if the topic areas listed should be included. The table below shows the results:

| <b>Topic Area</b>                     | <b>%</b> |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Visual Effects                        | 67%      |
| 3D Animation Software                 | 44%      |
| The business of film and television   | 56%      |
| Understanding the production pipeline | 67%      |
| Other                                 | 11%      |

The other category responses included:

- How the film industry works
- How to get a job in the Creative Industries

## **Teaching Questionnaire Results**

Cohort members who are currently undertaking GCSE, AS or A2 Moving Image Arts were asked to complete a short optional questionnaire on Teaching. The results of this questionnaire are presented below.

Of those Cohort members who completed this questionnaire, 29% were undertaking GCSE, 36% were undertaking AS and 36% were undertaking A2 Moving Image Arts.

### **Satisfaction with Teaching**

Cohort members were asked if they were satisfied with the teaching of their Moving Image Arts qualification. Overall, 64% said that they were satisfied with the teaching, 21% said that they were not satisfied with the teaching and 14% said that they did not know.

Those who were unsatisfied with the teaching were asked to explain why this was. Responses revolved around lack of practical teaching, lack of technical skills, lack of knowledge of the film industry and lack of interaction with the class.

### **Skills to teach Moving Image Arts**

Results from last year's survey showed that 79% of Cohort Members said that they felt that their teacher did not have the skills to be teaching Moving Image Arts. This year's survey asked Cohort members if they thought that their current teacher has the skills to be teaching Moving Image Arts. Overall 57% stated that they felt that their current teacher did have the skills to teach Moving Image Arts, 36% felt that their teacher did not have the necessary skills and 7% stated that they did not know.

Those who felt that the teacher did not have the skills to teach Moving Image Arts were asked what skills they felt were lacking. Responses revolved around lack of technical ability, lack of specialised knowledge and lack of editing skills. Responses included:

- *“Lack of specialised knowledge, qualifications and experience.”*
- *“Their technical ability is the thing for me that I feel is most missing.”*
- *“The ability to teach more intricate editing skills as only a basic course is available to students. Any skills more than basic cuts, transitions and sound editing are left for students to figure out on their own which may cause a lot of stress. A more in-depth explanation of camera use and settings is also missing. As in my personal case I was taught nothing further than the difference between manual and auto focus and ISO settings.”*
- *“I feel that my current teacher is useful at showing the basics however cannot use some of the editing software that we need to use to create high quality films.”*

### **External Teaching Input**

Cohort members were asked if external teachers or people from industry (e.g. film or television) come into their classes to teach or to talk to pupils about Moving Image Arts or about working in the Creative Industries. In total, 86% of respondents stated that no external teachers or people from industry came into teach and 14% stated that they did. Example of this were an online zoom editing course delivered remotely and a radio professional who came into the class to talk about working in radio.

Those respondents who answered no indicated that no external teachers or industry professionals came into the classroom were asked if they felt this type of input would be useful. Most respondents felt that this would be very useful and responses included:

- *“I think it would be useful and exciting for students to hear from real practitioners in the industry as it would give more insight as to the reality of working in film.”*
- *“Yes I think it would be extremely useful as it would provide students with reassurance that you can be successful in the sector and they would be able to ask questions.”*

- *“Definitely, it would give people a basic technical understanding of how to use a camera and of how movies are made.”*
- *“I think this would be very useful as not many teachers have had experience working in this area and can’t give pupils a real insight.”*
- *“I think that it'd be quite fun and useful to be able to receive help from a professional as it'd be a good way for students to get into the industry mindset, helping them improve their films.”*
- *“I think it'd be massively useful, yes. Having an opportunity to speak to people already working in the industry would be a great way to learn what it’s really like and what the current state of it is.”*

One respondent felt that it would not be useful commenting:

- *“I don’t think it would be overly useful since it wouldn’t influence our thoughts all that much but it would be interesting.”*

### **Awareness of Roles / Jobs in the Creative Industries**

Cohort members currently undertaking a Moving Image Arts qualification were asked to identify all the roles / jobs that they were aware of in the Creative Industries. Some did not identify any, some identified a few and some identified a lot of roles/jobs. The roles/jobs that were identified collectively are detailed in the table below:

|                    |                         |                      |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Producer           | Director                | Writer               |
| Actor              | Pre-production Crew     | Post-production Crew |
| Camera Operator    | Editor                  | Sound Engineer       |
| Sound Designer     | SFX Designer            | VFX Designer         |
| Animator           | Screenwriter            | Storyboard Artist    |
| 3D or CGI Animator | Boom operator           | Script Supervisor    |
| Costume Designer   | Set Designer            | Props team           |
| Gaffer             | Runner                  | Grip                 |
| Assistant Director | Cinematographer         | Make Up Department   |
| Prop Master        | Art Director            | Locations Department |
| Sparks             | Equipment Rental Houses | COVID Department     |

## **Additional Comments**

Cohort members currently undertaking a Moving Image Arts qualification were given the opportunity at the end of the teaching questionnaire to include any other comments that they might have about teaching. Responses fell into the categories of editing, practical teaching, preparation for working in the Creative Industries. Some illustrative responses are outlined below:

Editing: *“I feel editing has been under taught and the teacher leaves it up to the pupil to decide how the film turns out.”*

Practical Teaching: *“I feel as though teaching could go more in depth in practical terms rather than a strong focus on theory to better help teach skills for future work.”*

Preparation for working in the Creative Industries: *“It doesn't prepare people for the world of work, film and TV work or otherwise.”*

## **Equipment Questionnaire Results**

Existing Cohort members who are currently undertaking GCSE, AS or A2 Moving Image Arts were asked to complete a short optional questionnaire on Equipment. The results of this questionnaire are presented below.

Of those Cohort members who completed this questionnaire, 29% were undertaking GCSE, 36% were undertaking AS and 36% were undertaking A2 Moving Image Arts.

In total, 92% of respondents were undertaking their Moving Image Arts qualification at school and 7% at Further Education College.

## **Availability of Equipment**

Results from last year's survey showed that less than half of the cohort members (47%) felt that there was enough equipment available for their Moving Image Arts course. Cohort members currently undertaking Moving Image Arts qualifications were asked this year if

they thought that the equipment available from their school/further education college was enough to undertake their Moving Image Arts qualification. 43% felt that there was enough equipment available, 43% felt that there was not and 14% stated that they did not know. These results are very similar to last years results.

Those respondents who indicated that they felt there was not enough equipment available were asked to explain why they thought this. Issues were also raised around the quality and newness of the available equipment as well as having to share equipment. These issues were all raised last year as well. Responses included:

- *“Yeah, you can get through it with a pass, but I think it limits students. Our school has old 2010 esque camcorders which severely limit the quality of practise and performance”.*
- *“The equipment provided is very old and low tech in regards to access to cameras (if a student doesn’t have a phone) and tripods.”*
- *“For AS and A2 we have to travel to another centre to do moving image, the school that I come from has one camera to two students at GCSE but at the centre where I do my moving image at, they have 5 cameras shared between GCSE, AS, and A2 with no additional equipment like microphones, lighting, or gimbals.”*
- *“The camera stands kept being used by the photography students.”*
- *“The quality of equipment is not good enough to create a slick professional looking film and I feel like that can effect grades.”*
- *“While my school does have camcorders and tripods, I believe that that's some outdated equipment. Nowadays, phones are a lot better for filming than a camcorder so equipment that is more up to date (such as tripods/gimbals designed for phones and camcorders/cameras that are not old-fashioned) would prove beneficial in giving each student a fair shot at the practical side of the course.”*

## **Up to Date Equipment**

Cohort members currently undertaking Moving Image Arts qualifications were asked if they felt that equipment provided by their school or Further Education College was up to date. Responses can be seen in the following table.



| Is the equipment provided up to date? | %   |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Yes                                   | 21% |
| No                                    | 36% |
| Some of it is                         | 36% |
| Don't know                            | 7%  |

## Own Equipment

Cohort members currently undertaking Moving Image Arts qualifications were asked if they had their own equipment. Responses can be seen in the table below:

| Do you have your own equipment? | %   |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Yes                             | 36% |
| No                              | 43% |
| Some of the equipment is my own | 21% |

Those who have their own equipment were asked to detail what this equipment was.

Details are included in the table below:

|        |        |                 |
|--------|--------|-----------------|
| Tripod | Camera | Microphone      |
| Go Pro | Gimbal | Audio equipment |
| Lights | iPad   | Apple pencil    |

Respondents with their own equipment were asked if they bought the equipment specifically to do the Moving Image Arts qualification. Overall, 50% stated that they specifically bought the equipment for undertaking the Moving Image Arts qualification and 50% stated that Moving Image Arts was not the only reason that they purchased their own equipment.

Those with their own equipment were asked to expand on why they felt that they needed to buy their own equipment. Responses included:

- *“Less hassle to use and to not feel pressure about breaking or damaging said equipment.”*
- *“I was planning to use the equipment for other aspects of my life, but it came in handy as an excuse to convince my parents it was a good idea.”*
- *“To produce a A2 standard film.”*
- *“Just to have the tool is good to have for filming when you want.”*
- *“It's way easier if you have good equipment.”*
- *“I wanted to try out different, higher standards of equipment.”*
- *“I didn't buy this equipment specifically for MIA however, as I've wanted to make my footage seem as professional as possible, I have contemplated buying a gimbal and some professional lighting to make sure my film looks as good as it possibly can.”*

### **Improvement in Equipment after Covid**

Respondents were asked if they thought that the equipment available for Moving Image Arts had improved after return to face to face learning with no restrictions after Covid. The table below shows the responses.

| <b>Has equipment improved after Covid?</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|----------|
| Yes  | 21%      |
| No   | 36%      |
| Don't know                                 | 43%      |

### **Access to Equipment**

Respondents were asked if they felt that they had enough access to equipment. Overall, 79% felt that they did, 14% felt that they did not and 7% indicated that they did not know. The main reasons provided for feeling like there was not enough equipment was the sharing

of equipment across the school and across pupils and there not being enough equipment in the first place.

## **Standardisation of Equipment**

Respondents were asked if they felt that equipment should be standardised across schools and Further Education College for Moving Image Arts. Overall, 86% of respondents felt that it should be standardised and 14% stated that they did not know.

## **Owning Equipment**

Respondents were asked if they felt that those pupils who owned their own equipment had an unfair advantage over those who needed to use the schools equipment. Overall, 43% felt that those who owned their own equipment had an unfair advantage, 29% felt that they did not have an unfair advantage, 14% stated that they did not know and 14% felt that there was maybe a slight advantage but not a major one.

Those respondents who indicated that they felt pupils with their own equipment had an unfair advantage were asked to expand on this. Responses included:

- *“They can do coursework at any point or time, not just at school or when they have borrowed equipment.”*
- *“The private equipment is vastly superior. For example, I have a GoPro Hero 9 with advanced and adjustable electronic video stabilisation which gives me more opportunities (i.e., filming while running, not having to use a tripod, being able to not use a dolly etc) over those who use the old shaky camcorders provided by school.”*
- *“Equipment is ready at their disposal and don't need to queue on a waiting list or block slots to use school equipment.”*
- *“If you have a gimbal or Steadicam then you're going to get higher marks because you have better control over the camera. Especially with audio where equipment makes a big difference. If you have wireless lav mics then your audio, even in windy conditions, will sound so much better.”*
- *“They are able to produce high quality films which look much more professional and can achieve a much more vibrant and detailed film.”*

Several respondents who do own their own equipment had an alternative view as comments below show:

- *“There is a slight advantage, but teachers could help those students who have to use school supplies to think of creative ways to shoot scenes to make up for the other students', potentially better, knowledge of film.”*
- *“If they've made that investment at their own expense, then they have every right to be allowed to use it. Films should be marked mostly on the basis of technique, not camera quality.”*

## **Screen Academies and Screenworks Questionnaire Results**

A small number of Cohort Members who had attended one of the Screen Academies or Screenworks in the last three years completed this questionnaire.

Screen Academies attended included the BFI Film Academy, the Animation Academy and Screenworks. All respondents indicated that they found the experience useful. The most useful experiences were detailed as enhancing skills, industry contacts, hands on experience with professional equipment and seeing what its like in the film industry. There was nothing that any respondents found not to be useful and no improvements were suggested.

All respondents would recommend attending a Screen Academy or Screenworks. Reasons for recommending attendance included allowing young people to get hands on experience, development of teamwork skills, providing a rounded view of the film industry, being taught by people working in the industry and expansion of skillsets.

All respondents felt that attending a Screen Academy or Screenworks had positively influenced their choices around Moving Image Arts and a possible career in the Creative Industries. 50% of respondents said that they were planning to attend another Screen Academy of Screenworks.

## Free Comments Box

A 'free comments box' was included in the set of questionnaires available for Cohort Members to complete if there was anything they wished to say that they had not had an opportunity to say in any of the questionnaires. Some of the comments are included below:

- *"I'm not sure if this is because of my school in particular but I felt like there was way too much work (for both GCSE and A2). We're expected to juggle nearly every aspect of filmmaking and I feel like that is an unfair showcase of what industry-level work is like since in an actual industry environment you'd be given a certain role and tasks to do instead of everything."*
- *"I thought the theory we learnt was very beneficial towards increasing my awareness and understanding of filmmaking. e.g., the different new waves and styles."*
- *"I have greatly enjoyed studying AS and A2 Moving Image Arts. I believe the course is a great introduction to the world of film and can prove a great asset to finding work within the industry or furthering your education. I feel like less of a focus on theory and more focus and in-depth teaching on practical topics like camera, sound and editing would be a vital improvement to the course."*
- *"I hope in the future that we can get class visits to different studios and get introduced to local professionals in the industry to find out how they made it in the industry, the overall curriculum currently seems a bit bland and outdated and not that engaging despite it being my favourite subject, hopefully the course will be updated in the years to come."*
- *"Working together with the school's drama department absolutely has to happen, as I feel it would greatly benefit both groups; the MIA students gain actors/actresses, and the drama students gain more experience. It'll also be helpful for MIA students who don't have friends/family who are able to help them."*
- *"I feel that the GCSE should involve professionals coming into school and talking to students about the creative industry."*
- *"I do believe that without MIA I wouldn't be where I am today. My teacher made us all believe that a career in film is possible and I now know that to be true and I'm getting there bit by bit. I do think that more schools should be encouraged to offer*

*GCSE MIA because it is unlike any other subject and I think there would be more of an uptake at A-Level if pupils were allowed to experience the subject at GCSE also.”*

- *“The most useful information Moving Image Arts students could use, would be honest advice from those working in the industry and how to gain the qualifications needed for entry-level work in the industry.”*

## **Case Studies**

In Year 3 of the study within the first survey, the Cohort members were asked to volunteer if they would like to take part in the Case Study stage of the research. In total 38 members agreed to take part.

These 38 volunteers were emailed at the start of March 2022 and asked a few questions via email about the stage of their journey in relation to Moving Image Arts. This was to facilitate choosing of 10 appropriate Cohort members to take part in the case study research.

Twenty-two cohort members responded to this email and some basic information was gathered on the case study volunteers, to facilitate sorting into three categories.

1. Current school pupils
2. Current university students
3. Currently in employment in the Creative Industries

After categorising these 22 volunteers, a random selection of 10 members was made from each category comprising 4 school pupils, 3 university students and 3 people currently employed in the Creative Industries.

These 10 members were contacted to obtain informed consent to be interviewed. The remaining 12 cohort members were contacted to thank them for volunteering and ask them to be a reserve in case of selected members dropping out or being unavailable. Several reserve members were interviewed in the end replacing selected members who did not respond to give informed consent.

Interviews with the 10 case study volunteers were undertaken between April and June 2022. These were the first interviews in each case study. Interviews will continue on an annual basis to build a case study for each individual charting their journey with Moving Image Arts. Interviews were recorded with consent from the participant and transcribed verbatim. On analysis, five of the interviews were considered to be suitable to continue as case studies. The excluded interviews were not considered to have the substance to facilitate an ongoing case study.

The final five case studies include:

- 1 current school pupil
- 3 current university students
- 1 person currently working in the Creative Industries

A simple overview of each the case studies are included on the following pages. Yearly updating interviews will be undertaken as necessary and case studies built into a final illustration of each person's journey with Moving Image Arts. Names have been changed to protect anonymity.

### **Case Study 1: David**

At the time of interview, David was at school undertaking AS Moving Image Arts having complete GCSE Moving Image Arts the year before. He has always had an interest in cameras and technology and those were his initial reasons for wanting to do Moving Image Arts at GCSE, AS and A2 next year. He has had several trainee positions and a crew position since starting Moving Image Arts and wants to pursue a career in the Creative Industries. He has also attended Cinemagic and the BFI Film Academy.

David feels that the teacher makes a big difference to pupils' enjoyment of the Moving Image Arts qualifications at school and feel that Moving Image Arts as a subject is a lot more enjoyable than his Maths or Physics AS studies. *"A more creative, relaxed subject.... A lot more enjoyable to study..."*

David particularly likes the fact that Moving Image Arts links to his outside interests and that from an extracurricular point of view he is able to get involved in other activities after school by filming events such as music concerts or art exhibitions.

He is much more interested in the practical teaching of Moving Image Arts and doesn't find the Theory elements of the subject very enjoyable but accepts that they are necessary.

David's plan moving forward is to complete his AS and continue to A2 Moving Image Arts. He would then like to take a gap year to work in industry to get some experience before going to University to study either Audio Engineering or Video and Photography or possibly to the Irish National Film School to undertake a BA in Film. The job he would ultimately like to aim for in his career is Cinematographer. *"Cinematographer is the end goal so then my career would just be like working up to that from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> to camera op to DOP would kind of be where I'd like to sit..."*



### **Case Study 2: Mark**

At the time of interview, Mark was a second year University student at the University for the Creative Arts in England studying Film Production. While at school in Northern Ireland, Mark undertook GCSE, AS and A2 Moving Image Arts.

At University, Mark has had the opportunity to make two documentary films, directing one and cinematographer and editor in another. He has also been writing scripts and had the opportunity to work on a fiction film as first assistant camera operator and grip.

After he finishes his degree, Mark is aiming to go to the National Film and Television School to do a post graduate qualification.

Mark originally decided to take GCSE Moving Image Arts because he wanted to be a writer and was very interested in storytelling. He enjoyed the GCSE so much, he wanted to continue to AS and A2. *“I was completely like instantly, I want to continue this for two years, for two more years because the good thing about [school name] is because the sixth form college is connected its very good... to just continue... same teacher, all the same equipment.... So, there was no doubt about that. Really what was driving it for me behind that was to be able to make more short films...”*

Mark’s favourite thing about studying Moving Image Arts was making short films and editing them using industry level software but didn’t enjoy the exam elements of the qualifications. Taking Moving Image Arts changed what he wanted to pursue as a career *“MIA really brought my love of film more because this is something I can learn, this is an art form actually and I can be part of that”.*

### **Case Study 3: Siobhan**

At the time of interview, Siobhan was a second year University student at Ulster University studying Cinematic Arts. Siobhan undertook AS and A2 Moving Image Arts at school. In Northern Ireland, she did not undertake GCSE Moving Image Arts as it wasn't offered at her school. Since studying at University, Siobhan is very interested in a career in Cinematography and Directing. Paid opportunities at University so far having included editing promotional videos and working as a make-up artist on TV sets. Siobhan has also gained camera experience volunteering on other people's films.

While she was interested in making films as a child, she says that it was taking Moving Image Arts at school that made her think about a career in film. *"It was definitely because of Moving Image Arts; I hadn't really thought of Film as anything more than a hobby. I had previously just made films for fun when I was a child but I didn't really think any deeper into it until doing Moving Image Arts and learning about the theory of film.... so, it was definitely because of Moving Image Arts".*

Siobhan really liked the freedom to create that the Moving Image Arts AS and A2 gave her, she like not being told exactly what to do but that the remit was broad. While she loved the practical aspects of Moving Image Arts, she also really enjoyed the theory side of the qualifications as well. *"I actually found the theory really interesting and so did a lot of other people in my class.... We really enjoyed our theory days and particularly in A2 actually, we really enjoyed the more creative and artistic side of theory... and it was all something we could put into practice and there was no part of it that was boring or that felt like a chore".*

There was nothing that Siobhan didn't like about the Moving Image Arts qualifications but if she had to change anything she would incorporate more information and teaching on the different roles in the industry. *"I would have liked to have known, what does the producer do, what does the director do or what does a gaffer do and sound... I know every course was different but I didn't really learn how to use specific microphones or lighting in a different way so I would have liked to have learned a bit more about production roles".*

Other changes she would make would include theory and practice being 50% each and would try to find a way to introduce group work and collaboration into the film making process for the Moving Image Arts qualifications.

Siobhan felt that having undertaken the AS and A2 qualifications before university gave her a great advantage over many other students who hadn't studied "*Moving Image Arts at school. know in first year, first year... well at least the first half of first year, basically getting everyone who hadn't done Moving Image Arts and those who had, all on the same page*".

#### **Case Study 4: John**

At the time of interview, John was a first year student at Queens University Belfast studying Film Studies and Production. John undertook GCSE, AS and A2 Moving Image Arts at school. As his school didn't offer Moving Image Arts at A-Level, John attended a nearby school who were offering Moving Image Arts for his classes as part of a shared partnership arrangement.

John had a general interest in film but explains that taking Moving Image Arts at GCSE and A-level heavily influenced his decision to seek a career in the Creative Industries. *"It... would have been from MIA because initially when I picked it for GCSE I was just thinking, oh this will be just a fun little subject to go along with the others but.... Because originally I think I was... thinking of going into engineering but then when I did MIA I thought, no actually I prefer this so much more to like the technology and design subjects so I did it again for A level and at that point I realised that yes I would love to do a degree in this and actually get a career in it".*

During his GCSE in Moving Image Arts, he also attended the BFI Film Academy at the Nerve Centre which ran for a year and he also felt this had influenced his decision to pursue a career in the Creative Arts.

If he could change anything about the Moving Image Arts qualifications it would be to incorporate screenings of the films needed within the curriculum even as an extra curriculum activity. He felt that it was very necessary to watch the recommended films but that most people didn't.

John chose his university degree because it was 50% theory and 50% practice as opposed to courses that were heavily weighted towards practice. In his third year at University is a placement year and he hopes to find a placement that will lead onto a job or career in the Creative Industries. He is not entirely sure as yet what he would like that to be. He feels that the areas he is most interested in are screenwriting and directing.

### **Case Study 5: Jane**

At the time of interview, Jane was working as a video games producer in Canada having gone through a number of iterations in her career in the Creative Industries spanning the last 10 years. She was previously the Chair of Games NI and had worked remotely with companies in the UK before relocating to Canada.

Jane originally chose Moving Image Arts at A-level because she wanted to be a web designer and there was a lack of creative arts courses at her school. She was a pupils on the first year of intake for the Moving Image Arts qualifications. She quickly realised that it was nothing like web design but continue on with the AS and A2 Moving Image Arts because she really enjoyed them. No GCSE in Moving Image Arts was available at the time she was a school. *“So... I did the course [MIA] and I really loved it, I really fell in love with it and I... I got one of the highest grades in the year in it and just really, really enjoyed it, I just found a love of moving image and film and tv and animation.”*

Jane ended up going to University to study Web Design but in her final year project she redesigned a website for a company which included making a lot of video tutorials which again sparked her love of film and video. *“Basically I felt like doing Moving Image Arts plus my interest in interactive media made it like I could kind of do everything, I left with such a diverse skill set from my course that it’s made me extremely employable as a freelancer... I mean I’ve never had a full time job, I’ve freelanced my entire career now from that but when I left university I got a web job and within a month I quit and that’s when I got my first job in TV so I worked in TV for 4 years after that and I really think I got that job purely off the videos I had made for that company in the final year of my degree”.*

Jane feels that studying Moving Image Arts has had a huge impact on her career and feels that the skills she learned during AS and A2 Moving Image Arts have been invaluable in securing employment in the industry. She particularly like the practical elements of the Moving Image Arts qualifications. *“It was the practical side of it that I really enjoyed the most and I felt like you got a lot of creative freedom to make what you want to make, to express yourself through the medium and the teaching was in such a way that like.... I didn’t*

*do any video education in university but yet the skills that I learnt at A2 level was enough to get me a job in the industry...”.*

If she could change anything about the Moving Image Arts qualifications, she would incorporate teamwork and collaboration into the A-level, getting pupils to work together in different roles to make short films.

## Discussion and Conclusions

What we can now say with confidence pointing to mounting empirical evidence is that Moving Image Arts is having a significant effect on the creative industries in Northern Ireland. Many of those who have studied Moving Image Arts at school have cited the qualification as a key influence on their decision to pursue further study in the area and ultimately to go on a work in the creative or screen industries. This years study findings have produced a huge amount of information which is detailed in this report. In this section, some of the key elements of these findings are discussed.

This Cohort is the first of its kind anywhere in the world in relation to Moving Image Arts and the Creative Industries. There are currently 400 members of the Cohort. This year's more nuanced surveys targeted specific areas of interest that had arisen from the results of the first survey in January 2021. The primary data sources come from the 'Updating Survey' and the 'New Members Baseline Survey' with other optional surveys targeting specific areas of interest. Composition of the current cohort is 11% currently taking GCSE, 44% currently taking AS, 11% currently taking A2 and 33% having previously undertaken a Moving Image Arts qualification.

Many are drawn to the subject initially because of a love of film and or animation. However, we regularly see evidence that the main reason for studying the subject is an interest and ambition to work in the creative sector post education. What we know now about the usefulness of the qualification tells us that the creative side of the qualification holds a lot of appeal, the practical work is highly valued, and there is a genuine understanding of the value of communication skills acknowledged. Further, exploring different aspects and genres of film are important to the cohort. However, we also learned from findings is that cohort members want to see some changes. Core themes emerging here include changing the duration of the film assessment. Many see the duration for the animated 3 minutes films as very demanding within the timeframe available, shortened school year and early delivery. Indeed, timings and balancing the coursework across the years could be scheduled differently to enable more time against deadlines particularly in relation to the practical work. Many felt that the practical deadlines are too early. Teamwork also features largely in

qualitative feedback or lack for it to be precise. Frequently the cohort refers to need for teamwork as an issue, particularly by those who are now working in industry. In stark contrast, we see at university level students often pushing back against teamwork/groupwork assessment preferring to have authorship and ownership over their work than be part of a constructed group dynamic but at school there appears to be a keen interest to explore and encourage groupwork as a way to improve the qualification. This is largely related to assessment and likely requires further discussion as to the pros and cons of change here.

Over 75% of the new Cohort members said that they would recommend Moving Image Arts qualifications to other students. This is a significant percentage and draws on the overarching theme that runs through the findings, that those who study the qualification find it very useful. Across all existing members of the Cohort we see a figure of 75% saying they would recommend the qualification to other students. This is down on the 90% figure for last year but interestingly, when new cohort members this year were asked if they chose the qualification because they wanted to work in the creative industries, 100% stated that they did chose MIA because they wanted to work in the creative industries. This is a very high percentage and demonstrates a greater and increasing awareness of the possibilities for work in the creative industries at a relatively young age. This too brings some new challenges and the base level knowledge of production is ever increasing in new cohorts of students with an interest in the area.

When we explore satisfaction overall, we see that 69% of the new cohort to the study this year were satisfied with MIA. It is worth contextualising these scores in an environment when this cohort are largely a Covid generation moving through GCSE into AS/A2 emerging from a pandemic. When asked about Covid directly, particularly those who had taken AS or A2 qualifications within the last three years that element of the cohort felt the pandemic had an impact. Overall, 50% stated that it did have an impact on the course and their learning and 19% stated that it did not. In the comments we see evidence for what that effect was. For example, some suggested that it particularly impacted on the practical work and made it harder. Harder to access locations, people and equipment. Further Covid



restrictions limited what was possible in terms of practical support and being at/working from home was challenging.

Contributing to a lower satisfaction score overall, is the issue of resources and equipment. Overall, 50% stated that there were enough resources available, 25% stated that there were not enough resources available and 25% stated that they did not know. Many of those surveyed in comments suggested that the qualification was made more difficult 'without proper equipment'. Some current students suggested that it was very difficult to acquire the proper equipment and this 'put a lot of stress on keeping to the recommended deadlines'. The cohort was asked directly about teaching. The good news here is that 75% of current students of MIA stated that they felt their teachers did have the practical skills to be teaching MIA. Only 6% suggested their teachers did not have the necessary practical skills.

The influence of the qualification on University and FE course choices is clearly evidenced also in the study. Those still at school and Further Education College students were asked if they intended to go to university in the future. Overall, 55% stated that it was their intention to go to university in the future and 45% stated that they did not know. However, we are also seeing a narrowing of the breath of courses taken by those moving into creative courses at university than in previous years. Of those in Further Education colleges, 91% stated that they were planning on working in the creative Industries. When asked about what roles they want to explore FE suggested the following:

- Animator
- Character Design
- Director
- Graphic Designer
- Film Director
- Photographer
- Artist
- Camera Operator
- Screenwriter

It is worth noting that not all these roles feature in the Moving Image Arts curricula. However, when we extrapolate out the data around the awareness of roles in the creative industries, we see a broader range of roles (pg.21) and a pragmatic mix of craft and technical being referred to in this year's study. Significantly 91% of FE students believed choosing Moving Image Arts would help further their career in the Creative Industries and only 9% stated that they didn't know.

In relation to the academies, we now know that 38% of the cohort have attended a BFI Academy or Screenwork's programme with the last 5 years. What they found most useful from these courses included insight into the film industry and jobs; new skills gained such as working in teams and experience in software; pitching skills and meeting like-minded people. In fact, a direct correlation to what many in the cohort pointed out were traits missing from the MIA qualifications. The academies therefore have an important function at present in augmenting the experience of many in relation to working in the industry. Many pointed to being able to see how professionals work as very useful. Regrettably, 33% of Cohort members asked if they felt that there were better opportunities outside of Northern Ireland to work in the Creative Industries said yes but the majority at 58% said that they didn't know. There is an opportunity in these findings to find ways to connect more effectively with this group to enable them to understand the workplace and the scale of the employment opportunities happening in Northern Ireland and indeed the diversity of roles required for film and television production here.

Broader industry awareness was also explored with the cohort this year. When asked about film festivals only 6% of the new members in the cohort stated that they attended film festivals in Northern Ireland and 94% said they did not. However, within the existing cohort members the figures were slightly better with 48% stating that they had attended Film Festivals in Northern Ireland and 52% stated that they had not.

There is an opportunity here to explore what would bring more of this reflective sample of our young creatives to film festivals and indeed what the purpose of such festivals are. When asked if they had used the 'Made in Northern Ireland Database' no Cohort Members had used the resource and 63% of the cohort had never heard of it. Overall, 73% of the new

Cohort members were aware of Northern Ireland Screen and 89% of existing Cohort members were aware of the organisation but when asked if they knew what the organisation does, the responses demonstrated very limited understanding of the role of Northern Ireland Screen. This presents an opportunity for Northern Ireland Screen to raise awareness of the organisation and to build a better understanding of the work they do at every level. When asked about the Digital Film Archive none of the new members had ever used it and only 38% of the Cohort overall stated that they had never heard of it. Among existing members 19% stated that they had used the archive although 33% stated they had never heard of it.

‘Exploring changes’ to the qualification formed a significant section of the questionnaires this year. All cohort members were given the chance to suggest changes to the MIA qualification. One of the main suggestions that came through strongly in each demographic was groupwork. Working in groups seems to be an area where the cohort believe the qualification could be improved. Many even suggest that they would be interested in trying other roles or indeed to cycle around craft roles within group projects with 68% of the cohort believing that this was a good idea. Of those in industry many talked about the fact that you can’t make a film on your own and that communication and teamwork are critical skills in relation to production. Ultimately though there were no radical or worrying trends identified through the findings for suggested changes. The cohort was also presented with a list of options to add into the qualification and through not comprehensive we see some strong support for several options. Top among these was the opportunity to visit a production, followed by the chance to visit professionals on a set or working in the field. When we explore the list there are likely some that are very much worth exploring in the context of refreshing or modernising the qualification going forward but those now working in the industry acknowledged that film sets are dangerous places for those at school. That said those now working in the industry conceded that university students should be given the opportunity to see a production in action. Logistically however, insurance and setiquette training are prohibitive factors where it comes to large scale productions, not to mention the Intellectual Property and management of information or storylines where young people are concerned. A few of the cohort pointed to the industry need for non-disclosure

agreements, age of consent to sign the agreements and that these are hard, if not impossible to enforce in the era of social media and its use in younger students.

The study looked at the theory practice split. Ultimately the cohort were split also. The majority (48%) believed that MIA should be 50% practice and 50% theory though 39% believed that theory should only account for 25%. When asked what new topics could be included for study in MIA, the majority suggested visual effects/digital skills (67%) followed closely by a better understanding of the production pipeline. This recurrent theme of connection and relevance to the industry manifests through the analysis in different guises and a response to how this could be managed would greatly benefit the qualification going forward. That said, 78% of university students in the cohort said they felt MIA qualifications were of use to them on their current degree pathway.

When we look to those in the cohort who are now working in industry, we of course can see the greater diversity of roles than those explored in the MIA coursework. However, what the study has uncovered is the lack of awareness of further training opportunities post education. Again, this is an area that could be addressed with intervention. Bringing a greater level of awareness around continual professional development and skills courses available for after your formal education yet introduced at school level.

In most cases the cohort are satisfied with the teaching of the qualification. Of those unsatisfied we can connect some of the problems to the lack of practical teaching, lack of technical skills and lack of knowledge on the film industry of teachers. In last year's survey 79% of cohort members said that they felt their teachers did not have the skills to teach MIA. The existing cohort this year said that overall, 57% felt their current teacher did have the skills to teach MIA. Moving Image Arts students currently taking the qualification were much more positive about teaching with 75% stating that they felt their teachers did have the practical skills to be teaching MIA and only 6% suggested their teachers did not have the necessary practical skills.

The same reasons reoccur amongst the different demographics suggesting a lack of specialist knowledge as an issue but reading deeper into the analysis, there appears to be a

disconnect with what is being taught and what students already know about industry practice going into the subject. There is some evidence here to suggest that many students are getting more and more exposure to the processes of production, to behind the scenes of film production and that this element is now missing in the qualifications and by reflection from the experience of the teaching staff also. Many of the cohort felt largely unsupported formerly when it came to learning editing software for example. There is perhaps an opportunity here to homogenise the software used and further develop the teaching assets provided to schools to support the adoption of editing software and primarily the teachers who need to deliver the training.

We now know from the findings that many in the cohort would welcome industry experts coming into class at school level. This may be much more achievable than bringing students on to film sets etc. However, to date 86% of the cohort said they have never had external industry involvement in the teaching of Moving Image Arts or visits to their schools. Many in qualitative comments suggested that hearing from those in industry first hand would be very welcome. Another area of concern was the availability of equipment. Only 43% felt there was enough equipment and 43% felt there was not enough equipment available at their school for MIA assessed work. Further, the equipment offered or available was often criticised as being outdated or 'old' dating back in some cases to 2010. Many of the cohort commented that equipment provided at school level was 'not good enough' to create work at the standard they wanted to achieve. When we look to the analysis of equipment in use, we discover that 36% of the cohort have their own equipment with 43% not owning their own equipment. Many suggesting it resulted in less pressure to have their own equipment to give them more time to complete course work. There may well be an inequity here between those who can buy personal equipment and those depending on dated or more basic kit supplied by schools. However, 79% of the cohort felt that they had enough access to equipment either way but interestingly, 86% of the cohort, the overwhelming majority felt that the equipment should be standardised.

There is good news in relation to the Screen Academies and Screenwork's programmes. It is clear from the analysis and feedback that these have been very successful. All respondents would recommend attending a Screen Academy or Screenwork's event or training course.

All respondents who took part in one of the above said that it had positively influenced their career path towards working in the creative industries. In fact, 50% suggested they were planning to attend another screenwork's event where possible.

Lastly in the questionnaire was a free comments box. This enabled the cohort to feedback anything not already covered or asked in the surveys. What we learn from this is of course is subjective but some of the recurrent themes only serve to reinforce much of what has already been discussed in the analysis thus far i.e., a strong desire to engage with industry and the opportunity to connect with professionals. These themes emerge time and time again as extremely important to cohort members and perhaps to the development and continuing success of the qualification.

This year the report includes case studies from the cohort, individuals who took the time to meet with the author to explore their personal journey. What these case studies tell us is very useful but again we can see clearly identified is a common or shared enthusiasm for the practical aspects of the qualification. The making of work is still a critical component to the success of MIA. What we can also extrapolate from those who are now working in industry is that the qualification was seminal in their decision to want to work in the creative industries. These case studies are personal stories and they only serve to support the findings in this study that Moving Image Arts at school level is having a significant impact on those who took the qualification and this influence is now manifesting in the creative workforce in Northern Ireland.

## Key Findings from Questionnaires

### Baseline Survey (New Members)

- The age range for the new members who completed the survey was 15 years to 26 years. 83% were female and 5% were male. 11% indicated that they did not wish to indicate gender. 55% were at school, 11% at University and 11% in employment.
- 11% currently undertaking GCSE Moving Image Arts; 44% currently undertaking AS Moving Image Arts; 11% currently undertaking A2 Moving Image Arts; and 33% previously undertaken a Moving Image Arts qualification.
- 61% of new cohort members had previously undertaken GCSE Moving Image Arts, 38% had previously undertaken AS Moving Image Arts and 22% had previously undertaken A2 Moving Image Arts.
- Reasons for wanting to undertake MIA fell into two categories – love of and interest in film and wanting to work in the creative industries in the future.
- Cohort members felt that MIA was useful in relation to practical work, editing, creating short films, understanding the basics, communication skills, exploring different aspects of film, learning different film techniques, understanding directors thought processes and getting in touch with their creative side.
- Suggested changes to MIA included shortening the film for assessment, alerting the timeframe, inclusion of teamwork/groupwork and working more closely with classmates.
- 75% of new Cohort members, said that they would recommend Moving Image Arts, 6% percent stated that they wouldn't recommend it and 19% stated that they didn't know if they would recommend it.
- The overall percentage who would be happy to recommend Moving Image Arts to other students is lower at 75% than in last year's survey, when 90% of the cohort members stated that they would recommend the qualifications.
- Reasons for recommending MIA included that it was a unique and fun creative subject, different to other subjects, provided an opportunity to explore the creative industries while at school, gives you a wide skillset for preparing to work in the film industry, great introduction to film theory and a more relaxed subject.

- Reasons for not recommending MIA include that it needs to be more in-depth and that the teachers need to be interested in teaching it.
- 100% stated that they chose MIA because they wanted to work in the Creative Industries. This is a higher percentage than last year's survey results which showed that 78% said that they chose the qualifications for that reason.
- Only 18% stated that they felt that MIA is viewed as 'easy', a further 44% stated that they did not feel that MIA is viewed as 'easy' and 38% stated that they did not know. These results show a much lower percentage of new cohort members feeling that the qualifications are perceived as 'easy' than last year's results when 59% felt MIA was viewed as 'easy'.
- 69% stated that they were satisfied with MIA, 13% stated that they were not and 19% stated that they did not know. A lower percentage of respondents indicated that they were satisfied this year with MIA than last year when 87% stated they were satisfied with MIA.
- 50% stated that there were enough resources available, 25% stated that there were not and 25% stated that they did not know. Results from both last year and this year are very similar with around 50% of cohort members stating that there were enough resources.
- 75% stated that they felt their teachers did have the practical skills to be teaching Moving Image Arts, 6% felt that they did not and 13% stated that they did not know. Results from last year are very similar.
- 50% stated that the pandemic has had an impact on the course and their learning and 19% stated that it did not. A further 19% stated that they didn't know. Last year 95% of respondents last year felt that the pandemic has an effect on the course and their learning so the effect of that seems to be markedly reduced this year.
- 55% of school pupils and FEC students stated that it was their intention to go to university in the future and 45% stated that they did not know. This is a lower percentage than last year's results (71%). Intervening factors may include the current cost of living crisis.
- 91% of school pupils and FEC students stated that their intention was to pursue a career in the Creative Industries. 9% stated that they did not know yet. It is evident



that a much higher percentage indicated that they were planning a career in the Creative Industries this year than last year (63%).

- Future intended jobs included Animator, Character Design, Director, Graphic Designer, Film Director, Photographer, Artist, Camera Operator and Screenwriter.
- 91% of school pupils and FEC students felt that choosing to do MIA at GCSE, AS or A2 would further their career in the Creative Industries. This is a higher percentage than last year (76%).
- 38% of new cohort members had attended a Screen Academy or ScreenWorks. Academies within the last 5 years including BFI Film Academy, Animation Academy and ScreenWorks. Courses and workshops taken included Documentary Animation, Storytelling, Faking Reality 3D, Storyboarding Art for Games and Film and Animation.
- 33% of new cohort members felt that there were good opportunities to work in the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland, 8% felt that there were not and 58% stated that they did not know. A lower percentage this year felt that there were good opportunities than last year (59%).
- 33% felt that there were better opportunities outside of NI to work in the Creative Industries, 8% felt that there was not and 58% stated that they didn't know. This was a lower percentage than last year who felt that there were better opportunities outside NI (51%).
- 6% of all new cohort members stated that they had attended a Film Festival in Northern Ireland and 94% stated that they had not. The only Film Festivals attended were Belfast Film Festival and BFI Docs Ireland.
- 38% of new cohort members stated that they had not used Made in NI Database and 63% had never heard of it.
- 75% of new cohort members stated they were aware of Northern Ireland Screen, 19% stated they were not and 6% stated that they had never heard of Northern Ireland Screen.
- No new members had used the Digital Film Archive and 38% stated that they had never heard of it.

## Updating Questionnaire (Existing Members)

- Age range was from 16 to 29 years of age. 49% of the cohort identified as female, 43% identified as male, 3% indicated that they would prefer not to say and 5% identified as non-binary. 26% of the cohort are school pupils, 31% are university students, 37% are currently in employment and 6% were 'other' included currently unemployed, employed part-time and taking a gap year.
- 38% of school pupils indicated that they intend to pursue a career in the Creative Industries in the future, 38% states that they did not intend to do so and 25% stated that they had not decided yet.
- 33% of University students in the Cohort are first year students, 56% are second year students and 11% are third year students. Degrees being undertaken include Screen Production, Sound Design, Film Studies and Production, Broadcast Production, Animation, Accountancy, Film Studies, Cinematic Arts and Prop Making.
- 11% of University students were extremely aware of Creative Industry Training Opportunities after graduation, 33% were very aware, 44% somewhat aware and 11% not aware at all.
- 78% of University students felt that their Moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use to them in the current degree and 22% felt that they were not.
- 17% of cohort members in employment were extremely aware of Creative Industry Training Opportunities, 8% were very aware, 58% somewhat aware and 17% not so aware.
- 67% of cohort members in employment felt that the moving Image Arts qualifications were still of use, 17 % felt that they were not and 17% stated that they did not know.
- 48% of existing Cohort Members stated that they had attended Film Festivals in Northern Ireland and 52% stated that they had not. Film Festivals attended included Belfast Film Festival, Foyle Film Festival, Film Devour, Cinemagic and Belfast Media Festival.
- Only 3% of existing Cohort Members had used the Made in Northern Ireland Database, 30% had not used it and 67% had never heard of it.

- 89% of existing Cohort Members stated were aware of Northern Ireland Screen, 4% stated they were not aware of Northern Ireland Screen and 7% stated that they had never heard of Northern Ireland Screen. Those respondents unaware of Northern Ireland Screen were all school pupils.
- 19% of existing Cohort Members stated that they had used the Digital Film Archive, 48% stated that they had never used it and 33% stated that they had never heard of it. Usage included accessing archive footage, research purposes, University work, and documentary work.

### **Changes to Qualifications Questionnaire (both new and existing members)**

- 68% of Cohort members thought changing MIA to include groupwork taking on different roles (e.g., camera operator, director, producer...) was a good idea, 11% felt that it was not a good idea and 21% stated that they did not know.
- 92% felt that a trip to see a TV or film set would be a useful change to MIA.
- 77% thought that opportunities to talk to industry professionals informally on set would be a useful addition to MIA.
- 58% felt that collaboration with the Drama department in schools would be a good change to MIA.
- 77% felt that guest teaching from industry professionals in schools would be a useful change to MIA.
- 69% felt that there should be an increased focus on TV as well as film within MIA.
- 77% thought that there should be teaching on each role in the Creative Industries included in the MIA courses.
- 65% felt that post production skills should be included in the MIA courses.
- 50% thought that there should be education on freelancing skills including financial skills included in MIA courses.
- 53% felt that set etiquette should be included in MIA.
- 48% of cohort members felt that the theory practice balance within the MIA courses should be 50% theory, 50% practice and 39% felt that it should be 25% theory, 75% practice.

- 39% felt that the MIA courses do need to include new topic areas, 39% felt that it did not need to include new topic areas and 22% stated that they did not know.
- 67% felt that visual effects should be included, 56% felt that 'the business of film and television' should be included, 67% felt that 'understanding the production pipeline' should be included and 44% felt that 3D animation software should be included.

## Teaching Questionnaire

### (both new and existing members currently undertaking MIA courses)

- 64% said that they were satisfied with the teaching of MIA, 21% said that they were not satisfied with the teaching and 14% said that they did not know.
- Those unsatisfied with teaching cited issues around lack of practical teaching, lack of technical skills, lack of knowledge of the film industry and lack of interaction with the class.
- 57% stated that they felt that their current teacher did have the skills to teach Moving Image Arts, 36% felt that their teacher did not have the necessary skills and 7% stated that they did not know. This is an improvement from last results as 79% stated that they felt the teacher did not have the skills to teach MIA.
- 86% stated that no external teachers or people from industry came into teach and 14% stated that they did. Example of this were an online zoom editing course delivered remotely and a radio professional who came into the class to talk about working in radio.

## Equipment Questionnaire

### (both new and existing members currently undertaking MIA courses)

- 43% of cohort members felt that there was enough equipment available, 43% felt that there was not and 14% stated that they did not know. These results are very similar to last year's survey results.
- 21% of cohort members felt that the equipment provided by school or FEC was up to date, 36% felt that it was not up to date and 36% felt that some of it was up to date.

- 36% of cohort members have their own personal equipment, 43% do not have any equipment of their own and 21% own some equipment.
- Equipment owned by pupils includes tripods, cameras, microphones, go pro, gimbals, audio equipment, lights, iPad and apple pencils.
- 50% of those cohort members who own their equipment stated that MIA was the only reason that they had bought it.
- 21% of cohort members felt that there had been an improvement in equipment in schools/FECs since Covid. 36% felt that there had been no improvement and 43% stated that they did not know.
- 79% of cohort members felt that they had adequate access to equipment, 14% felt that they did not and 7% indicated that they did not know.
- 86% of cohort members felt that equipment should be standardised across schools/FECs and 14% stated that they did not know.
- 43% of cohort members felt that those who owned their own equipment had an unfair advantage, 29% felt that they did not have an unfair advantage, 14% stated that they did not know and 14% felt that there was maybe a slight advantage but not a major one.



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