



What does 'Hope' mean to you?

A filmmaking challenge for any young filmmaker aged 6-17, with the chance to win an **entire year scholarship** to PQA!

Inspired by Charlie Quirke's 'Bring Hope Home' trek for his mum Pauline Quirke to raise awareness of dementia. This winter PQA is challenging YOU to make a short film about what you are hopeful about.

In a world full of information, sometimes it can be hard to be hopeful. But we know that the next generation of young filmmakers at PQA and beyond have a lot to be hopeful for!

This challenge is about your hopes and dreams for the future, your future or the future of those around you, or for the world!

Short films need to be between 60 and 90 seconds long and use a combination of voiceover and visuals to tell your story. Full competition rules, prizes and how to enter can be found below, along with some useful advice to guide you through the filmmaking process. Please read the whole of this document before getting started!

Younger students may want to enlist a family member such as a parent or older sibling to help!

STEP 1: DEVELOPING YOUR IDEAS

For this project, we suggest that the first step is to think about hopes and dreams, either your own, or your hopes for others. Or where in the world you see hope or how you'd like things to turn out, and how you plan to take part in these outcomes.

Ask yourself these questions and some questions of your own making as a starting point to stimulate your ideas creation:

What am I hopeful about?

What are my hopes for my family and friends?

What are my hopes and dreams for myself?

What do I hope to achieve in my life?

Why is it important that we are hopeful about the future?

Where in the world is hope most important?

How does hope play a part in how we treat each other?

Where can hope be found?

How does being hopeful affect us?

Write these thoughts and ideas down and get excited about them. Take your time to choose an idea that you are most interested in and focus in on how this could become a short film (60 – 90 seconds) and the story you'd like to tell.

Now focus on the key **theme** of your idea, what would you like the audience to take from it, do you want us to think about something? do you want to ask us a question? be clear and **specific** about what the film is saying.

For example: The theme for my film is 'how can I spread hope to my family and friends in a meaningful, fun way'. I want to film a series of simple actions that show that hope can be found in everyday situations.

STEP 2: WRITING VOICEOVER

Now you have narrowed down your theme, think about the structure of your film and the voiceover script. You could consider first writing it down as a short story with a beginning, middle and end. Including any characters, settings, key phrases and visuals.

Write your voiceover script. This is important as it will be what drives the story of your film, consider if it is your voice, if it is a personal story coming from you, your thoughts and story or are you playing a character, or is the voiceover from another point of view in film and television terms this is sometimes referred to as 'voice of god'.

The voiceover should be clear and concise, once you have a first draft, consider refining this again and then again after that!

STEP 3: PRE-PRODUCTION

Think about what you could film or animate to visually represent what you have written.

You may find that when you visualize your voiceover and story that more things come to mind and the film develops.

Storyboard your film. You do not have to be good at drawing to do this, the storyboard is for your reference only!

You may wish to use the storyboard template on page 8 to plan your shots by writing your voiceover script beneath pictures of what you'd like to film to complement them or link them together.

Here's what to consider and organize before you move your film into production:

- Choose a location or locations to film.
- Collect together any props or costumes.

- Decide upon and communicate with cast members you may need to make your film. (you will need permission from anyone who appears in your film)
- Identify and gather any equipment you need e.g. Camera, tripod
- Set dates and times to film your film. (If you are filming outside be sure to check sunrise and sunset times so that you have enough light)

STEP 4: PRODUCTION - Voiceover recording

We have provided a list of free apps further down this document that will help you record your voiceover, or you could simply use a phone voice note app. Please make sure that you have an adults permission to use a device.

Rehearse your voiceover until you are happy with the performance.

Record your voiceover in a small, quiet room and consider surrounding yourself with blankets and cushions (like a blanket fort) to reduce the reverb in the room.

Place the microphone close to your mouth, but not so close that it results in the voiceover recording becoming distorted.

Save the voiceover recording!

**Another choice is to record your voiceover at the same time as you film your visuals, so that you speak while filming meaning your voiceover is recorded on camera. This may make post-production simpler if you are not technically confident.*

STEP 5: PRODUCTION - Filming

Now that you have recorded your voiceover, you are ready to pick up a camera or phone and shoot the visuals for your film!

Make sure that you have permission to record on the camera or device that you use.

By now you should have a clear idea of what you want to film, and in what order, and perhaps you have also drawn storyboards.

Although this is a solo student project, this doesn't mean you can't ask your friends and family for help, especially if you plan to film yourself.

**If you are using other people in your film on screen, please make sure that you have their permission to appear in your entry.*

STEP 6: POST-PRODUCTION

Once you have recorded your voiceover and filmed your visuals, you are ready to put everything together.

You will find a list of free apps below to help you.

When layering your voiceover over the visuals think about timing, what do you want people to see when they hear a certain word or sentence from your voiceover?

You may also wish to add music to your film, you could record something original yourself or perhaps you have friends or family who are musicians or find some free to use music for your film.

Here's a useful [PQATV blog](#) for these purposes.

Younger students may want to enlist a family member such as a parent or older sibling to help them with this.

Apps

There are many filmmaking apps available, here are a few examples:

Voiceover Recording & Editing

Filmora free version, phone & desktop - <https://filmora.wondershare.net/>

Capcut free version, phone & desktop - <https://www.capcut.com/>

Lightworks free version, desktop only - <https://lwks.com/>

iMovie, phone & desktop (apple only) - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/imovie/id377298193>

Video Editing only

Canva free version, phone & desktop - <https://www.canva.com/video-editor/youtube/>

Prizes

One winner will receive a **FULL YEAR SCHOLARSHIP** to PQA and a trophy

3 Runner-Ups will receive a PQA merchandise bundle and a trophy

The winner and runner-up films will screen at the PQA Film Festival 2026

All films will be shared on the PQATV YouTube channel

Rules

- The deadline for entries is Friday 9th January 2026
- Films should have one main filmmaker/entrant.
- Your film should be 60 - 90 seconds long.
- Your film can be live action or animated or a combination of both.
- Your film should have a voiceover spoken by you (the filmmaker/entrant).
- All entrants must be 17 or under by the date of the deadline.
- You do not need to be a PQA student.
- You must give your film a title, for example, "*Hopes and Fears*".
- Films do not require credits, but if you choose to, you must only include first names.

Terms & Conditions

By entering this competition, you consent to your film being uploaded to the PQATV YouTube channel after the deadline. Your film will remain online for 5 years unless you request it be removed. You may opt out at any time by emailing filmandtv@pqacademy.com.

How To Enter

Completed films should be emailed to filmandtv@pqacademy.com by a parent/guardian.

Films submitted by over 17's will not be accepted.

Parents/guardians should include the following in their email: the **first name** of the filmmaker, their **age** (this will not be made public), and the location of the academy they attend if they are a PQA student (this information does not impact the judges and is collected for internal engagement monitoring purposes only).

If you have any questions, please email: filmandtv@pqacademy.com

GOOD LUCK!

