



**Ready, set, journal!**

**This summer PQA is challenging YOU to make a short film about the personal moments in your life.**

The theme behind this year's competition is **mindfulness**. Mindfulness is about being present and aware of your thoughts, feelings, body, and world around you. It means noticing these things without judgment and accepting them as they come.

Journalling, writing down your thoughts and feelings, is a way for you to connect with yourself and this competition challenges you to create a short video journal.

This competition is open to all young people (18 or under), both non-PQA students and PQA students.

Please read the whole of this document before getting started!

## **Prizes**

Two winners (one under 12 years old and one 12 and over winner) will receive a £100 voucher of their choice.

4 Runner-Ups will receive a £20 cinema voucher for the cinema of their choice

The 2 winners and 4 runner-up films will screen at the PQA Film Festival 2025 (either Sheffield or London), in November where they will receive their prize and award!

## **What is mindful journalling?**

- A way to focus your attention on your thoughts, feelings, and emotions as you write in a journal.
- A way to connect with yourself, deepen your self-awareness, and create a sense of inner peace.

## **How can mindful journalling help?**

- It can increase your self-awareness to your own thoughts, emotions, and patterns.
- It can help regulate your emotions in a healthy way.
- It can help to reduce stress and anxiety by focusing on being present in the moment
- It can aid personal growth through self-reflection

## **How to practice mindful journaling**

You will need a blank journal book and a pen!

Choose a time when you can sit comfortably and undisturbed for at least 10-15 minutes.

Center yourself by taking a few slow, deep breaths before you begin writing.

Focus on the present and allow your thoughts to flow freely, try not to judge what you are writing.

Be honest and open, there are no right or wrong ways to journal.

## **DETAILS**

For this project, we suggest that the first step is to keep a journal over the duration of a week of the summer holidays and then record a voiceover and film visuals that complement this. We have put together an example schedule below which you may find helpful but feel open to adapt this to you.

## **STEP 1 - DEVELOPMENT**

Write in your journal for a week answering a selection of the prompts below, picking those that are relevant to you.

Poppets & Green group students may want to enlist a family member such as a parent or older sibling to help them with this.

Example Journal Prompts:

What made you smile today?

What challenged you today?

What made you feel productive today?

What made you feel loved today?

What beautiful things did you hear today?

What beautiful things did you see today?

What made you feel brave today?

What did you learn today?

What are you grateful for today?

What are you feeling right now?

For each of the above, write about how these moments made you feel.

## **STEP 2 – PRE-PRODUCTION**

Select some of the prompts to turn into your video journal.

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

You may find that there is a theme or story that emerges and links some of your journal entries.

Choose a location or locations to film.

Collect together any props or costumes or cast members you may need to make your film.

You may wish to use our [downloadable storyboard template](#) to plan your shots by writing your journal entry beneath pictures of what you'd like to film to complement them or link them together.

### **STEP 3 - VOICEOVER**

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.

We suggest simply reading from your journal.

*\*Another option 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.*

*For example:*

*Today I heard the most beautiful song that reminded me of playing on the beach with friends. It made me feel thankful for the positive connections I have made with my friends.*

### **STEP 4 - 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. Again, make sure that you have permission to record on the device that you use.

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

You may also wish to return to your written journal and film it or film yourself writing in it.

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 5 – 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 of 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.

Poppets & Green group students may want to enlist a family member such as a parent or older sibling to help them with this.

## **Apps**

### **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/>

## **Rules**

The deadline for entries is 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.

Films should have one main filmmaker.

The main filmmaker should be the person who the film is about.

Your film should be between 30 and 60 seconds long.

Your film can be live action or animated or a combination of both.

Your film should contain a voiceover spoken by you (the filmmaker).

All entrants must be 18 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, “Why I Dance”.

Films do not require credits, but if you choose to, you must only include your first name.

## **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](mailto:filmandtv@pqacademy.com).

## **How To Enter**

Completed films should be emailed to [filmandtv@pqacademy.com](mailto:filmandtv@pqacademy.com) by a parent/guardian. 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).