

BA Theatre Studies Guide for Applicants 2013-2014

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Term Dates 2013-14

<u>Autumn Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Summer Term</u>
Monday 30 September 2013 to Friday 13 December 2013	Monday 6 January 2014 to Friday 21 March 2014	Monday 28 April 2014 to Friday 11 July 2014
<u>Autumn Closures</u>	<u>Spring Closures</u>	<u>Summer Closures</u>
The College will close at 5pm on Monday 23 December 2013, re-opening at 9am on Wednesday, 2 January 2014	Easter closure <i>to be confirmed</i>	<p>The College will be closed on Monday, 5 May 2014 re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 6 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed on Monday, 26 May 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 27 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed from 8pm Friday, 22 August 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 26 August 2014</p>

BA Theatre and Drama Studies

BA Theatre Studies & English

- **What does theatre tell us about the world?**
- **How do audiences make sense of what they see at the theatre?**
- **How is identity imagined and invented on the stage?**
- **How have philosophers, psychologists, artists, linguists, sociologists, feminists, writers, politicians and designers thought about the theatre?**
- **What are the contexts, themes and trends informing theatre in London today?**

These are some of the questions you will tackle while studying Theatre Studies at Birkbeck. Offering you the opportunity to study a diverse range of theatre histories, practices, companies and contexts, with a focus on contemporary theatre in London, this degree is designed to introduce you to the concepts and ideas that form the basis of theatre practice.

Birkbeck is the only University of London college offering a taught BA in Theatre Studies in central London in the evenings. Running over two to three evenings a week part-time, or three to four evenings a week full-time, you will have the opportunity to visit theatres, theatre museums and performances, and to work with guest artists and speakers from the theatre industry throughout your degree. Theatre Studies classes are held in the School of Arts building in Gordon Square, which includes studio and performance spaces as well as seminar rooms.

While studying Theatre Studies at Birkbeck, we aim to help you:

- Gain a strong understanding of the key contexts, institutions, histories and practices of contemporary theatre in London;
- Develop an understanding of the history of concepts and ideas that have underpinned theatre practice;
- Develop a sense of how the various modes of communication in theatre practice create meaning: such as lighting, costume, acting, architecture, text, scenography, publicity and reviews;
- Develop your communication, leadership, creative and interpersonal skills;
- Gain specialised knowledge of a research area of your own choice.

This course focuses on the theories, histories and practices of theatrical performance. The course involves some group and demonstration work – to a greater extent on BA Theatre and Drama Studies, the single honours course – which function to elucidate and explore the concepts and theories you will study on the course. The degree does not provide training in acting, stage management and lighting design – in other words, it is not geared towards vocational theatre training. However, if you are interested in developing your knowledge of histories, concepts and practices of theatre in London – and, on the single honours course, testing this knowledge experimentally using performance – this is the course for you.

BA Theatre and Drama Studies

Birkbeck's single honours degree, BA Theatre and Drama Studies, is ideal if you want to immerse yourself in theatre. If you choose the BA Theatre and Drama Studies, you will explore the histories and contexts of performance through discussion in seminars and develop your understanding of theatre through practice-based workshops. Workshops on BA Theatre and Drama Studies are delivered through the core module Critical Practice. These enable you to take a 'laboratory' approach, where you hypothesise on an aspect of performance, and test this hypothesis through practice. You will not be assessed on your practical skills, but on your reflective and analytical engagement with the concepts you have explored.

Further information about the content and structure of the single honours degree is available at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATHEDR.html> for part-time

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATHEDF.html> for full-time

BA Theatre Studies and English

If you wish to combine the study of theatre and English literature, you can do this via our joint honours degree (offered part-time at present with a full-time course coming on board from October 2014). If you choose the BA Theatre Studies and English, you will explore the histories and contexts of performance with and alongside exploration of literature and culture. Your study of theatre will illuminate aspects of your literary studies, and in turn, your study of literature will enhance your understanding of theatrical texts and practices.

Further information about the content and structure of the joint honours degree is available at:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATS_EN.html

Birkbeck, University of London

Birkbeck, University of London is a unique institution with a proud history. Founded as the London Mechanics Institute in 1823, it was subsequently incorporated into the University of London in 1926, specialising in education at university level for part-time students, for which it holds a royal charter. In the twenty-first century, both full-time and part-time students now benefit from Birkbeck's long tradition of outstanding teaching expertise and support, as well as its international academic renown. Voted number one in London for quality of teaching by students in the 2012 National Student Survey, Birkbeck is a vibrant place to study.

BA classes at Birkbeck run between 6pm and 9pm. Full-time students will find the evening teaching hours free them to take full advantage of the opportunities for study and development during the day, when the resources of the college, libraries, and London itself, are fully available. Part-time students who work during the day, and may be older than the conventional student in higher education, will discover that staff are well versed in, and sympathetic to, their particular needs.

Academic staff at Birkbeck combine teaching with an active engagement in research. Many of your teachers will be highly-regarded authorities on the subjects that they teach. This means that the modules that you take will reflect the most recent scholarship and approaches within the field of Theatre Studies.

Location

Birkbeck College is in the heart of the Bloomsbury district in the centre of London, one minute walk from the British Museum and five minutes from the British Library. It is next door to the major collections of the Senate House Library, and to University of London Union, with its sports, clubs and leisure facilities. The Department of English and Humanities in the School of Arts is located at 43 Gordon Square, WC1, in an elegant block of houses which were once the home of the novelist Virginia Woolf, and the economist John Maynard Keynes. Find us at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/maps>

Structure and content of BA Theatre Studies degrees

All students on BA Theatre Studies programmes (whether single or joint honours) will take a core of Theatre modules including the Theatre in London portfolio module every year. In addition, BA Theatre and Drama Studies and BA Theatre and English Joint students will take additional core and/or optional modules according to the table given below:

BA Theatre and Drama Studies Programme Structure (full-time)

Year One	Critical Practice I: History		Theatre Languages	Option module*	Portfolio: Theatre in London Year 1: Histories of London
Year Two	Critical Practice II: Space	Critical Practice III: Communities	Theories of Theatricality & Performance	Research Case Study	Portfolio: Theatre in London Year 2: London Spaces
Year Three	Critical Practice IV: Final Year Project		Option module	Option module	Portfolio Theatre in London - Year 3: London Policies and Communities

* Interdisciplinary Navigational Module (Level 5)

BA Theatre and Drama Studies Programme Structure (part-time)

Year One	Critical Practice I: History	Theatre Languages		Portfolio: Theatre in London Year 1: Histories of London
Year Two	Critical Practice II: Space	Theories of Theatricality & Performance	Option module*	Portfolio: Theatre in London Year 2: London Spaces
Year Three	Critical Practice III: Communities	Research Case Study	Option module	Portfolio Theatre in London - Year 3: London Policies and Communities
Year Four	Critical Practice IV: Final Year Project	Option module		Portfolio: Contemporary Theatre in London

* Interdisciplinary Navigational Module (Level 5)

BA Theatre Studies and English Programme Structure (part-time)

Year One	Theatre Languages	English: Writing London	Portfolio Theatre in London - Year 1: Histories of London
Year Two	Theories of Theatricality & Performance	Option module x 2 (1 Theatre, 1 English)*	Portfolio Theatre in London - Year 2: London Spaces
Year Three	Option module x 3 (1 Theatre & 2 English)		Portfolio Theatre in London - Year 3: London Policies and Communities
Year Four	Independent Research Project English: Option module		Portfolio: Contemporary Theatre in London

* Interdisciplinary Navigational Module (Level 5)

Each degree is made up of 12 units in total. A unit equals a year long course (with the exception of the portfolio which equates to two units over the period of the degree as a whole). You must pass your first year courses in order to progress into your second year.

Theatre and Drama Studies

9 units core/3 units options:

- Theatre Languages (Year 1)
- Theories of Theatricality and Performance (Year 2)
- Portfolio (Years 1-3 or 1-4)
- Research Case Study (Year 2 full-time, Year 3 part-time)
- Critical Practice (including Final Year Project)

Theatre and English

6 units core/6 units options:

- Theatre Languages (Year 1)
- Writing London (Year 1)
- Theories of Theatricality and Performance (Year 2)
- Portfolio (Years 1-4)
- Independent Research Project
- Six optional units (Years 2-4) of which two should be Theatre options

Modules Studied

Year 1

Theatre Languages

Mondays 6.00-7.20pm

How is meaning made in the theatre? What are the different 'languages' at work in the theatre event? What is the relationship between the meanings made in the theatre, and their social and historical contexts? And in what ways might it be useful for us, as theatre scholars, to think about theatre as, or in terms of, language? Theatre Languages is a core module studied throughout the degree by all Birkbeck Theatre Studies students (single and joint honours). It is designed to explore these questions by introducing a series of key methodologies, histories and vocabularies for the study of theatre. The course surveys a range of practices and texts from the ancient world through to the contemporary, and critical approaches regarding the analysis of theatrical performance. Each week, we will consider a critical problem or question – for example, audience reception, urban transformation, costume and the actor – in relation to a case study. Our work together will be pursued through a combination of lectures, seminars and workshops. Discussions of theatre visits undertaken independently will allow you to bring your theoretical and historical explorations into relation with examples of contemporary theatre in London.

Portfolio: Theatre in London

Mondays 7:40-9:00pm

Portfolio: Theatre in London is a core module studied throughout the degree by all Birkbeck Theatre Studies students (single and joint honours). It seeks to enable and cultivate close critical analysis of performance taking place in London, and to offer access to the research methods and skills necessary to undertake that analysis. The topics it addresses include the key contexts and conditions in which contemporary theatre in London takes place, the role of the spectator in the creation of meaning in theatre practice, and a range of critical perspectives available for the analysis of performance. To this end, each year group attends five set performances throughout the year, examining these in relation to a particular theme (year 1: history; year 2: space; and year 3: communities). These function as the basis of seminar discussion and the final pieces of assessment. Through participation in Portfolio: Theatre in London, each student gradually builds an archive of materials and critical writings related to the theatregoing undertaken during the course.

Critical Practice I: History (BA Theatre and Drama Studies only)

Tuesdays 6.00-9.00pm

Critical Practice is a core module studied throughout BA Theatre and Drama at Birkbeck. In the first year, the theme to be examined is 'history', asking after approaches to performance taken at different historical moments in relation to a single case study work, William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In the Autumn term, students explore aspects of theatrical practice in relation to productions of the play at various points in history, from the early

modern to the contemporary. In the Spring term, students explore contemporary adaptations and deconstructions of the play by writers and directors from the UK, North America and Europe. The module is taught through a weekly three-hour seminar and workshop class, which involves mini-lectures, seminar discussion, practical group work, group research projects, and analysis of screenings and performances. Each class also features guided independent practice, which enables students to work in small teams or as individuals in the realisation of a task, or group experimentation with particular techniques. Throughout the module each student maintains a journal that documents work in class time, and research and writing outside of class time.

Writing London (*BA Theatre Studies and English only*)

Tuesdays 6.00-7.20pm

This module introduces you to different types of literature in their historical and generic contexts, and focuses on the way that London has been imagined in a wide range of texts from different periods, styles and genres. Lectures will alternate with seminars – there will be a lecture one week, and a seminar on the same text the next week. The Autumn term's work on 'London in Fiction' starts by examining a contemporary representation of London, and then moves back to the early nineteenth century to explore the developing ways that London has been represented in fiction between the nineteenth-century and the present. The Spring term's work on 'London on Stage and Screen' introduces students to some of the ways in which London has been represented in the theatre and on film. Starting with Renaissance texts (including Shakespeare) and moving up to the twentieth century, the course explores the ways in which drama and later film have constructed the idea of 'London'. The texts will be read in the context of their social, political, cultural and intellectual contexts, and questions about genre, audience, authorship and performance will be considered.

Years 2-4

Theories of Theatricality and Performance

Wednesdays 6:00-7:20pm

Building upon the skills of analysis developed in Theatre Languages, the second year core module Theories of Theatricality and Performance introduces some of the major debates in performance theory and practice from the late nineteenth century to date. The first half of the module will focus upon the relationship between theatrical function and representational form, examining the propositions theatre-makers and critics have made regarding theatre practice and its social, educational and aesthetic effects. The second half of the module will explore definitions of the nature of theatre and performance offered by theorists and theatre-makers, raising questions about 'liveness', 'mediation', 'performativity' and the ways in which racial, sexual and national identities come to be constructed. The module will draw upon the work of a wide range of theorists, practitioners and critics, and analysis of three contemporary productions will form the basis of discussion in three seminars, providing opportunities to apply theoretical debates to current performance practice.

Portfolio: Theatre in London (years 2 & 3 only)

Mondays 7:40-9:00pm

See description on page 8.

Critical Practice II: Space

Thursdays 6:00-9:00pm

Critical Practice is a core module studied throughout BA Theatre and Drama Studies at Birkbeck. In the second year, the theme to be examined is 'space'. Exploring 'space' as a foundational attribute of theatre practice, the module asks a series of questions: what is the material relationship between spaces of performance and theatrical production? How have artists chosen to make use of theatre as a spatial practice to reflect upon society and to construct new worlds and situations? How might space 'itself' be analysed and approached as performance? The module introduces students to a range of theatre and performance methodologies (for example, scenography, site specific performance, installation and performance art), case study works, and critical literatures from within and outside the discipline of theatre and performance studies. The module is taught through a weekly three-hour workshop class, which involves practical group work, group research projects, discussion of screenings and performances, and independent practice. Throughout the module students maintain a journal documenting their work.

Critical Practice III: Communities

Mondays 6:00-9:00pm

Critical Practice is a core module studied throughout BA Theatre and Drama Studies at Birkbeck. In the third year, the theme to be examined is 'communities'. The module explores the multiple ways in which theatre has functioned as a locus of social gathering, identity formation, and educational and political practice at various points in history and across the world. The module explores definitions of 'community', the processes by which 'communities' are formed, and a series of cognate concepts (for example, gender, 'race', nation, *communitas* and *anomie*) in relation to a range of theatre practices and methodologies. These may include (but are not restricted to): the performance of tragedy in ancient Athens; 'stage Irishness' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; British community theatre, dance, and theatre-in-education; theatre, activism and politics in the United States in the twentieth century; Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed; and contemporary 'applied' and socially engaged performance. The module is taught through a weekly three-hour class involving practical group work, group research projects, discussion of screenings and performances, split equally with independent practice. In the Autumn term, the class is run by the module convenor. In the Spring term, a visiting artist will facilitate the class, culminating in a sharing of work. Throughout the module students maintain a journal documenting their work in and out of class time.

Research Case Study

Wednesdays 7.30-9:00pm

What are the debates informing research in theatre and performance studies now? How do you go about designing a research project exploring a particular case study in theatre and performance studies from scratch? Research Case Study is a core module for students of BA Theatre and Drama Studies and available as an option for BA Theatre

Studies and English and other students in the School of Arts. The module asks each student to prepare a short research essay on a case study of his or her own choice selected from within one of two broad topic areas in theatre and performance studies. Each year, the set topics relate to staff members' current research projects and specialisms, and act as the basis of the module's work. In the Autumn term of 2013-14, students will explore themes, techniques and methodological questions emerging from researching theatre, performance and therapy. In the Spring term, students will explore processes of researching British theatre in relation to the repercussions of the financial crisis. Alongside learning about these topics and associated theatre and performance practices, the module investigates how various research methodologies can be used to investigate those topics and practices in-depth. These may include: the relationship between performance practice and scholarly research; reading performance in relation to critical theory; assembling sociological research; working with archives; and documenting performance. Running over the course of the academic year, the module seeks to enable students both to design and produce a piece of independent research, and to provide students with the skills to undertake longer pieces of independent research in the future.

Independent Research Project / Critical Practice IV: Final Year Project

Thursdays 7:40-9:00pm

The Independent Research Project (IRP) is an individual course of study undertaken in the final year of the degree, which results in the production of a dissertation of 6,000 words. The Critical Practice IV: Final Year Project is similar, but integrates elements of performance practice into the process of research, and as such is open only to BA Theatre and Drama Studies students. In both cases, the project is an opportunity to work in depth on a particular research question. It might be understood as the culmination of your work at Birkbeck, as it offers you the opportunity to work, semi-autonomously, with the skills and knowledge that you have acquired here. The focus of the project is likely to arise out of courses you have taken on the BA Theatre Studies programme. But, if you have a strong case for doing so, you might also wish to enter into a completely new area of research, backed up by the writing and research skills that you have acquired. The project also offers the opportunity to establish links between the various components of the degree programme, and topics and questions encountered as part of your studies in English or Arts and Humanities (although this is not compulsory). You will develop your skills of analysis, structuring an argument, engaging with a range of research materials, planning a project and making a cogent and critical argument in writing. You should expect to spend a minimum of 50 hours working on this project across the course of the year. You might like to chart your progress by keeping a logbook of hours worked, books consulted, major breakthroughs and problems. *This module is taught concurrently with **Portfolio: Contemporary Theatre in London**.*

Options (years 2-4 part time, years 1-3 full-time)

Where options are to be taken, BA Theatre and Drama Studies (single honours) students can choose from a range of modules in Theatre Studies, Arts and Humanities, English and Creative Writing. BA Theatre Studies and English (joint honours) students specialise in Theatre Studies and English modules only. The full list of modules across all four disciplines may include:

- Shakespeare and Comedy
- Tragedy
- Elizabethan and Seventeenth Century Drama
- Narratives of the Body
- Connecting the Arts
- Crowds and Power
- Enlightenment and its Others
- English Literary Modernism
- The Global Eighteenth Century
- The Victorians and Their World
- Playwriting Workshop 1
- The Novel
- Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Literature
- Gothic Romance, 1764 to the Present
- Fin de Siècle
- Middle English Literature
- Postcolonial Biographies
- African-American Literature
- Contemporary British Fiction
- Farce
- Reading Joyce's *Ulysses*
- Queer Fiction
- The 'American Century' and Beyond: US Literature and Culture since 1900

Teaching Methods

Classes are generally taught in small seminar groups, in which informal lectures are always opened to interrogation and discussion; individual tutorial support is also provided, particularly around writing assignments. Students will also engage in critical practice workshops in which they will investigate key concepts on the programme through practical work. On many courses, students will be asked to make independent arrangements to see one or more current London theatrical productions for comment and analysis. The core courses, in particular, are also kept in touch with current practice through guest sessions taught by theatrical professionals, who have included the likes of Sam West, Kelly Hunter, John Barton, Mick Barnfather, Joel Scott and Roisin McBrinn.

Assessment

Assessment is by a combination of essays, unseen and prior-disclosed examinations, presentations, vivas and production outlines. The BA Theatre studies degrees are internal BA (Hons) of the University of London.

Duration and Attendance

The BA is a three year full-time or four year part-time degree. Like other degree programmes at Birkbeck, the course is specifically geared for students who work during the daytime. Teaching takes place on Mondays to Fridays, between 6pm and 9pm. You should expect to attend class on two or three evenings a week (part-time) or three or four evenings a week (full-time) during term time.

Theatre visits are a mandatory component of the degree. Students will be expected to schedule these visits in their own time. Students will not be expected to do any group work or rehearsals beyond their contact time in class. Students may be asked to undertake some online discussion work in between classes.

How to Apply

We interview all applicants for the BA Theatre Studies degree, regardless of qualifications. Following interview, applicants may also be invited to submit a short task (normally a commentary on a given passage or a brief essay on a book, film, exhibition, or TV programme of your choice). Instructions for the task can be obtained from:

Department of English and Humanities
Undergraduate Office
020 3073 8378
e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk

Interviews are normally held between January and early September. Applicants are encouraged to apply early, as we expect the demand for places to be high.

The Application Form:

To be considered for a place on the degree, applicants should complete an online application form available from the Birkbeck website at:

BA Theatre and Drama Studies full-time:
<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATHEDF.html>

BA Theatre and Drama Studies part-time:
<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATHEDR.html>

BA Theatre Studies and English part-time:
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug2013/drama/UBATS_EN.html

For applicants aged 21 or above there are no formal qualifications required for entrance to the degree, hence the application form should be completed as fully as possible, especially the section headed 'any other relevant skills or interests'. Please note that if you state on your application form that you have formal qualifications such as 'A' levels in any subject, you will be required to produce documentation for the Registry when you enrol.

Entry requirements for applicants below the age of 21 for both the BA Theatre and Drama Studies and BA Theatre Studies and English courses are: BBB at A-level or equivalent.

The Interview:

You will normally be interviewed by one or two members of the academic staff. You will not be expected to be an expert but to demonstrate an interest in the subjects for which you have applied. You are more likely to be successful at interview if you have a clear overall view of what you wish to gain from the degree, and if you have a realistic sense of the level of commitment involved. This is as much an opportunity for you to ask questions about the subjects you will be studying and to make sure that the course is right for you, as it is a chance for us to assess your suitability. The interview normally takes place in the afternoon or early evening and lasts about 20 minutes.

Further help

If you have general questions about the degree you might like to come to one of our open evenings (details of these are on the Birkbeck website) and talk to members of staff or you

could directly contact the admissions officer for BA Theatre Studies.

There are a number of helpful books on writing and grammar that you might find useful to look at both to aid you in this task and also as part of the process of beginning a degree in English literature. Some recommendations are listed below. You should be able to find copies of these in libraries and bookshops.

Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (London: Profile 2003)

Stella Cotrell, *Critical Thinking Skills* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan 2005)

David Crystal, *Rediscover Grammar*, 3rd edition (London: Longman 2004)

Study Skills and Student Support

Study Skills Programmes

Every Department within the School of Arts has a provision for student support and the programmes vary as they are targeted at specific degree requirements. You are encouraged to contact your administrator if you are having **any** difficulties in completing your coursework. There is help available to you at every point in your degree, and we are more than happy to guide you. We provide a continually expanding programme of induction into the basic study skills of reading, listening, note-taking and essay-writing to academic standards.

Learning Support Tutor for the School of Arts, Dr Fleur Rothschild

As Learning Support Adviser, I will supplement the assistance offered by Departments in the School of Arts to students in their first year of study. Through a programme of workshops and short courses, I will provide additional guidance on how to enhance your study performance. In consultation with Subject Directors and Personal Tutors, I will extend advice and support to individual first-year students. I look forward to meeting and introducing myself to you at Induction events.

Get Ahead: Stay Ahead - Helping you get the best possible start

At Birkbeck we want to make sure you get all the help you need to get your studies off to a great start and to provide you with support during your course. On the Get Ahead: Stay Ahead website you can access a range of online resources to help you:

- consider how you can achieve your goals
- find out what studying at Birkbeck is like
- improve your study skills and succeed on your course
- The online materials are interactive tutorials that are free to use and you can work through them at your own pace.

www.bbk.ac.uk/ahead

Student Support: Disability Statement, Learning Support and Student Awards

Disability Statement for the Department of English and Humanities

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, medical conditions, respiratory conditions. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's Disability Office.

The Disability Office

The College has a Disability Office located in room G12 on the ground floor of the Malet Street building. We have a Disability Service Manager, Mark Pimm, and a Disability Advisor, John Muya.

Mark is your first point of referral for disability enquiries at the College whilst John is for dyslexia. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students Allowance, special equipment, personal support, examination arrangements etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you come to our drop in session where we can discuss support and make follow up appointments as necessary. The drop-in sessions are between 4pm and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Disability Office can also complete an individual Student Support Agreement form with you, confirming your support requirements and send this to your School and relevant Departments at the College so they are informed of your needs.

Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks have induction loops for people with hearing impairments and we have large print and tactile signage. Disabled parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops etc can all be arranged by the Disability Office.

The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and most EU students with disabilities on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA usually provides **thousands of pounds worth of support** and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Disability Office can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

The Personal Assistance Scheme

Some students need a personal assistant to provide support on their course, for example a note-taker, sign language interpreter, reader, personal assistant, disability mentor or dyslexia support tutor. Birkbeck uses a specialist agency to recruit Personal Assistants and they can assist you with recruiting, training and paying your personal assistant. Please contact the Disability Office for information on this scheme.

Support in your Department

The provision which can be made for students with disabilities by Schools is set out in the Procedures for Students with Disabilities. This is available from the Disability Office and the Disability website (see below).

As mentioned above your Department will receive a copy of your Individual Student Support Agreement from the Disability Office. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the School.

Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and School Administrator, the Department of English and Humanities also has a Student Disability Liaison Officer, Dr Stephen Clucas. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then she may also be able to assist you. He may be contacted on 0203 073 8421 or at: s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk.

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Inspiration), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs etc. For advice and assistance please contact Disability IT Support. There is also a range of specialist equipment in the Library including a CCTV reading machine for visually impaired students as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service who provides a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities.

Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies which make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you should contact the Disability Office who can screen you and where appropriate refer you to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. These assessments cost £215. Some students can receive assistance in meeting this cost from their employer. In exceptional cases students may receive assistance from the Access to Learning Fund.

Examinations

Students with disabilities and dyslexia may be eligible for special arrangements for examinations e.g. extra time, use of a word processor, amanuensis, enlarged examination papers etc. In order to receive special arrangements a student must provide medical evidence of their disability (or an Educational Psychologists Report if you are dyslexic) to the Disability Office. For School examinations you should contact your Programme Director to request special arrangements at least two weeks before the examination. For main College summer examinations you are given the opportunity to declare that you require special provision on your assessment entry form. Students who require provision should then attend an appointment with the Disability Office to discuss and formalise the appropriate arrangements. The closing date for making special examination arrangements in College examinations is the 15th March and beyond this date consideration will only be given to emergency cases.

Further information

Full information on disability support can be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability>

For further information or to make an appointment to see Mark or John, please call John Muya (Disability Advisor) on 020 7631 6336 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can go to the Disability Office in room G12 between 4pm and 6pm Monday-Friday.

Support Team Contact Details

Mark Pimm

Disability Co-ordinator
Room G12
Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
Telephone: 0207 631 6315
Email: m.pimm@bbk.ac.uk

John Muya

Disability Administrator
Room G12
Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
Telephone: 0207 631 6336
Email: disability@bbk.ac.uk

Dr Stephen Clucas

Disability Liaison Officer
Department of English and
Humanities
Telephone: 0203 073 8421
Email: s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk

Student Financial Support Office

Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
Telephone: 0207 631 6362
Email:
studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk

Jackie Barnes

Examinations Officer
Telephone: 0207 380 3030
examinations@bbk.ac.uk

Lisa Mayer

Assistant Examinations Officer
Telephone: 0207 380 3039
l.mayer@bbk.ac.uk

President of the Student Union

Telephone: 0207 631 6365
Email: president@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk
Web address: www.bbk.ac.uk/su

Dr Fleur Rothschild

Learning Support Advisor
School of Arts
Room 210
43 Gordon Square
Telephone: 0203 073 8411
Email: f.rothschild@bbk.ac.uk

NB most SU information is available
on the website

Accommodation

Birkbeck does not have its own halls of residence. We have a limited quota of places in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence (see below). There are however a diverse range of options open to you in finding student accommodation in London. If you are looking to rent accommodation, then the helpful University of London Housing Services should be your first point of contact:

University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY

Tel: 0207 862 8880

Email: housing@lon.ac.uk

You can use this service to seek help with finding accommodation or to obtain advice (including free legal advice) concerning housing. They also offer the following services:

- Short-term accommodation: you may be able to book temporary accommodation if you are having problems finding long-term housing.
- Advertising vacancies: If you own property, you can advertise your vacancies to other students via the Landlord Registration Scheme.

Other accommodation help

Birkbeck has a limited quota of places reserved in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence available to full-time students, with full-time international students being given priority. You should also try the following:

Ashwell House (female only)
City YMCA London
Goodenough College
Homes For Students
International Students' House
London Hostels Association Ltd
London Strategic Housing
London Tourist Board
Nansen Village (singles, couples and families)
Netherhall House (male only)
Nido Student Living
Opal Property Group Student Halls
UNITE

Further information and links to the above may be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/accommodation>

Please note: much of the accommodation available in halls of residence is only open to full-time students.

International students

Students applying from countries outside of the European Union should contact the International Office as soon as possible for advice at: international-office@bbk.ac.uk

Helpful information for international students may be found on the Birkbeck website at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/guides/international>

For information about international student accommodation, please see the link below:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/international/accommodation>

Frequently Asked Questions

We hope we have covered many of the important aspects of considering whether to make Birkbeck your choice. Here are further FAQ, and below, key contact details for staff.

What teaching methods will be used?

As a BA Theatre Studies student, you will experience a wide range of teaching methods and approaches. However, teaching will usually take one of three forms: the lecture, the workshop and the seminar. Lectures normally involve relatively large groups of students listening to a formal presentation given by a member of academic staff. Workshops involve breaking a larger group into smaller subgroups and providing students with tasks or worksheets and specific questions on which they work and then report back. Seminars also involve a smaller group of students, and are designed to allow students to engage in active discussion of a chosen topic, under the direction of a tutor. In seminars students may be asked to do some preparatory reading, invited to join in a group discussion, or occasionally asked to give a short presentation to the rest of the group. Some seminars may involve audio-visual presentations, or an element of group work, and may include some degree of formal presentation by the lecturer. The approach to teaching methods will, of course, vary greatly from course to course.

What kinds of assessment should I expect?

Most modules in Theatre Studies are assessed through a combination of assessed essays and examinations, or essay work alone. Some modules might be assessed on a portfolio of shorter pieces of work or logbooks. Most courses also include shorter compulsory course essays or commentaries which carry 10% of the final grade for the module, but allow you to develop your ideas and writing before you tackle the major assessment on your module. Full information about assessment requirements is always listed in the Programme handbooks.

Will I be able to transfer credit for courses already completed?

If you wish to transfer to the BA Theatre Studies programme from another degree programme in the College, or from a programme in another institution, it is possible that you may be able to transfer some credit from your previous studies. If you think you are eligible for credit transfer, please consult the BA Theatre Studies Director (Dr Louise Owen: l.owen@bbk.ac.uk).

What about libraries?

Birkbeck has its own well stocked library situated in the main building of the College in Malet Street. The College Library is particularly geared towards the courses that are taught in the College, and you will find the staff particularly helpful in finding the materials needed for your studies. For a moderate fee – and for no charge in third and final year - Birkbeck students are also entitled to a ticket for the University of London Library in Senate House (the large white building which dominates the Malet Street skyline). This will give you access to one of the finest libraries in the capital. Many of the books and periodicals held here will not be found in the College Library. In addition to that, the College has reciprocal arrangements with many of the libraries in other colleges of the University of London, which will allow you to use some of the more specialised libraries in the area. Information on these, and on how to register with Senate House Library, is available in the College Library in Malet Street. You will be invited to induction sessions for both the College Library and Senate House Library at the beginning of the academic year. We are also a few minutes walk from the British Library, the major national library in the UK.

Is there help with IT needs?

The College's Central Computer Services Unit, located in the main building in Malet Street, provides good computer facilities for all students. Our ITS helpdesk staff offers drop-in training, access to colour printing and scanning, and storage devices that you can buy. You can contact them by:

Telephone: 020 7631 6543

Email: its@bbk.ac.uk

In person: ITS Helpdesk, ground floor, Birkbeck main building

What happens if I have financial or other difficulties?

The College provides advice on possible sources of assistance for both part-time and full-time students, and maintains its own scheme of awards operated by the Scholarships Sub-Committee. In addition to that, there is a range of Government and College funding for which students experiencing financial hardship may apply, if eligible. Please contact the Student Financial Support for advice or to make an appointment, on Tel: 020 7631 6362 between 12–5pm, Monday to Thursday (term time), or email: studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk

Detailed information about student fees and finance for students is online at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

What other services and facilities are there at Birkbeck?

As well as an excellent environment for study with numerous public events, readings and talks, the College also provides a number of services and facilities which help to provide a lively and supportive context for students. These include:

- Evening nursery facilities
- Careers advice services
- Counselling services
- Common rooms, canteens and a bar - plenty of places to meet people
- Clubs and Societies (e.g. Literary Society, French Society, History of Art Society etc)
- Its own sports ground for Football, Cricket, and Tennis
- A cinema and café in the School of Arts
- We are next door to the University of London Students' Union Building (ULU), with its excellent facilities, including swimming pool, gymnasium, squash courts, bars and shops.

For more information on these facilities see the College Prospectus and Student Union information pack.

Academic Staff

Dr Aoife Monks

Aoife Monks specialises in theatre and performance studies. Her research includes: costume, fashion and materiality in the theatre; the histories and cultures of cross-dressing; the work of contemporary female theatre directors; emigration and tourism in the performance of Irishness; The Wooster Group; oratory and theatricality; contemporary uses of Shakespeare in performance, death, ghosts and objects in performance; and Naturalism. She is the author of *The Actor in Costume*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. She is assistant editor of *Contemporary Theatre Review* journal and curates the events and programmes of the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre.

Dr Louise Owen

Louise Owen's research examines contemporary theatre and performance in terms of economic change and modes of governance. These interests are informed by her previous work in participatory and community theatre as an administrator, marketing and audience development worker and youth theatre practitioner for companies in London including Battersea Arts Centre and London Bubble. She has written about immersive performance, site-specific theatre and film, post-feminist culture and sexualized performance, documentary theatre, experimental dance, live and performance art, and community theatre. She is currently working on a book project examining the implication of a series of performance works in processes of neoliberalization in Britain. As part of the research network *Inside/Outside Europe*, she is also working on a project exploring mediations of multiculturalism and internationalism in British theatre. She is co-convenor of the London Theatre Seminar, an intercollegiate research event at which scholars based in London and beyond present work in progress in theatre and performance studies, and between 2010 and 2012 she co-curated the ATHE Performance Studies Focus Group pre-conference, running events in Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington DC.

Dr Fintan Walsh

Fintan Walsh researches within the fields of modern and contemporary theatre and performance studies. To date his work has focused on performance, subjectivity and cultural identity; performance and affect; performance, psycho-social phenomena and therapy culture; performance, participation and community, including queer arts, theatre in education and theatre for young audiences. Prior to joining Birkbeck, Fintan worked at Queen Mary, University of London, and at Trinity College Dublin, where he held a Government of Ireland post-doctoral Research Fellowship (2009-2011), and served as coordinator of the MPhil Theatre and Performance (2010-2011). Fintan has worked as a Reader in the Literary Department of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, and collaborated in script development, dramaturgy, facilitation and criticism projects with a number of Irish theatre companies and organisations including Calipo, Dublin Fringe Festival, Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin Youth Theatre, TEAM theatre and THISISPOPBABY. Fintan has also worked in the primary sector for many years, leading drama and theatre projects for children and young people. Current research projects focus on Irish theatre and cultural performance; questions of affirmation, affect and performance; and issues of absorption and orientation in theatre, performance and artistic practice.

Contacts

BA Theatre Studies Admissions Tutors

Dr Louise Owen
Part-time applications

l.owen@bbk.ac.uk

Dr Fintan Walsh
Full-time applications

f.walsh@bbk.ac.uk

BA Theatre Studies Administrative Staff

Esther Ranson
Administrator

e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk
englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk

0203 073 8378

Contact Details for My Birkbeck

Website

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/>

Online Enquiries

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ask/>

Telephone Enquiries

Tel: 0207 631 6316 (Fax: 0207 079 0641)

We look forward to meeting you.