

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MA Theatre and Performance <i>pathway exit awards</i> - MA Theatre and Performance: Theatre Making - MA Theatre and Performance: Dramaturgy - MA Theatre and Performance: Writing for Performance (Level 7)
Name and title of any interim exit qualification(s)	PG Dip PG Cert
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time 1 year Part-time 2 years October start
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
<u>QAA subject benchmark group(s)</u> <u>Higher Education Credit Framework for</u> <u>England</u>	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMATHPRF_C
HECoS Code	100698 100069
Start date of programme	Autumn 2010
Date of programme approval	Summer 2010
Date of last programme amendment approval	March 2026
Valid for academic entry year	2026-27
Programme Director	Seda Ilter
Date of last revision to document	12/03/26

Admissions requirements

Undergraduate degree at 2nd class honours or above, and/or relevant practical experience in the creative industries. If English is not your first language or you have not previously studied in English, the requirement for this programme is the equivalent of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic Test) score of 6.0, with not less than 6.5 in each of the sub-tests.

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

Course aims:

Birkbeck's MA Theatre and Performance is a highly distinctive degree delivered by one of the most impactful and innovative departments in the UK. Taught by world-leading academic researchers, writers, dramaturgs, and theatre makers, in association with industry artists and partners, you will explore the dynamic relationships between text, performance, writing, and dramaturgy through a combination of:

- Writing for and about theatre and performance
- Performance-making
- Dramaturgical practice
- Academic study
- Playwriting

This postgraduate degree is ideally suited to those interested in learning about or working in theatre and the performing arts, including writing for performance, digital and screen-based arts, dramaturgy and literary management, and an array of other career paths. Each student will choose between three specialist routes upon application. The degree titles you can exit with upon graduation are one of the following:

- Theatre and Performance: Theatre Making
- Theatre and Performance: Dramaturgy
- Theatre and Performance: Writing for Performance

Students across all three routes will share some compulsory modules in which you will examine historical, philosophical and theoretical materials and ideas to understand contemporary theatre and performance and the ways in which they are shaped by current concerns, traditions, and legacies. Depending on your chosen exit award you will also study with industry professionals at Camden People's Theatre (Theatre Making), leading playwrights and screenwriters such as David Eldridge and Daragh Carville (Writing for Performance), and guest artists such as Tim Crouch and Zoe Svendsen (Dramaturgy). This course will prepare you to enter the world of creative industries with specialist theoretical and practical knowledge, and an informed overview of the creative process and its components.

Course structure (divided according to exit degree titles)

MA Theatre and Performance: Theatre Making

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
7	AREN277S7	Collaborative Theatre Making	30	Comp	2
7		Option	30	Option	2 or 3
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Core	1-3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
7	AREN277S7	Collaborative Theatre Making	30	Comp	2
7		Option (or in T2, Y2)	30	Option	3
Year 2					
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
		Option Module (if not taken in Y1)	30	Option	2
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Core	1-3

MA Theatre and Performance: Dramaturgy

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
7	AREN298S7	Dramaturgy: Processes and Practices	30	Comp	2
7		Option	30	Option	2
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Core	1-3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
	AREN298S7	Dramaturgy: Processes and Practices	30	Comp	2
7		Option (or in T2, Y2)	30	Option	2

Year 2					
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
		Option Module (if not taken in Y1)	30	Option	2
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Core	1-3

MA Theatre and Performance: Writing for Performance

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
7	ENHU124S7	Introduction to Playwriting	30	Comp	2
7	ARMC048H7 SC04006S7 ARMC102S7	One 30-credit option taken from: Scriptwriting in Different Genres Writing for Gaming Audiences: Communities, Participation and Learning	30	Option	TBC
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Core	1-3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	AREN022S7	Contemporary Performance Cultures: Ideas and Approaches	30	Comp	1
7	ENHU124S7	Introduction to Playwriting	30	Comp	2
7	ARMC048H7 SC04006S7 ARMC102S7	One 30-credit option taken from (depending on availability): Scriptwriting in Different Genres Writing for Gaming Audiences: Communities, Participation and Learning	30	Option	3
Year 2					
7	AREN276S7	Performing Texts	30	Comp	1
7	ARMC048H7 SC04006S7 ARMC102S7	One 30-credit option (if not taken in Y1) taken from (depending on availability): Scriptwriting in Different Genres Writing for Gaming Audiences: Communities, Participation and Learning	30	Option	2
7	AREN031D7	Dissertation: Theatre and Performance Research	60	Comp	1-3

Note: part-time students start preparation work on their dissertations in Term 3 of their first year and complete in year 2

Core:	Module must be taken and passed by student
Compulsory:	Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)
Option:	Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around: individual and collaborative project work; independent and in-class activities; critical engagement with a variety of dramatic, writing workshops, performative and theoretical texts and performances; written and performed tasks; academic inquiry and performance-making.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures, seminars and studio-based practices. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare. Studio-based workshops provide you with the opportunity to explore practices and ideas in embodied ways, and to refine your performance-making and presentation skills.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Assessment methods include:

- Research essays
- Creative projects, practice, and portfolios
- Critical reflections on practical work
- In-class performance exercises (Theatre and Performance)
- Scriptwriting (Writing for Performance)
- Dissertations (practice-led or academic pathways)

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Show a creative and conceptual understanding of theatre and performance-making processes that will support the critical evaluation of current research, performance and advanced scholarship in the discipline. This will enable students to evaluate and critique

rival methodologies, and, where appropriate, develop and propose new hypotheses and practices;

2. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of performance practice and a critical awareness of the current problems and new insights raised by the relationship between history, theory and practice;
3. Identify, engage and analyse a variety of approaches to the creation of text and performance that inform contemporary theatre practice;
4. Show an ability to develop practice-based approaches to a range of theatrical, dramatic and performative stimuli and sources.
5. Evidence an ability to work through complex ideas intellectually and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
6. Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge and the development of practice based projects, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research, enquiry and performance are used to create and interpret knowledge;
7. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and nonspecialist audiences; [Social/practical]:
8. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
9. Manage workloads and meet deadlines;
10. Evidence a capacity to work collaboratively in a small group to achieve shared goals;
11. Develop transferable skills of value within and beyond the subject including: interpersonal and communication skills; creative thinking and problem solving; initiative and personal responsibility; decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Careers and further study

You will find MA Theatre and Performance graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- Academia and education
- Theatre and performance practice
- Script development
- Dramaturg
- Film, media, and the creative arts
- Writing for tv, film, and gaming
- Arts Leadership
- Administration and outreach
- Journalism
- Advertising and marketing
- Public relations
- Policy and strategy for political organisations, charities, and NGOs

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website.](#)

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

Please check our website for more information about student support services. This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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