

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	MFA Theatre Directing				
4	Programme Code(s)	TMFTTDCT_C				
5	UCAS code	N/A				
6	Home Department	English, Theatre and Creative Writing				
7	Exit Award(s)	N/A				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	2				
9	Mode of Study	FT	X	PT		DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	7				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	The programme is overseen by Drama UK, the organisation that oversees the accreditation of conservatoire drama training. The programme is delivered in partnership with a range of drama schools, including RADA, Guildhall, Drama Centre London, Arts Educational, Rose Bruford and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School; and a range of producing theatres, including Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester, Sheffield Theatres, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Glasgow Citizens and Birmingham Rep.				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	QAA Benchmark Group	N/A				

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>This Course provides its students with a comprehensive practice-based awareness at professional level of the work and functions of the professional theatre director under current conditions. It achieves this through an integrated programme of professional practice and theoretical, critical and contextual study. The Course aims to further the creative and intellectual development of its students as independent creative artists by enabling them to develop their directing abilities to a professionally acceptable level; to understand and be able to communicate the nature of the professional practice of directing; and to develop themselves as autonomous reflective and self-aware artists. Year one enables the student to acquire an informed experience, knowledge and understanding of the work of the professional director with key collaborators such as actors, authors, designers. It includes a term's "fieldwork" spent largely exploring the training of the professional actor through regular attendance at an accredited drama school. Year Two enables the student to exercise and develop her/his skills as a director within a lengthy secondment to a professional theatre company or companies. In the final term, students will reassemble as a group to reflect upon and draw together their individual experience of the course in a final presentation that will</p>

	encapsulate her/his personal understanding of the role and function of a professional theatre director.
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15	<p>Entry Criteria</p> <p>The possession of one of the following: 1) minimum second-class honours degree from a UK university (or a directly comparable qualification from a non-UK university) together with some significant experience of professional or professional-level theatre; 2) undergraduate- or postgraduate-level diploma from a recognised UK drama school (or a directly comparable qualification from a non-UK drama school) together with some significant experience of professional or professional-level theatre; 3) appreciable experience (normally three years' minimum) as a professional or professional-level theatre practitioner.</p> <p>If English is not a student's first language or a student has 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 6.5.</p>
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16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A comprehensive knowledge of the work of the professional theatre director and an understanding of all key aspects of that work, including: (a) the professional director's role as interpreter and co-ordinator; (b) the relationship between the professional director and other essential professional collaborators, including the actor, the author (and the text), the designer and the manager; (c) the relationship between the professional director and the audience. 2 An informed knowledge of strategic, policy and financial/business issues that affect and impinge upon the work of the professional director. 3. The ability to evaluate critically arguments, claims and statements so as to arrive at a reasoned and sustainable conclusion. 4. The capacity to analyse complex concepts through considered assessment of their origins, developments and ramifications. 5. The ability to research broadly, laterally and in depth and to synthesise the results of that research so as to draw conclusions that are appropriately effective and productive. 6. Overall, the ability to assess and comprehend situations and to evolve appropriate and realistic strategies to address those situations 7. On successful conclusion of the Course the student will be able to execute in practice the range of skills required of a theatre director at a professionally acceptable level. 8. S/he will be able to take a professional theatre production through its entire cycle, from initial conception to final public performance, at an acceptable level of professional competence.
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17	Learning, teaching and assessment methods
	<p>The programme includes a three-month secondment to a drama school that includes participation in acting classes; and a six-month secondment to a producing theatre company that includes the opportunities to assist on the productions, to direct actors and understand the organisation of a professional producing theatre.</p> <p>Teaching at Birkbeck is delivered by a range of workshops and seminars led by experienced theatre directors, designers, playwrights actors and other practitioners; practical exercises are undertaken individually and as a group; and directed independent study and research to support the secondments and class work.</p> <p>Assessments are a combination of oral presentations to panels of experienced theatre practitioners, supported by written material, and practical exercises that allow the demonstration of the practical skills and knowledge required of a professional theatre director. There are two dissertation assessments that comprise the above elements and viva voce examinations</p>
18	Programme Description
	<p>Year 1 After a three-week induction module at Birkbeck the first term is spent at a leading drama school, learning how actors are trained for today's theatre: the module, the director and the actor). There also workshops at Birkbeck with directors and actors.</p> <p>The spring term comprises two modules: the director and the author and the director and research. The director and the author includes workshops and seminars that develop an understanding of how directors approach productions by classic, historic and living authors. The director and research enables students to take one of a range of option modules offered by the department of English & Humanities; and to so acquire post-graduate research skills that may be applied to research for work on production.</p> <p>The summer term comprise two modules: the director and the designer and the director and the industry. The director and designer offers a practical understanding of how directors collaborate with designers, (including lighting and sound designers) and as well as a range of workshops there is an intensive three-week project working with designers from RADA and Wimbledon School of Art. The director and the industry offers a practical understanding of how theatre companies and pieces of work are funded and managed.</p> <p>Year 2 The first six to eight months are spent on secondment to a professional producing theatre. It offers the opportunity to assist on at least three full productions; to direct actors in projects; and to understand the functioning of a producing theatre: this module is the director and the production. Collaborating theatre companies will be drawn from a group of committed organisations. This group currently includes: the Royal Exchange Manchester, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Sheffield Theatres, the Citizens Theatre Glasgow, Birmingham Rep and the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith. This module therefore may require relocation to a regional city for the secondment period.</p> <p>In the final term of the degree, students reassemble as a group at Birkbeck to acquire practical knowledge and skills that will enable them to begin their careers as independent artists, and to articulate their artistic vision and aims: this module is the director and directing.</p>

19	Programme Structure			
Full Time programme				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ENHU001Z7	Course Induction (MFA Theatre Directing): Unit A	-	
7	ENHU095S7	The Director and the Actor	30	Compulsory
7	<i>Spring option from the department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing</i>		30	Option
7	ENHU096S7	The Director and the Author	30	Compulsory
7	ENHU097S7	The Director and the Designer	30	Compulsory
7	ENHU098S7	The Director and the Industry	30	Compulsory
Year Two				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ENHU005D7	The Director and the Production	60	Compulsory
7	ENHU006D7	The Director and Directing	60	Compulsory

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

24	Programme Director	Professor Robert Swain
25	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	Autumn 2003
26	Date approved by TQEC	Prior 2003
27	Date approved by Academic Board	Prior 2003
28	Date(s) updated/amended	Summer 2015