

MA Acting

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution: University of London
Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title: MA Acting
Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Post Graduate Diploma in Acting
Duration of Programme: 1 year full-time
UCAS Code(s): Not applicable
HECoS Code(s): (100069) Drama
QAA Benchmark Group: Dance, Drama and Performance
FHEQ Level of Award: Level 7
Programme accredited by: Not applicable
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: 21 May 2023
Home Department: Theatre and Performance
Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme: N/A

Programme overview

The MA Acting programme provides creatively rigorous, diverse and socially aware actor training for application in theatre and performance in a twenty-first century global context. Goldsmiths is famous for producing theatre practitioners who have agency and critical capacity that makes them not only fit for work in the existing theatre and screen industries but who are also able to create, innovate, and initiate change, in their own right as artists. The MA Acting is rooted in the Actor-Plus model which seeks to produce Actors who are highly creative, skilled and flexible as actors but who are also capable of work in other capacities in addition to acting, for example as playwrights, producers, directors or screenwriters.

You will be given the opportunity to engage in imaginative, technical and intellectual training in a range of methods, approaches and related practitioner and critical discourses for use in classical, contemporary, devised, site specific, and new theatre writing productions. The programme also offers an introduction to working in screen/audio/digital contexts and you learn about performance theories, practices and methodologies in relation to your own performance practice and research. You will have the opportunity to work towards a final Independent Research Project which will include a public performance as part of the Graduate Festival and a written reflection on your practice research.

On this programme you are introduced to a range of psychophysical acting methods and genres of theatre from different cultures and periods in history. Methods will include Intra/Inter-cultural Actor Training, Michael Chekhov Technique, SoulWork, Viewpoints, Stanislavski's Method of Physical Actions and Active Analysis, Suzanne Bing/Jacques Lecoq Technique, and various other contemporary and Post-Modern approaches. Work from a wide range of genres is explored, for example, classical Japanese, Indian, Greek theatre and Commedia dell'arte, along with Naturalistic, Realistic, Expressionist, Absurdist, Devised, Site-Specific, Afrofuturist, Physical, Hip-Hop and Visual Theatre. The MA Acting offers ongoing weekly training in movement and voice throughout the autumn and summer terms which will cover areas such as play, animal work, performance capture, stage combat, working with intimacy directors, vocal expression, accents, singing and wellbeing strategies for actors. Reflexive practice is embedded throughout your learning journey and a professional development programme prepares you for a career in the cultural sector with a wide range of industry guests who visit over the year to deliver lectures, masterclasses and networking opportunities.

The training model used on the MA Acting will place the student actor, their identity, agency and wellbeing at the centre of the pedagogic process. Students are encouraged to develop creative, critical, self-reflexive, technical and professional strategies for driving independent career pathways, while working collaboratively. The MA Acting has been designed to work synergistically with the MA Directing programme and the small number of directing students will work closely with the actors on a number of modules and projects over the year. Students also work alongside those studying on our MA Performance Making, MA Screen Acting and MA Dramaturgy and Writing for Performance programmes in a dynamic post-graduate community. Goldsmiths is a small and welcoming arts university which provides the intimacy needed for training in acting, combined with a long history of intellectual and creative dynamism and critical enquiry. Students benefit from the dynamic environment of Goldsmiths within reach of the imaginative and theatrical stimulus of London's cultural and creative locations.

The teaching on the MA Acting is research-led and the staff team on the programme, and industry guests, are highly experienced and sector-leading practitioners and scholars.

Programme entry requirements

Candidates undertaking the MA Acting at Goldsmiths are usually expected to hold an undergraduate degree in an Arts or Humanities area (with a degree classification at 2:1 level or higher). In terms of professional and relevant work experience, some familiarity with performer training and past presentation opportunities is required. Further and holistic criteria for entry to the programme emphasises: the discipline in collaborating with others, artistic risk-taking in opening up to the pedagogic practices and a commitment to exploring

the research contexts to acting independently, commensurate with the level of postgraduate learning.

Programme learning outcomes

For the Postgraduate Certificate to be awarded, modules of at least 60 CATS will have been passed and the relevant learning outcomes will have been achieved.

- Devised Theatre
- Classical Acting (including Movement and Dance)
- Performance Theories and Practices I

For the Postgraduate Diploma to be awarded, modules to the value of at least 120CATS will have been passed and the relevant learning outcomes will have been achieved.

- Devised Theatre
- Classical Acting (including Movement and Dance)
- Contemporary Acting (including Movement and Dance)
- Performance Theories and Practices I
- Performance Theories and Practices II
- Staging the Text and Performance

For the full MA to be awarded, modules to the value of at least 180 CATS will have been passed and the relevant learning outcomes will have been achieved. These modules include:

- All of the above, plus the Independent Research Project

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Present advanced and systematic embodied knowledge and understanding of recent and relevant debates, concepts and issues relating to the field of acting.	Classical Acting, Contemporary Acting, Devised Theatre and Staging the Text.

A2	Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of current performance theories and theoretical discourses in relation to the practices of acting and theatre making	Performance Theories & Practices I & II Independent Research Project
A3	Demonstrate an advanced understanding of relevant methodologies and approaches to the practice and study of acting and the ability to design, develop and evaluate practice research.	Performance Theories & Practices I & II Independent Research Project

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Show understanding of, and ability to, apply skills in critical thinking and performance in the field of acting.	Classical Acting, Contemporary Acting
B2	Demonstrate a contextual understanding of the modes and styles of performance explored and an advanced ability to analyse the text / score, dramaturgy and style of the work.	Devised Theatre, Staging the Text
B3	Ability to critically appraise their own and other's relevant current practice, research and methodologies using the critical approaches studied on the programme.	Performance Theories and Practices I & II, Independent Research Project

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	The development of advanced vocal, physical and acting skills related to a wide range of classical and contemporary forms of theatre/performance.	Classical Acting, Contemporary Acting
C2	Demonstrate a rigorous and creative application of relevant and developed vocal, physical and acting skills	Devised Theatre, Staging the Text, Independent Research Project

	appropriate to the production and in collaboration with a director.	
C3	Develop, deliver and appraise the advanced performance of characters and personae in classical or contemporary performance.	Classical Acting, Contemporary Acting, Staging the Text, Independent Research Project
C4	The development and appropriate application of methodologies for the generation of original performance material (devised theatre, new writing, etc) and the capacity to self-direct performance.	Devised Theatre Contemporary Acting Independent Research Project
C5	Ability to deliver a detailed, structured and coherent performance based on in-depth and advanced knowledge of techniques, theory and practice.	Independent Research Project

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Act autonomously and be proactive as an actor in researching, planning and implementing tasks, individually and collaboratively in rehearsal.	Classical Acting, Contemporary Acting, Devised Theatre, Staging the Text
D2	The skills needed to operate successfully as a professional actor working as part of a company (e.g. manage time and deadlines; structure and communicate ideas effectively; engage with relevant team members)	Staging the Text, Devised Theatre, Independent Research Project
D3	Demonstrate the capacity to collaborate closely with a director, or self-direct, and reflect upon their own and others' relevant practice	Devised Theatre, Contemporary Acting, Independent Research Project
D4	The ability to initiate projects as an actor-creator with the use of discipline specialist skills in original material generation/adaptation/new writing and entrepreneurial strategies.	Devised Theatre, Independent Research Project
D5	Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of actors in	Performance Theories and Practices I & II, Independent Research Project

	the context of equality of opportunity, good working practices and the capacity to implement wellbeing strategies.	
--	--	--

Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	<p>Practical Work In order to achieve 80% or over, the piece of work being assessed would need to demonstrate that the majority of the learning outcomes have been achieved to an Outstanding level. Marks in this category will be awarded for work which demonstrates a professional level of integrated skillset that relies on a conceptual command of the material, is original and potentially shows new insights into the assigned contexts of the acting and the associated skills that support it, via the application of a continually dedicated creative process.</p> <p>Written Work and Documentation In order to achieve 80% or over, the written work would need to meet an outstanding and publishable benchmark for academic or industry writing in the related category and indicate independent critical thinking, an outstanding research strategy which also rests upon independent research and writing, a full socio-historical and cultural appraisal of the relevant material and any other professional, praxis-based insights.</p>
70-79%	Distinction	<p>Practical Work In order to achieve 70% or over, the piece of work being assessed would need to demonstrate that the majority of the learning outcomes have been achieved to an Excellent level (distinction threshold). Marks in this category will be awarded to work which shows stylistic and technical distinction and conceptual sophistication and insight, relying upon a secure and discerning acquaintance with the field of study.</p> <p>Written Work and Documentation In order to achieve 70% or over, the written work would need to meet a level of excellence in the related category, indicating academic rigour, independent critical thinking, an excellent research strategy which also rests upon a full socio-historical and cultural appraisal of the relevant material and any other professional, praxis-based insights.</p>

60-69%	Merit	<p>Practical Work In order to achieve 60-69%, the piece of work being assessed would need to demonstrate that the majority of the learning outcomes have been achieved to a good extent. Some of the qualities of Distinction work may be found in this category but the difference will be either of the degree of skill application in the consistency of the work or in the conceptual basis for the choices made. The work should be of merit in all the areas of the practical work, or of considerable merit in some areas and a higher standard in others.</p> <p>Written Work and Documentation In order to achieve 60-69%, the work will be characterised by a good effort in collation of research and/or creative materials and soundness of individual written insights, argument or analysis, and a wide acquaintance with the field of study, coherence and relevance.</p>
50-59%	Pass	<p>Practical Work In order to achieve 50-59%, the piece of work being assessed would need to demonstrate that the majority of the appropriate learning outcomes have been achieved to a satisfactory extent. Marks in this range will reflect solid competence and achievement, although the work might be partial rather than consistent in its clarity, precision and effectiveness.</p> <p>Written Work and Documentation In order to achieve this grade, documentation will rely too heavily on tutorial notes or the repeated use of the same secondary sources at the expense of personal critical activity; notes could be insufficiently detailed; or tend towards description rather than analysis. The work should be of good standard in some areas and of a satisfactory standard in others.</p>
30-49%	Fail	<p>Practical Work The mark indicates that the work is below the standard of a Masters degree. The piece of work being assessed demonstrates that the majority of the outcomes have been achieved to a less than satisfactory extent. Marks in this range will reflect work that is significantly inconsistent or flawed in relation to all or some of the areas related to practical acting.</p> <p>Written Work and Documentation This mark indicates a scant effort at documenting the process of learning, little to no evidence of a wider reading or research</p>

		strategy and only basic description, with little to no insight or analysis.
10-29%	Bad fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes at Masters standard.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	Non submission or plagiarised A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

Mode of study

This programme will:

- Provide students with extensive studio-based training in tandem with learning in seminar, lecture, masterclass, rehearsal, production and tutorial contexts.
- Train students as actors in a wide range of methods, genres and approaches from a diverse range of cultures and eras and provide extensive and ongoing training in movement and voice for actors.
- Encourage students to critically engage with current epistemologies of acting and theatre making, along with other critical frameworks, in order to reflect on the work of others and to develop their own practice and artistic voice in relation to their identity, interests and needs.
- Facilitate the student's independent research in relation to technical skills, projects, creative practice *auto-cours*, critical readings, the devising of original material, research preparation for existing plays, and the development of their own extended practice research project.
- Provide a three term programme of professional development that prepares students for the industry and ensures they are entrepreneurial artists who have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as professional actors and coherent wellbeing strategies.
- Offer students bespoke Virtual Learning resources for each module of the MA Acting programme.

Programme structure

The programme offers two major modules, *Classical Acting* (autumn term, weeks 1-10) and *Contemporary Acting* (intensively taught weeks 1-5, spring term), each of which contains complementary movement and voice training for actors. In the autumn term students have the opportunity to make an original piece of work in *Devised Theatre*. In the spring term students have an introduction to Screen Acting in week 6 and work on *Staging the Text* with a director in a full rehearsal process weeks 7-11. In tandem with this studio-based learning

students take the *Performance Theories and Practices* modules which provides critical frames to explore and interrogate various acting and theatre-making epistemologies and practices, explore issues of identity, agency and wellbeing and to reflect on the development of their own work and practice research. The *Independent Research Project* is made up of three units: (i) Professional Development, which runs through all three terms, (ii) Practice Research Project Production, that the student directs as part of the Graduate Festival in the summer term, and (iii) Critical Reflection, which is written in the summer months after the festival. The Programme ends with a dynamic graduation event preparing students to enter the Goldsmiths alumni professional network in theatre, film, television and cultural sectors in the UK and around the world.

Academic year of study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Classical Acting	DR71XXXA	30	7	Compulsory	1
Devised Theatre	DR71XXXA	15	7	Compulsory	1
Performance Theories & Practices I	DR71XXXA	15	7	Compulsory	1
Performance Theories & Practices II	DR71XXXA	15	7	Compulsory	2
Contemporary Acting	DR71XXXA	30	7	Compulsory	2
Staging the Text	DR71XXXA	15	7	Compulsory	2
Independent Research Project	DR71XXXA	60	7	Compulsory	2, 3
Introduction to Screen Acting	N/A	0	7	Optional	2

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally. All students are allocated a Personal Tutor from their programme of study who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student frequently either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting will take place at the very start of the autumn term. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, personal goal setting, attendance, and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success. The department of Theatre and Performance also has a Senior Tutor who can support students with any issues that are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Directors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/ programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is progressing well. This may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and Welcome Week. This includes the University [Disability](#) Service which can put reasonable adjustment student agreements in place to remove any barriers to learning, a [Wellbeing](#) Service who can provide support in relation to student welfare, and the [Centre for Academic Language and Literacies](#) which works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)) to ensure students are provided with a bridge into the arts and cultural sector on graduation.

Programme-specific requirements

Due to the practice-based and vocational nature of the MA Acting students are expected to attend all sessions in order to embody their learning and be prepared for the assessments.

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information at <https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs/>

Specific programme costs

The workshop-based Modules which involve performer skills should not incur a cost. However, for the Independent Research Project, there may be costs related to personal items, such as make-up, extra clothing (beyond our costume department's range). These will be

managed in accordance with similar postgraduate specialist programme expenses, where the Department will reasonably cover a range of expenses to a capped amount per student.

Tuition fee costs

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>