

MA Directing Programme Specification

Awarding Institution: University of London
Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title: MA Directing
Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Post Graduate Diploma in Directing
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 Directing programme provides creatively rigorous, diverse and socially aware director training for application in theatre and the arts sector 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, screen and arts industries but who are also able to create, innovate, and initiate change, in their own right as artists. The MA Directing is designed to train directors who are highly creative, critically and socially engaged, and who are skilled to work in a range of performance styles and practices. The programme supports you in developing your own creative and ethical working methods, and unique style, as a director. It centralizes your identity as an artist and ensures that the development of your working methods avoids discriminatory practices in relation to your actors and collaborators and also ensures you are able to meet your duty of care in future jobs as Directors, or Artistic Directors of theatre companies and arts organisations.

This programme offers an 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. You also receive an introduction to working in screen/audio/digital contexts and learn about performance

theories, practices and methodologies in relation to your own performance practice and research as director. You will work in various contexts as a director, be trained to lead workshops, and have the opportunity to work as either an Assistant Director or Assistant Dramaturg to a professional director in the spring term. On Approaches to Direction I & II you will benefit from studio-based LAB work on direction in addition to seminars, talks from a wide range of professional directors, one-to-one tutorials and observation of your rehearsals throughout the year. You also have the opportunity to work towards a final Independent Research Project which will include a public performance they have directed as part of the current Graduate Festival and a written reflection on your practice research. All students also have professional development learning, and reflexive practice, embedded through all three terms of the programme and a wide range of directors will visit to lecture and teach over the year, including alumni from the department of Theatre and Performance.

Students on the MA Directing will be introduced to a range of directorial methods, plays and styles of theatre from different cultures and periods in history. This will include a focus on the following practices/practitioners: Intracultural Practice (Kristine Landon-Smith); Michael Chekhov Technique; Truscott's SoulWork; Overlie / Bogart's Viewpoints; Stanislavski's Method of Physical Actions and Active Analysis; Suzanne Bing/Jacques Lecoq Technique; Pina Bausch's process; Robert Lepage's methods and RSVP; Akram Khan and Jatinder Verma. In addition the work of socially engaged directors such as Freddie Henricks, Joan Littlewood and Augusto Boal will be explored. Importantly, the programme will also explore a number of case study directors who went on to lead the development of new theatre companies and the generation of new work in order to broaden and diversify the repertoire and style of work in the twentieth and twenty-first century theatre. For example the pioneering work of Talawa, Tamasha, New Earth, Gay Sweatshop, Split Britches, Graeae, Eclipse and Progress Theatre. The programme also prepares students for a career in the cultural sector and wide range of industry guests will visit over the year to deliver lectures, masterclasses and networking opportunities.

The MA Directing has been designed to work synergistically with the MA Acting programme and the small number of directing students will work closely with the actors on a number of modules and projects over the year. The Directing students can audit two major modules taken by the MA Actors, including the ongoing movement and voice classes, in order to embody methods they may wish to employ as directors, to ensure they have a thorough understanding of the actor's process, and to deepen ensemble skills. The training model used on the MA Director will place the student, 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.

You will 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 theatre, combined with a long history of intellectual and creative dynamism and critical enquiry. You 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 Directing 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 Directing 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
- Approaches to Direction I
- Performance Theories and Practices I

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

- Devised Theatre
- Approaches to Direction I
- Approaches to Direction II
- Performance Theories and Practices I
- Performance Theories and Practices II
- The Director and the Text

For the 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 directing.	Approaches to Direction I & II, Devised Theatre and The Director and The Text.
A2	Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of current performance theories and theoretical discourses in relation to the practices of directing, 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 directing 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 directing.	Approaches to Direction I & II
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.	Approaches to Direction I & II, Devised Theatre, The Director and 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, Approaches to Direction, Independent Research Project
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Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	An advanced embodied development and use of skills as a theatre director related to a wide range of theatre/performance styles, text analysis, dramaturgies and creative interpretation, with an awareness of the actor's process.	Approaches to Direction I & II
C2	Demonstrate the ability to work effectively as an assistant director / assistant dramaturg and collaborate effectively with all the other members of a multi-disciplinary theatre company.	The Director and the Text
C3	The capacity to lead a theatre company and closely collaborate with actors with an understanding of equality of opportunity, good working practices and the actors' and other team member's wellbeing.	Performance Theories and Practices I & II, Approaches to Direction I & II, Independent Research Project
C4	The development and appropriate application of directing using methodologies for the generation of original performance material (devised theatre, new writing, etc.).	Devised Theatre, Independent Research Project
C5	Ability to plan, pitch for, direct and deliver a detailed, structured and coherent production based on in-depth and advanced knowledge of techniques, theory and practice.	Approaches to Direction I & II, Independent Research Project

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Act autonomously and be proactive as a director in researching, planning and implementing tasks, individually and collaboratively in rehearsal.	Devised Theatre, Approaches to Direction I & II, The Director and the Text.
D2	The skills needed to operate successfully as a professional director, or assistant director, working as part of a company (e.g. manage time and deadlines; structure and communicate ideas effectively; engage with relevant team members)	Devised Theatre, The Director and the Text, Independent Research Project
D3	Demonstrate the capacity to collaborate creatively with actors and other company members, and reflect upon their own and others' relevant practice	Devised Theatre, Approaches to Direction I & II, The Director and the Text, Independent Research Project
D4	The ability to initiate projects as a director with the use of discipline specialist skills in text analysis, original material generation/adaptation/new writing and entrepreneurial strategies.	Devised Theatre, Independent Research Project
D5	Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of directors in the context of equality of opportunity, good working practices and the capacity to implement wellbeing strategies.	Performance Theories and Practices I & II, Independent Research Project.

Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	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

		<p>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</p>

		soundness of individual written insights, argument or analysis, and a wide acquaintance with the field of study, coherence and relevance.
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 strategy and only basic description, with little to no insight or analysis.</p>
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	<p>Non submission or plagiarised</p> <p>A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.</p>

Mode of study

This programme will:

- Provide students with extensive studio-based training in tandem with learning in seminar, lecture, masterclass, rehearsal, LAB rehearsal processes, production and tutorial contexts.
- Train students as directors in a wide range of methods, genres and approaches from a diverse range of cultures and eras and provide the opportunity to audit classes on the MA Acting to learn embodied methods that can be utilised in directorial practice and to enhance their understanding of the actor's process.
- Encourage students to critically engage with current epistemologies of directing 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, the direction of various projects, creative practice *auto-cours*, critical readings, the devising of original material, research and dramaturgical preparation for existing plays, and the development of their own extended practice research project.
- Provide the opportunity for MA Directing students to work as assistant director/assistant dramaturg with a professional director in a full length rehearsal process gaining the appropriate skills and knowledges to work in this capacity.
- 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 directors and coherent wellbeing strategies.
- Offer students bespoke Virtual Learning resources for each module of the MA Directing programme.

Programme structure

The programme centres around *Approaches to Direction* the major module that runs in both the autumn and spring term. In addition to seminars, lectures and tutorials this module also contains two blocks of studio LAB practice for all the MA Directors in order that they can explore their ideas and interests in practice. Students can also audit *Classical Acting* (autumn) and *Contemporary Acting* (spring), each of which contains complementary movement and voice training which they can participate in. In the autumn term, students have the opportunity to make, and direct, an original piece of work in *Devised Theatre*. In the spring term students have an introduction to Screen Acting and also work as either Assistant Director or Assistant Dramaturg with a director in a full rehearsal process in *The Director and the Text* module. In tandem with this studio-based learning students take the *Performance Theories and Practices* modules in the autumn and spring term which provides critical frames to explore and interrogate various directing, acting and theatre-making epistemologies and practices, explore issues of identity, ensuring the actor's agency and wellbeing, management styles and interpersonal strategies, 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
Approaches to Direction I (including LABS)	DR71XXXA	30	7	Compulsory	1
Approaches to Direction II (including LABS)	DR71XXXA	30	7	Compulsory	2
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
The Director and the Text	DR71XXXA	15	7	Compulsory	2
Independent Research Project	DR71XXXA	60	7	Compulsory	2, 3
Introduction to Screen	N/A	0	7	Optional	2
Students may audit: Classical Acting (MA Acting)	DR71XXXA	0	7	Optional	1
Students may audit: Contemporary Acting (MA Acting)	DR71XXXA	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 Directing 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/>