

## Programme Specification

A Programme Specification provides a concise summary of the main features of a programme and its intended learning outcomes. It is intended to be used by prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers.

<b>Programme Title:</b>	
<b>MA Performance (Live and Digital)</b>	
<b>Programme (AOS) Code(s):</b>	<b>MA1PFM1/MA1PFM2</b>
<b>UCAS Code:</b>	
<b>Name of Final Award:</b>	<b>Master of Arts, MA</b>
<b>Level of Qualification:</b>	<b>Level 7</b>
<b>Regime of Delivery:</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Mode(s) of Delivery:</b>	<b>Full Time &amp; Part Time</b>
<b>Typical Length of Study (Years):</b>	<b>1 (2 part time)</b>
<b>Professional Body Recognition / Accreditation (including specific requirements where applicable):</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### Brief Description of the Programme

Do you enjoy creating work that pushes the boundaries between performance and contemporary life, and the boundaries between performance and other disciplines?

Do you see yourself as an artist who wants to experiment with lots of ideas and wants to learn about how contemporary practitioners and writers understand performance?

If so, this could be the course for you.

You will explore the application of live and digital performance to a contemporary society that has become increasingly technologised. You will view performance as both performing – a skill which can be applied in a variety of contexts – and as an absorbent art form that can accommodate a range of media, including film, screen and digital platforms. You will gain hands on experience with the latest technology, allowing you to explore the full range of stage, screen, audio and intermedial possibilities.

At the centre of the programme is practical work with industry professionals at the forefront of contemporary UK performance. You will work with them practically and learn about their professional practices. You will then go on to study thinkers who have written about the possibilities of performance, and explore concepts discussing what performance is and could be. The course culminates in you creating your own original project where you can put into practice the skills and methods you have experienced.

The course bridges the gap between undergraduate courses in performance and the advanced skills needed for a career in the creative industries. It also offers a range of transferable skills that can be applied to other contexts beyond conventional notions of the performing arts, in particular those industries that utilise screen media, recorded sound, presentation,

performance, collaboration and leadership. It will appeal to performing arts, theatre and acting graduates interested in expanding their skills set as well as media students interested in performance. It will provide additional skills and specialisms for those without a first degree in performance fields who are already engaged in the industry.

## Programme Aims

1	Develop students as mature creative artists with a comprehensive understanding of the UK performing arts industry and related industries
2	Develop students' practical skills within the field of performance through an engagement with a wide range of performance practice.
3	Encourage a sophisticated critical awareness and analysis of the theoretical, political and ethical contexts of various examples of performance work.
4	Facilitate students' personal and professional development as artists through simulation of and engagement with industry practice in their own creative work.
5	Prepare students for employment by developing and consolidating a wide range of creative, technical, leadership and collaborative skills.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

The Bucks Graduate Attributes focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens. The attributes are developed through the programme.

ID	Learning Outcome
On successful completion of the programme a graduate will be able to:	
<b>Graduate Attribute: Knowledge and its application (K)</b>	
K1	Describe, interpret and evaluate performance texts and events through a creative and critical engagement with a range of advanced critical and theoretical perspectives.
K2	Identify a wide range of performance and screen practitioners and theorists and place them within the cultural, political and financial context of the UK performance field.
K3	Create a performance project for a specific context, harnessing appropriate theoretical, creative and organisational principles to the project chosen.
K4	Select and apply appropriate methodologies to a research project.
<b>Graduate Attribute: Creativity (C)</b>	
C1	Demonstrate a comprehensive awareness of the creative skills and group processes of production, design and rehearsal by which performance is created.
C2	Engage creatively and critically with the possibilities for performance implied by a text or other performance documentation.
C3	Synthesise a variety of working methodologies in order to question and challenge existing conventions through the invention and production of performance.
C4	Propose advanced solutions to contemporary problems by selecting appropriately from theories of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.
<b>Graduate Attribute: Social and ethical awareness and responsibility (S)</b>	

S1	Critically evaluate the social and ethical significance of a range of critical literature on performance and related fields.
S2	Contrast and critically assess the effectiveness, politics and ethics of the artistic and working practices of a range of professional artists.
S3	Engage creatively and critically with existing orthodoxies in performance, suggesting alternative approaches which resonate with current social, political and ethical concerns.
S4	Articulate original and reasoned critical arguments, both orally and in writing, which show an understanding of contemporary social and ethical issues.
<b>Graduate Attribute: Leadership and self-development (L)</b>	
L1	Formulate and present clear critical arguments, both orally and in writing.
L2	Work creatively and imaginatively both individually and in group settings
L3	Demonstrate a broad range of information retrieval skills to gather, assess and synthesise material and to critically evaluate its significance
L4	Manage personal workloads efficiently and effectively through the formulation, implementation and evaluation of a creative project.

## Programme Structure

Programmes are structured in stages. The number of stages will vary depending on the mode (e.g. full-time, part-time), duration and location of study which will be detailed in the Programme Handbook.

Modules are set at a specific academic level and listed as either core (compulsory) or optional. The level indicates the relative academic difficulty which will increase through the programme. Passing modules will reward you with academic credit. The amount of credits will depend on the complexity of the module and the level of effort required, which is measured in 'notional learning hours'.

Our [Academic Advice webpages](#) provide more information on the structure of taught awards offered by the University.

*Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to sector developments.*

## Level Seven

Code	Module Title	Credit	Core / Option	Compensable (Normally Yes)
PA701	Interrogating Performance and Screen	15	C	Yes
PA702	Residency and Contemporary Contexts	15	C	Yes
PA703	Contemporary Performance Practice	30	C	Yes
PA704	Creative Explorations in Screen and Performance	30	C	Yes
PA705	Creative Explorations in Live Performance	30	C	Yes
PA706	Performance Practical Dissertation	60	O	No
PA707	Performance Written Dissertation	60	O	No

## Learning and Teaching Activities

Please see the [Academic Advice pages](#) for a description of learning and teaching activities that are recognised by the University. Detailed information on this specific programme is outlined below:

Teaching methods vary enormously but will include:

- workshops, which develop practical and production skills. They often involve physical work and deal with techniques actors need to learn and develop. Wearing comfortable, easy to move in clothes is advised.
- performances (some of which are formally assessed, but may be formative as well as summative). These may be either public (i.e. to a paying audience), private (i.e. to an invited audience), or mediated (i.e. for camera). Their style and duration will vary according to the module, and they are featured across the degree. Students will have opportunities to work in many areas of production.
- lectures and seminars, which develop analytical, critical and research skills. These generally take place in a classroom or lecture theatre, and combine tutor-led information-giving with student-centred discussions about the studied topics. They often include presentations and exercises.
- study trips and visits to performances. These trips give students an opportunity to watch professional theatre and provide invaluable material for students' development.

This is an Attendance course. Performance is inevitably often centred on working in the room with the tutor and with other students. Group sizes are limited to 20 for all practical work.

Wherever possible reading is made available in advance and notes are placed on the VLE for students. Students will receive three one-to-one meetings with their Personal Tutor each year.

When students begin in September, as we assume most will, the course begins with an intensive week working with a professional company from the field of live and/or digital performance. As the course develops students become more independent, working on a project inspired by industry practice before leading a group project and finally moving on to their own independent research project. This is intended to reflect the need to acquire skills and knowledge before going on to apply them to the specific contexts of a research project.

The course aims to integrate practice and theory. This approach reflects the need for experts in the discipline of performance to understand concepts and to apply them practically. The course is underpinned by a belief that having a solid understanding of a variety of theoretical and academic contexts can help develop engaging and original performance work, as well as offering an understanding of how theory can be applied to industry and leadership contexts.

Throughout the course students should, roughly speaking, expect to supplement the timetabled hours with an equivalent number of hours available to rehearse with others, and the same number of hours again on independent study. Experiential learning is a key principle of study. Collaboration is another key principle, in this course both in terms of working with other students as well as with industry professionals. Throughout the degree, students will normally experience both tutor-led learning, including the participation of professional practitioners, and self-directed methods of learning, reflecting increasing independence and encouraging positive attitudes towards lifelong learning.

The course is divided into three terms:

### **Term 1:**

- **Interrogating Performance and Screen (15 credits):** The first module is a theoretical introduction examining the question of postgraduate study in performance. Students will consider 'what is research in performance' and 'what is research in film', as well as broader debates regarding what disciplines are and how they transform over time.
- **Residency and Contemporary Context (15):** This vocational module focuses on working with a specific professional practitioner or company whose emphasis is on interdisciplinary work of some kind and making a piece with them over a week. This is coupled with an examination of professional processes in contemporary performance.
- **Contemporary Practice (30):** This emphasis in the programme on working with professionals is continued through the chance to work with visiting film/theatre companies/practitioners who come and run day long workshops. Students then select from these approaches to create a performance, along with documentation of their creative intentions.

#### Term 2:

- **Creative Explorations in Screen and Performance (30):** This functions as a partner module to Creative Explorations in Live Performance. Students will explore debates about the disciplinary boundaries of screen and performance, with a focus on film and performance makers who sought to expand and develop what the relationship between screen and performance might be. They will lead a performance/film based on the ideas and films/performances studied, and evaluate its success through writing an essay which engages with relevant theoretical and creative debates.
- **Creative Explorations in Live Performance (30):** This functions as a partner module to Creative Explorations in Screen and Performance. Here, student consider questions around performance: its limits, its ontology and how it has been understood and redefined over centuries, with a particular focus on innovators of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Students will write an essay outlining their creative intentions for a performance before leading a performance based on some of the practitioners and ideas studied.

#### Term 3:

- **Practical Dissertation / Project (60):** This module aims to promote and support the development of an area of independent, original research and performance making in the medium of live, screen or digital performance. The module involves a major piece of independent artistic and theoretical research carried out under the supervision of the Dissertation Supervisor. The student will research a chosen topic and write a thesis of 6000 words (+/- 10%). The research will form the basis of a performance or film. It will include a viva/presentation on the research.  
OR
- **Written Dissertation (60):** This module aims to promote and support the development of an area of independent, original research. The Dissertation is a major piece of independent research carried out under the supervision of the Dissertation Supervisor. The thesis should be 12000 words (+/- 10%). The content of the dissertation/project is chosen by the student in collaboration with their supervisor. It will include a viva/presentation on the research.

### Additional Course Costs

There are costs associated with all studies, additional to the tuition fee, which require consideration, when planning and budgeting for expenditure. Costs are indicative and for the total length of the

course shown unless otherwise stated and will increase with inflation; depending on the programme they may include equipment, printing, project materials, study trips, placement activities, DBS and/or other security checks.

**Books and other Texts:**

All core texts will be in the library for students to borrow for free, and wherever possible texts on reading lists will also be purchases in the library. Students may be required to purchase texts and journals to support their study programme. The average cost of books for students studying on a degree course is assumed as £100 per year.

**Printing:**

We recommend a minimum budget of £100 per year for printing costs including dissertation printing and binding. This relates to the printing of written documents through the photocopiers. Where relevant, the printing of artworks (draft and finished) will incur additional costs listed below.

**In year or end of year exhibitions, projects and performances:**

Where a course contains exhibitions, major projects or performances additional costs will be incurred. These costs can be discussed in detail with your course teams and some will be linked to a professional skills element of the course where organised fundraising for such activities may be included. We would anticipate up to £200 per year maximum for these elements.

**Graduation:**

Graduation costs per student are estimated at £100 - £200 total. This is an optional cost for all students as attending graduation is not a requirement in order to have a degree conferred. Any additional costs over and above those listed above can be found listed below:

**Hard Drive:**

All students are required to own a 1TB hard drive.

**Study Tours and Trips:**

Compulsory theatre trips and study tours of up to £100 per year. Students may wish to organise additional trips to support their own research of another £100.

**Contact Hours**

1 unit of credit is the equivalent of 10 notional learning hours. Full time undergraduate students study 120 credits (1200 hours) and full-time postgraduate students study 180 credits (1800 hours) per year or 'stage' of the course.

Course Stage	Scheduled Activities (Hours)	Guided Independent Study (Hours)	Placement / Study Abroad / Work Based Learning (Hours)
FT or PT	392	1408	0

**Assessment Methods**

The [Assessment and Examination webpages](#) provide further information on how assignments are marked and moderated, including a description of assessment activities. These also include further information about how feedback on assessed work is provided to students, including our

commitment to ensure this is provided to students within 15 working days (the 'three-week turnaround').

The following assessment activities are used on this programme:

- Creation of individual performance
- Creation of group performance
- Creation of film
- Leading a workshop
- Essay
- Individual presentation
- Written statement of creative intentions
- Written reflection on creative work

Summative feedback is provided within three weeks in a written form or potentially through a recorded downloadable oral feedback. However formative feedback will normally be provided prior to this during the assessment process, to ensure that students are given opportunities to respond to feedback prior to submission.

Inevitably performance is often a group activity. Therefore, process and contribution to process is key to assessment and wherever possible (unless process is very brief, or the focus is on improvisation, for example) process and product are weighted equally in assessment. This is always the case in group assignments. For practical assignments, all students will be asked to both peer and self-assess, and to submit a record of their and others' contribution in written form to enable the tutor to accurately reflect elements of the process they do not witness. The tutor will use their own records and student records in tandem with the learning outcomes for each module to ensure that process marks and feedback are an accurate reflection of student attainment against the learning outcomes.

## Classification

<b>Calculation of final award:</b>	<b>Level 7 – 100%</b>
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For full details of assessment regulations for all taught programmes please refer to our [Results webpages](#). These include the criteria for degree classification.

## Admissions Requirements

Please see the [Application webpages](#) for more information on how to apply, including a statement on how we support students from a variety of backgrounds. Please also see our [general entry requirements](#) for taught programmes. Applicants who do not meet our published entry requirements are encouraged to contact our admissions team for further advice and guidance.

## Typical applicant profile and any programme-specific entry requirements

Typically 2:1 or above in a Media or Performing Arts related field, and/or experience in the performing arts sector (in its widest sense, from performance to design, video production, teaching and leadership). All students will be required to attend an interview and give a presentation on their relevant experience. Students will be required to work to a high level in both practical and academic work. We welcome applicants from a range of backgrounds and experiences and are prepared to consider students with relevant experience in addition to the above typical profile

**Do applicants required a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check?**

**No**

### **Opportunities for students on successful completion of the programme**

A wide range of roles in the performing arts industry such as performance practitioner for theatre and film, technician, arts management, performance practitioner in a wider industry role (for example training, role-playing, creative teamwork, tourism, event/arts management, television and radio performance, and video / film production).

There is a particular focus on the range of skills involved in small scale theatre and setting up students' own theatre companies, which aims to simulate industry practice. The range of leadership roles will develop creative and innovative thinkers on this programme by drawing on collaborative, ensemble and directing working practices. The high level of academic knowledge and ability to do independent research paves the way for students to embark on PhD study subsequent to this programme.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules. Please refer to our [Credit Accumulation webpages](#) for further guidance.

### **Student Support**

During the course of their studies, students will be supported in the following ways:

- At the start of their studies all students will receive a full **induction** to the programme which will include introduction to the staff responsible for delivering the course, and access to library and IT facilities
- The **Programme Handbook** will outline the exact nature of the course and how it is structured, including the availability of option modules
- Each student will be allocated a **Personal Tutor** who will support their academic development, be able to advise and guide them with their studies and, where necessary, give advice on study options
- Students will be able to access our full range of **support services**, including the Learning Development Unit for skills and study support, the Library, the Careers and Employability Team, Student Finance Team, Accommodation and Counselling Services

## Appendices

### Quality Assurance

<b>Awarding Body:</b>	Buckinghamshire New University
<b>Language of Study:</b>	English
<b>QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s):</b>	QAA characteristics statement Masters Feb 2020 Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ
<b>Assessment Regulations:</b>	<i>Academic Assessment Regulations</i> , accessible via the Academic Advice webpages ( <a href="https://bucks.ac.uk/students/academicadvice">https://bucks.ac.uk/students/academicadvice</a> )
<b>Does the Fitness to Practise procedure apply to this programme?</b>	No
<b>Ethics Sub-committee</b>	Art, Design and Performance
<b>Date Published / Updated:</b>	September 2020
<b>Date programme re-approval required:</b>	2025-26

### Other awards available on programme (Exit Qualifications)

Please refer to the *Academic Qualifications Framework* for Exit Qualifications recognised by the University and credit and module requirements.

<b>Name of Exit Qualification:</b>	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
<b>Full name of Qualification and Award Title:</b>	Postgraduate Certificate in Performance (Live and Digital)
<b>Credits requirements:</b>	60 credits
<b>Module requirements:</b>	60 credits at Level 7 from PA701, PA702, PA703, PA704 and PA705 (excluding Dissertation module PA706/PA707)
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	
Describe, interpret and evaluate performance texts and events through an engagement with a range of advanced critical perspectives.	
Synthesise working methodologies in order to question and challenge existing conventions and engage creatively with the invention and production of performance.	
Critically evaluate the significance of critical literature on performance and related fields.	
Formulate and present clear arguments, both orally and in writing.	
Work creatively to realise performance in both individual and in group settings	

<b>Name of Exit Qualification:</b>	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
<b>Full name of Qualification and Award Title:</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Performance (Live and Digital)
<b>Credits requirements:</b>	120 credits

**Module requirements:**

**120 credits at Level 7 from PA701, PA702, PA703, PA704 and PA705 (excluding Dissertation module PA706/PA707)**

**Learning Outcome**

Describe, interpret and evaluate performance texts and events through an engagement with a range of advanced critical and theoretical perspectives.

Synthesise a variety of working methodologies in order to question and challenge existing conventions and engage creatively with the invention and production of performance.

Critically evaluate the social and ethical significance of critical literature on performance and related fields.

Formulate and present clear arguments, both orally and in writing.

Work creatively to realise performance in both individual and in group settings