Buckinghamshire New University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	MA Performance and Digital Media
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	Dance & Performing Arts
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	MA Performance and Digital Media
Pathways (if applicable)	
FHEQ level of final award:	7
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma
Accreditation details:	
Length of programme:	1 year full time 2 years part time
Mode(s) of Study:	Full Time Part Time
Mode of Delivery:	In person (on-site) delivery
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	QAA Dance, Drama & Performance (2024)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	
Course Code(s):	MAPADMFT / MAPADMPT
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	1 December 2022
Date of last update:	July 2025

2. Programme Summary

Digital technologies are having a continuing impact on the performing arts. The next generation of innovation will continue to offer creative opportunities and some even greater challenges to actors and performing artists as they bring their work to the media production industry. This course offers a pathway into this fast-changing world by looking at how established principles and techniques can adapt to the digital world, and how new approaches can shape the future.

Perhaps you are a new graduate in Acting or Performing Arts, wanting to specialise in digital performance. Perhaps you are an established professional looking for the tools to navigate this brave new world. If so, this could be the course for you.

You will explore the application of established acting and performance skills in a digital context. You will view performance as both an ancient expressive art form, and also as an absorbent creative practice that can accommodate a wide range of technological innovations. You will gain hands-on experience with the latest equipment and processes, allowing you to explore the full range of audio, screen, audio and performance capture possibilities and their multiple applications.

You will work practically with established industry professionals and researcher-practitioners who will bring the latest knowledge into the course. You will explore what it means to perform in a range of mediated contexts, particularly looking at the shifting relationship between role you are playing and your personal identity. We also explore creative practice in a range of recent and emerging production contexts, investigating the evolving relationships between performers, directors and designers. We also affirm the empowerment that technical knowledge can offer the individual performer. The course culminates in the creation of both a group, and a solo original project where you can put into practice the skills and ideas you have acquired.

The course bridges the gap between undergraduate courses in performance and the advanced skills needed for a career in the digital creative industries. It also offers a range of transferable skills that can be applied to other contexts beyond conventional notions of the performing arts, particularly those industries that utilise screen media more broadly, recorded sound, presentation, performance, collaboration and leadership. It will appeal to acting and performing arts graduates interested in expanding their skill set as well as media graduates with an existing foundation 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 as performance professionals.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

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

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Assess digital performance texts and events through a creative and critical engagement with a range of advanced critical and theoretical perspectives.
K2	Evaluate key digital performance practitioners and theorists and place them within the cultural, political and economic context of the UK performance field.
K3	Harness and develop appropriate theoretical, creative and organisational principles within established acting techniques to develop performance projects within a specific digital context.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Contrast and critically assess the effectiveness, politics and ethics of the artistic and working practices of a range of artists within the current and emerging digital performance fields.
C2	Interrogate, critically and creatively, the possibilities for digital performance through practical and reflective engagement with text, mediated content or other performance documentation.
C3	Synthesise a variety of rehearsal and production methodologies in order to question and challenge existing conventions through the creation and production of performance for digital media.

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Investigate the technical production and creative development processes by which digital performance is created through a comprehensive assessment of media practice.
P2	Develop an original perspective on advanced acting and/or performance skills through the creation of collaborative work for existing and/or emerging digital media practice.
P3	Formulate an innovative application of digital production skills in audio and/or video platforms to the construction of a series of creative digital products.
P4	Synthesise a variety of working methodologies in order to develop an original artistic approach to the creation of a performance for existing and/or emerging digital media practice.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Formulate and present clear critical arguments both orally and in writing.
T2	Design production strategies for the effective realisation of performed creative output, both individually and in group settings.
T3	Synthesise a broad range of information retrieval skills to research and appraise original material, and to critically evaluate its significance.
T4	Interpret and apply personal workloads efficiently and effectively through the formulation and implementation of a creative project.
T5	Interrogate, acquire and apply relevant innovative digital production and postproduction skills.

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development 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.

On this programme, attributes are developed through the practical application of creative performance techniques within the specific context of digital performance as both audio and video output. Modules build knowledge in both established and emerging practice for digital performance and focus on the synthesis of existing knowledge and key innovations in current practice (K1-3).

Access to professional practitioners through intensive workshops offers an immersive experience of applied creative development in core performance practice as applied to digital media. Creative group projects address ethical and creative problem-solving within specific performance contexts (P1, P2, P3, T1, T3). Leadership and self-development are enhanced by this experience and then developed further through the creation of semi-independent group and individual productions, both of which demand highly refined levels of contextual and theoretical understanding and the ability to evaluate established practice in the context of new/emerging technology. particularly in relation to (C2, C3, P2, P4, T2).

Engagement with industry professionals and relevant technology ensures currency, boosts the learners' cultural capital and ensures that they exit the course with a rigorous experience of the creative opportunities and ethical challenges inherent in digital performance, and the confidence to apply their attainment in professional contexts K3, C3, P2, T2, T4, T5).

4. Entry Requirements

The University's general entry requirements will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

- Typically 2:1 or above in an Acting or Performing Arts related field, and/or experience in the performing arts or media sector (in its widest sense, from performance to audio/video production, teaching and leadership).
- All learners will be required to attend an interview and give a presentation on their relevant experience. A showreel and/or audition workshop will also be required to ensure that learners have the requisite performance skills to be able to access the course successfully. Learners 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 learners with relevant experience in addition to the above typical profile.

If you do not meet the entry requirements you may, if you have relevant professional experience, still be invited for interview, where you will be required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course.

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our accreditation of prior learning (APL) process.

5. Programme Structure

Pathway 1 or stand-alone course **[add further tables for each additional pathway]**

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	**Core modules:** PER7067: Interrogating Digital Performance (20) PER7068: Digital Production Skills (20) PER7069: Acting for Digital Media (20) PER7070: Creative Explorations in New Technologies (20) PER7071. Independent Project: Development (20) PER7072: Independent Project: Production (20) **Optional modules:** PER7007 Practical Dissertation (60) Or PER7008 Written Dissertation (60)	**Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)** awarded on achievement of 60 credits **Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)** awarded on achievement of 120 credits

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching:

The interplay of innovative practice and critical theory is a hallmark of the approach to learning on this master's programme. Learners are offered a range of practice-based experiences placed into their theoretical, social and ethical context, to generate a robust engagement with both the reflective and practical elements of performance making in novel contexts.

Contact with professional practice and emerging technology is a key feature of the postgraduate experience and we enable this by drawing on the input of industry professionals in acting skills for the Acting for Digital Media module, and new media specialists for both Digital Production Skills and Creative Explorations in New Technologies. The latter is delivered as an intensive workshop series synthesising performance skills and technical knowledge.

Elsewhere the teaching recognises that at master's level the learner will become progressively independent as their knowledge and confidence grows. In the later stages of the programme teaching become more individualised, with tutors offering one-to-one input on creative and academic work-in-progress.

Assessment:

The MA draws on a wide range of assessment tools, as recommended in the QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement. For example:

- Critical Essay
- Reflective Report
- Production Blog
- Production Blog
- Workshop Practical performance
- Production performance
- Creative proposal (oral and written)

Contact Hours:

- Contact hours are in line with BNU specifications, for example 60 hours per module in a typical 20 credit module.
- The exception is the dissertation module which is designed around the requirement to support independent postgraduate study. In this case the contact hours are fewer but focussed on one-to-one tutorial and supervision support.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- Regulations for Taught Degree Programmes (2023)

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The appointment of a personal tutor to support you through your programme
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of students and course administration
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability and counselling
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in external surveys
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Other sector compliance and review mechanisms

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement – see detailed mapping below
- The QAA Masters Characteristics Statement
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
QAA MA Characteristics Statement: ... learners should be able to:																				
...demonstrate a systematic and comprehensive understanding and critical awareness of current and emerging trends...	X	X				X					X					X		X		
...evaluate current research and advanced scholarship to apply knowledge in original ways in the field of performance,	X		X				X					X	X						X	X
...evaluate appropriate methodologies and demonstrate self-direction and originality in dealing with complex problems...			X				X							X			X		X	
...create new insight in their field of study, and communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	X							X				X		X		X				
...complete of a major piece of practice, or substantial research project, informed by thorough understandings of the discipline.			X					X						X		X		X		
Selected QAA Subject-specific benchmarks																				

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
(Knowledge): Creative and intelligent engagement with...																				
... forms, practices, techniques.		X				X					X		X							
... key components of performances and processes by which it is created...						X						X					X			
... critical and theoretical perspectives.	X					X					X					X		X		
… creative and critical engagement with the role and function of performance in social, educational, participatory and industry contexts.		X					X				X			X			X			X
...strong understanding of the interplay between critical and creative modes of enquiry.			X				X					X						X		
...creative and critical understanding of appropriate interdisciplinary elements of performance.		X						X						X			X			
...critical understanding of the responsibilities of performance practitioners to facilitate safe, environmentally sustainable and ethical working practices.								X			X						X		X	X
Selected QAA Subject-specific benchmarks (Subject-specific skills):																				

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
On graduating learners should be able to...																				
...engage critically and comprehensively with the processes of performance and production, and demonstrate the ability to select, refine and present these in performance.	X					X					X					X			X	X
...engage creatively and comprehensively with the creation and/or production of performance, through a developed and thorough understanding of appropriate performance vocabularies, techniques, crafts, structures and working methods.	X	X					X				X		X				X			
...engage creatively and thoroughly with the possibilities for performance... [and] realise these sources sensitively through design and performance, leading to novel or original work.			X			X						X					X		X	X
...engage critically and comprehensively in appropriate independent research... as part of the process of creating new or novel performance and/or insights.			X				X							X		X		X		
...demonstrate appropriate technological and digital skills, and be fully aware of their potential applications.			X				X						X					X		X

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Module Code (Core)	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 7																				
Interrogating Digital Performance	x	x				x					x					x		x		
Digital Production Skills	x						x						x				x			x
Acting for Digital Media		x	x				x	x				x		x			x		x	
Creative Explorations in New Technologies		x				x	x	x			x	x		x			x	x		
Independent Project: Development	x		x				x				x	x		x		x	x	x		
Independent Project: Production	x		x					x			x	x	x				x		x	
Practical Dissertation	x		x			x		x					x	x		x		x	x	
Written Dissertation	x					x					x					x		x	x	