Buckinghamshire New University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	BA (Hons) Musical Theatre BA (Hons) Musical Theatre with Foundation Year BA (Hons) Musical Theatre (Top-Up)
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):	BA (Hons) Musical Theatre
Pathways (if applicable)	none
FHEQ level of final award:	6
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	Certificate of Higher Education Diploma of Higher Education BA Musical Theatre
Accreditation details:	
Length of programme:	3 years 4 years with Foundation Year 1 year Top-Up
Mode(s) of Study:	Full time
Mode of Delivery:	In person (on-site) delivery
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Dance , Drama and Performance (Dec 2019)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	
Course Code(s):	BAMUTHFT / BAMUTHFY / BAMUTHTU
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	1 December 2022
Date of last update:	July 2025

2. Programme Summary

The BA (Hons) Musical Theatre equips you with the fundamentals of musical theatre performance skills, enabling you to emerge with the confidence and creativity to launch a career as a performer. At BNU the notion of the 'thinking practitioner' is central to our approach across all the performing arts. The ability to understand oneself as a performer and have the confidence to engage creatively and thoughtfully with the industry, and its innovations, is at the heart of our working ethos.

Within this context our unique selling point for this course is its professional awareness. This is reflected in our primary focus, which is on developing your singing, dancing/movement and acting. Experienced professional performers tutor learners in a range of singing and dance styles, closely aligned to the industry's constantly evolving sense of genre. We also put particular emphasis onto production, which provides the setting for the development of your inter-disciplinary education. Here you use your skills to interpret and create a complete piece of work, while also learning to co-operate and adapt with your co-performers and the creative team. These increasingly demanding productions culminate in a performance in front of a paying audience in the final year. To reflect the professional production experience, we also intensify the rehearsal schedule in a 'timetable take-over' in the run-up to two of the key large-scale productions. Further, every production is also an opportunity for you to reflect on creative process and analyse outcomes.

To build on this reflection, a strand of theoretical modules explores the evolution of the musical theatre form within popular culture and the cultural/political contexts of musical theatre traditions. This knowledge develops you to become increasingly confident in assessing and interpreting not only established 20th century repertoire, but also more recent innovations within the form. The result is an intellectually engaged artist who can evaluate their work within its social and cultural setting.

This award offers you the chance to study within the creative hub of BNU performance courses. Plus, with The Wycombe Swan Theatre next door and the West End just a short train ride away opportunities for cultural engagement are particularly rich. Further industry links are offered through a programme of visiting practitioners which expands your knowledge and understanding of the professional environment that you will enter on graduation.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Create skilled and reflective Musical Theatre artists with the ability to apply their practice within a range of professional contexts
2. Enhance and develop learners' performance skills in dance, singing and acting through working with professional practitioners
3. Develop learners' ability to interpret, evaluate and innovate within the creative production of live performance
4. Equip learners to critically engage with Musical Theatre texts, traditions and genres
5. Prepare learners for the demands of freelance working patterns by developing their communication and self-management skills.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

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

ID	Learning Outcomes
K1	Demonstrate a systematic recognition of the skills and processes involved in creating a musical theatre production.

K2	Utilise industry knowledge to independently identify relevant research projects and appropriate methodologies to explore these.
K3	Demonstrate a secure knowledge and critical awareness of developed and emerging musical theatre principles.
K4	Grasp the interplay between practice and theory within a range of performance contexts.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Analyse, through exploration and reflection, the evolution of the musical theatre form and the cultural/political contexts of musical theatre traditions in practice.
C2	Evaluate and critique, using analysis and interpretation, a wide range of musical theatre repertoire.
C3	Creatively interpret and analyse musical scores.
C4	Engage creatively and critically with existing texts, finding possibilities for reinterpretation.

Application and Practice (P)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Embody a continued development and application of the three disciplines within Musical Theatre: singing, dancing/movement and acting.
P2	Demonstrate a developed integration of professional practices and standards in the performance industry.
P3	Work collaboratively with co-performers and the creative team to create a professional working environment culminating in a successful performance in front of a paying audience.
P4	Apply appropriate mastery and considered performance skills within a particular production context.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Approach problem-solving with the ability to retrieve relevant information and evaluate theories pertaining to creative production.
T2	Apply and uphold the values of professional practices such as production safety, ethical rehearsing and physical and emotional self-care.
T3	Engage in a strategic dialogue with prospective employers and collaborators.
T4	Work independently to set realistic goals and manage workloads.

| **T5** | Reflect on personal and professional development to identify strengths and areas for continuous development. |

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 application of the fundamentals of musical theatre performance skills such as: singing, dancing/movement and acting (P1). Creativity is embedded throughout with a particular emphasis on process into production (P4, T1) which provides the setting for the development of your inter-disciplinary education (C3). Creative skills are used to analyse, explore and interpret complete pieces of work from a wide range of Musical Theatre repertoire (K4, C2, C4). The application and awareness of working collaboratively in creating a professional environment with co- co-performers and the creative team is also nurtured (P3, T3). Each production creates an opportunity for you to reflect on the creative process and analyse outcomes (T1, T5) and to develop an understanding of the evolution of the musical theatre form within popular culture and the cultural/political contexts of musical theatre traditions in practice (K2, K3, C1). Throughout the course you will develop as performers and build a strong understanding of professional working practices in the performance industry and how to build your own career in the industry (P2, T2, T4).

4. Entry Requirements

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

•   UCAS Tariff score 88-112 Invited audition and interview

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

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Foundation Year 1	**Core modules:** PER0003 Intro to Dance (20 CREDITS) CAD0002 Collaboration in Creative Practice (20 CREDITS) PER0006 Contemporary Performance (20 CREDITS) PER0001 Contextual Studies: Intro to Performing Arts, research & writing (20 CREDITS) PER0002 Professional Practice (20 CREDITS) CAD0011 Project - Creative Realisation (20 CREDITS)	**N/A.** No credit is awarded at this Level.
Level 4	**Core modules:** PER4019 Foundations in Dance Technique (20 CREDITS) PER4021 Development in Dance Techniques (20 CREDITS) PER4022 Singing & Applied Voice (20 CREDITS) PER4001 Actor Training & Theory (20 CREDITS) PER4023 Variety & Cabaret (20 CREDITS) CAD4089 Contemporary Issues and Creative Practice (20 CREDITS)	**Certificate of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 120 credits at Level 4
Level 5	**Core modules** PER5006 Dance Progressions (20 CREDITS) PER5010 Ensemble Singing (20 CREDITS) PER5011 The Broadway Musical (40 CREDITS) PER5012 The Political Musical (20 CREDITS) **Option modules:** Choose from one of the following 2 modules: CAD5122 Belonging & Becoming (20 CREDTS) CAD5061 Enterprise (20 CREDITS)	**Diploma of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 240 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5
Level 6	**Core modules:** PER6008 Advanced Dance Performance (20 CREDITS) PER6009 Performance Showcase (20 CREDITS) PER6002 Independent Project (40 CREDITS)	**Ordinary Degree**, awarded on achievement of 300 credits, including 60 credits at Level 6 and 120 credits at each of Levels 4 and 5

	PER6012 Advanced Musical Theatre Performance (40 CREDITS)	
		Honours Degree, awarded on achievement of 360 credits, including 120 credits at each of Levels, 4, 5 and 6

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 changes in the subject area.

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

The teaching, learning and assessment methods used are consistent with those described in the Benchmark statements. Teaching and learning on the programme will be related closely and will help facilitate your creative development, enabling you to integrate practice and theory. As identified in the benchmark, experiential learning is a key principle of study.

A variety of teaching and learning methods will be employed during the programme and will include:

Lectures and Seminars

Formal lectures will be used at each level, especially for the delivery of the theoretical and practical frameworks of Musical Theatre. They are followed by seminars and group discussions, enabling you to voice ideas and develop a critical and analytical approach to media production methods.

Seminars and group discussion are used throughout the programme to support teaching and learning, by encouraging you to contextualise and critically evaluate your own work and the work of others, using contemporary Musical Theatre practices and conventions as a benchmark.

Personal and Group Tutorials

Tutorials allow you to discuss your progress and be given verbal advice and guidance on your intended approach to aspects of assessments, on a one to one or small group basis.

Virtual Learning Environment

'Blackboard' is the University's choice of computer software for our virtual learning environment (VLE). It supports online teaching and learning and can be accessed by registered learners and staff via the University's intranet system or by the internet from any location. Blackboard has become a key learning support tool whereby staff and learners can communicate through text and image. Resources available within the 'environment' include, course information, module materials that can comprise of anything from lecture notes to video clips, discussion forums for communication between staff and learners, administrative information such as calendars, and the setting and marking of online assessment. Blackboard will be used to support all modules on the programme.

Work-based Learning

You will take part in work-based learning throughout your degree programme. Placement opportunities will take the form of professional practice, by undertaking a professional level of work from process to performance at all levels. Preparing you for employment through the development and employment of technical skills, industry knowledge and leadership skills.

You will have the opportunity to work collaboratively as a professional company in producing in-house performances, fully scaled musicals, and a graduate showcase at Level 6.

Your personal contribution is monitored throughout the production process by observation of key stages, facilitating assessment.

Assessment

The overall aim is to use innovative teaching and learning methods to guide you towards becoming more independent and autonomous by the end of the programme, and to allow you to explore issues fully in the context of their work. Formative assessment creates a point from which you and lecturers can appraise development, consolidate learning and plan ahead. Summative assessment allows recognition for progression to further study, informs those involved of the level of achievement, and validates the learning process.

At level 4, the emphasis will be on enabling you to develop your knowledge, understanding and application of skills across all three disciplines.

At level 5, the focus will be on the application of your understanding through the interplay between practice and theory in performances in the modules: The Broadway Musical and The Political Musical.

At level 6, the focus is upon you attaining a level of independent learning with the ability to apply knowledge and critical understanding of the demands and expectations of the Musical Theatre industry. The emphasis is on self-directed study will be seen within the independent research and Performance Showcase modules. You will develop the necessary subject specific, and skills needed to enter the industry.

Assessments have been designed to allow you the opportunity to learn and demonstrate strengths in all areas of academic knowledge and to be assessed in industry specific ways. The programme encompasses a broad range of activities, ranging from the vocational and applied, through to assessments both formatively and summative, with the aim to engage you in a variety of ways. A range of frameworks are integrated into the design in demonstrating assessment development.

Contact Hour

Contact hours per week differ throughout the academic year but average out at the equivalent of 12 hours per week approximately.

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
- Review by the relevant PSRB(s)
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years
- 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 BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy

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**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
Knowledge of forms, practices, techniques, traditions, histories and applications of performance	X	X	X			X		X			X						
Knowledge of the key components of performance and the processes by which it is created, realised, managed, distributed and documented	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X						
Knowledge of critical and theoretical perspectives appropriate to the study of performance			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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Knowledge of key practitioners and practices and/or theorists and their cultural and/or historical contexts			X	X	X		X						X				
Knowledge of the role and function of performance in social, educational, community and other participatory settings	X	X				X											
Understanding of the interplay between critical and creative modes of enquiry within the field of study		X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X				
Understanding of how to read and interpret texts, media, dance notations			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**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
and/or scores to create performance																	
Understanding of group and collective processes						X			X		X				X		X
Understanding of key components of performance within the disciplines such as the role and function of ideational sources, performers, body, space, sound, text, movement and environment	X	X			X	X		X	X	X				X			X
Understanding of appropriate interdisciplinary elements of dance, drama and	X	X		X	X	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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
performance and how to apply them																	
Knowledge, practices, concepts and skills from other disciplines			X				X								X		
Understanding of the responsibilities of performance practitioners to facilitate safe, environmentally sensitive, sustainable and ethical working practices														X			
Subject-specific skills																	
Engage in the creation and/or production of performance through an understanding of appropriate performance vocabularies, techniques, crafts, technologies, structures, contexts,	X	X				X		X	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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
working methods and research paradigms																	
Understand the possibilities for performance implied by a text, media, dance notation or score and, as appropriate, realise these sources through design, technology and performance		X			X	X		X		X			X				
Make records of performance using skills and technologies in notation and/or documentation										X						X	
Describe, theorise, interpret and evaluate performances and events				X			X			X		X	X			X	X
Engage in independent research, whether			X	X		X		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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
investigating past or present performances or as part of the process of creating and/or critically responding to performance																	
identify the cultural and contextual frameworks of performance		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X					
Investigate performance environments to determine the influence of spatial relationships.		X				X		X									
Generic and graduate skills																	
Have developed skills in self-management, demonstrating the ability to set goals, manage workloads, work under pressure and meet deadlines											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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Be able to assess and manage risk, health and safety and to employ ethical working practices											X			X			
Have developed skills in critical engagement, demonstrating the ability to operate and think reflexively, creatively and critically, to develop ideas and to construct and present arguments in appropriate ways				X		X				X		X	X				
Be able to work in a group or team and to have the skills needed for the realisation of collaborative project -based work	X					X					X				X		
Have an ability to manage creative, personal and interpersonal issues						X				X				X		X	X
Have acquired skills in communication and				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**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
presentation with the ability to articulate and communicate ideas and information in a variety of forms, as appropriate to content																	
Have developed information skills and be able to critically retrieve information, and to gather, sift, manipulate, synthesise, evaluate and organise material							X			X		X					
Have an ability to select, employ and adapt digital media and information technologies								X							X		
Be able to use project management skills involving the ability to investigate, organise, curate and realise activities.	X			X		X		X		X			X		X	X	

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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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 4																	
Foundations in Dance Technique	X		X		X				X				X				
Development in Dance Techniques	X		X		X				X	X			X		X		
Singing and Applied Voice	X		X				X							X			
Actor Training & Theory	X	X			X			X								X	
Variety and Cabaret	X	X	X		X	X		X					X			X	X
Contemporary Issues and Creative Practice				X									X				
Level 5																	
Dance Progressions	X		X	X	X				X				X				
Broadway Musical	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X					
Political Musical	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X			X	
Ensemble Singing	X				X		X			X			X			X	X
Level 6																	
Independent Project	X					X	X							X	X	X	
Advanced Musical Theatre Performance	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			X	

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	C1	C2	C3	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Advance Dance Performance	X		X	X	X				X				X				
Performance Showcase	X	X			X	X				X	X		X	X	X	X	