

## **Programme Specification: Post Graduate Diploma / Masters in Acting**

**NOTE:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found (1) at <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/pme>, (2) in the Module Specifications and (3) in the Student Handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

<b>1</b>	<b>Awarding Institution / Body:</b>	<b>Birmingham City University</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching Institution:</b>	<b>Birmingham School of Acting</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Programme accredited by:</b>	<b>National Council for Drama Training (NCDT)</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Final Award:</b>	<b>PgDip/MA Acting</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Programme Title:</b>	<b>PgDip/MA Acting</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>UCAS Code:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>QAA Benchmarking Group:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### **8 Aims of the programme**

#### **The programme aims to provide learners with:**

- Realise as fully as possible students' creative gifts and talents within a specialised, taught course of study in acting.
- Synthesise the theory and practice of key acting processes, and integrate professional studies relating to performance and recorded media industries.
- Develop the students' skills and techniques for working both independently and within the ensemble.
- Create a well-informed, personal working process that is supported by theory, practice and reflection.
- Develop an understanding and mastery of a body of core technical skills and the ability to apply these skills in preparation for professional practice.
- Develop the ability to apply background research skills and enquiry methods to support and enrich performance.
- Encourage creative and imaginative responses to source material for



performance.

- Equip students with a range of professional skills required by the contemporary actor.
- Develop skills of self-reliance and a pro-active attitude to creating employment opportunities.
- Develop open-minded attitudes to all kinds of drama and performance.

**Additionally, the MA programme aims to provide learners with:**

- The conceptual understanding required:
  - 1) To evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in acting beyond the student's own area of interest, and
  - 2) To evaluate theoretical, technical, and interpretive methodologies, to review them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses or develop innovative approaches in practice.
- To provide a progression route to further study at MPhil or PhD level.



## Intended learning outcomes:

### Skills and other attributes

<p>Intellectual / cognitive skills: students will be able to</p> <p><u>PgDip</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyse a performance script applying a systematic understanding and comprehension of the principles inherent in the Stanislavski system.</li> <li>2. Create and perform a believable character with the psychological and emotional truth appropriate to the needs of a performance genre, style or text employing appropriate methods of research, based upon current understanding of performance theory.</li> <li>3. The ability to reflect, analyse and discuss concepts and ideas in the application of the work with evidence of self-guided study. The work is presented according to current scholarly conventions.</li> <li>4. Make an advanced analysis and mature interpretation of a performance text. Students will synthesise and apply the skills of acting voice and movement to create and communicate a believable character with a truth appropriate to the performance text and medium.</li> <li>5. Create and adapt evidence informed strategies for the successful identification and pursuit of employment opportunities within the dynamic context of their profession.</li> <li>6. Have a high level of critical and creative engagement with the</li> </ol>	<p>Teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Acquisition of 1 is through practical workshops, personal reading and research.</p> <p>Acquisition of 2 is through group practical sessions, rehearsals, classroom presentations and private study.</p> <p>Acquisition of 3 is through group practical sessions, tutorials, rehearsals and private study.</p> <p>Acquisition of 4 is through private study and rehearsals.</p> <p>Acquisition of 5 is through lectures, research and personal reading.</p> <p>Acquisition of 6 is through personal reading and rehearsals.</p> <p>Acquisition of 7 is through private study, rehearsal &amp; (possible) performance.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Intellectual and cognitive skills are tested through practical work and performance (1,2,3,4,6,7), written (5,7,8), and dissertation/research project(7,8)</p>
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<p>performance possibilities of a production text.</p> <p><u>MA</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Devise and present a substantial piece of work (the research project) using scholarly conventions where appropriate.</li> <li>8. Engage in the independent study and research of a specific area of theatrical interest, including its context within contemporary practice or current research and critical opinion.</li> </ol>	
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<p>Practical skills - students are able to:</p> <p><u>PgDip</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A high level of technical skill in movement, voice, and singing which facilitates artistic interpretation at a mature level.</li> <li>2. Students will be able to synthesise and apply the skills of acting, voice and movement to create and communicate a believable character with the psychological and emotional truth required by the needs of various performance texts and media.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate a high level of self-awareness and critical insight in the evaluation, interpretation, and performance of audition material.</li> <li>4. An ability to communicate an imaginative interpretation of performance text through the integration and synthesis of specialist acting skills in a public performance</li> </ol>	<p>Teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Acquisition of 1-4 is through classroom presentations, rehearsals and performances.</p> <p>Assessment: Practical skills are tested through rehearsals, performances &amp; presentations (1, 2, 3 and 4) written work (3), and tutorials (3).</p>
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<p>Transferable / key skills:</p> <p><u>PgDip</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate an attentive, critical and creative commitment as a member of the ensemble.</li> </ol> <p><u>MA</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Propose new hypotheses or develop innovative approaches to practice.</li> </ol>	<p>Teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <p>Acquisition of 1.is gained as an accumulation of working practices Acquisition of 3 is through lecture, seminar, tutorial and self-directed study.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Transferable and Key skills are tested through rehearsals project/workshop performances (1); written work (2) and research project (3).</p>
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## Programme structure & requirements, levels, modules, credits, awards

The structure of the course, the modules, levels and credit ratings, and the awards which can be gained are shown below.

### Stage 2 Level 7

Module number	Module name	Credit
ACT7009	ACTING	15
ACT7010	WORKSHOPS	30
ACT7011	SKILLS	30
ACT7012	PROFESSIONAL STUDIES	15
ACT7013	PRODUCTION	30
Award: Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits)		

### Stage 3 Level 7

Module number	Module name	Credit
ACT7014	RESEARCH PROJECT	60
Award: Master of Arts Degree (180 credits)		

## Support for Learning

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to those needs:

An induction period of normally one week

Student Handbook and Module guides

Onsite library and computer facilities, plus further facilities through BCU and TIC Libraries.

Staff support through the Programme Director. All staff are open to personal access to advise on pastoral and course issues.

Professional counselling and Student Support through BCU Student Services

Medical advice through connected services with experience of performers' needs.

Dietary advice through a qualified dietician

Small Group Classes allow students to gain advice on problems relating to and arising from the training process.



**Criteria for admission**

Candidates must satisfy the general admission requirements of the programme.

The current admission requirements can be found under the 'Entry Requirements' tab of the web page for this course.



## Evaluation and improvement of quality and standards

<p><b>Committees:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff Meetings.</li> <li>2. Ad-Hoc Project groups.</li> <li>3. Departmental meetings.</li> <li>4. Course Monitoring Meetings.</li> <li>5. Academic Directorate meetings.</li> <li>6. Planning Directorate meetings.</li> <li>7. Student Year meetings.</li> <li>8. Whole School Student Assemblies.</li> <li>9. N.U.S. and Academic directorate meetings.</li> <li>10. Course Board.</li> <li>11. Examination Board.</li> <li>12. Faculty Board.</li> <li>13. Management meeting.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Mechanisms for review and evaluation:</b></p> <p><b>Student/Staff Feedback</b></p> <p>Student Feedback Questionnaires Student Feedback meetings with Course Director</p> <p>Staff feedback questionnaires</p> <p>All feedback is discussed and evaluated at Course Boards and reported upon in the Annual Course Report written by the Programme Director.</p> <p>Items arising from meetings between the N.U.S. and Academic Directorate are reported to and evaluated by Course Boards.</p> <p>Students are represented on the Course Board</p> <p><b>Professional/Academic Monitoring</b></p> <p>External Examiner Reports External assessors are used to give professional benchmarking</p> <p><b>The Examination Board meets to consider marks, progression and awards</b></p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring</b></p> <p>Peer teaching observation Assessment Workshops A database of graduate destinations is kept and constantly updated. Graduates are regularly contacted to update their CVs Yearly Course Monitoring Meetings allow staff to comprehensively examine the Course in detail across disciplines, and its relationship to training and the profession at large.</p> <p><b>Staff Development</b></p> <p>All staff are encouraged and supported to undertake professional and academic development.</p>
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## Regulation of assessment

Details of the mechanisms and criteria for assessment in individual modules, and the means of determining final award classifications, are published widely. Students can access the University's Standard Assessment Regulations on commencing the course through the University's intranet, and individual and collective guidance is given by academic staff on their operation at appropriate times throughout the course.

## Differentiation of Awards

To qualify for a **Postgraduate Diploma** a student must successfully complete all required assessments and obtain 120 credits. The pass mark in all modules is 50%.

The award will be differentiated for achieving the following marks at the first sitting for Post Graduate Diploma modules equivalent to at least 120 credits:

Distinction	average mark of 70% or above
Commendation	average mark of 60 - 69%

To qualify for a **Master of Arts** degree a student must successfully complete all required assessments and obtain 180 credits. The pass mark in all modules is 50%

The award will be differentiated for achieving the following marks at the first sitting for Masters Level modules equivalent to at least 60 credits:

Distinction	average mark of 70% or above
Commendation	average mark of 60 - 69%

**External Examiners** are appointed. Their work and responsibilities include:

- Ensure that the assessments are conducted in accordance with the approved assessment regulations.
- Attend the meeting of the Examination Board at which module marks are determined and ensure that those decisions have been reached by means which accord with the University's requirements and normal practice in higher education.
- See a sample of work of students across the full range of attainment, including failed work, in order to ensure that the standard of marking is appropriate.
- Have sufficient competence in the field or fields of study concerned.
- Where appropriate, to comment upon the design of the programme or programmes and their component parts.
- Report on the standards of student performance in the programme or programmes and on the comparability of those standards with the performance of students taking similar programmes in other UK higher education institutes.