

Programme Specification

Postgraduate Programmes

Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA in Dramaturgy and Writing For Performance
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
QAA Benchmark Group	N/A
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved	September 2015
Primary Department/Institute	Theatre and Performance

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme
Not Applicable

Programme overview

This is a well-established, highly successful programme with specialist pathways in Dramaturgy and Playwriting.

It concentrates on the process of writing for live performance, together with an ongoing evaluation of the work in process. Through practice and reflection, we enable you to establish a distinctive, individual creative approach.

We support the development of texts for performance, alongside an intellectual understanding of the diverse contexts in which live performance can be made. We examine texts from a wide range of periods and cultures. We engage with work that is innovative, or which challenges established notions of practice.

Dramaturgs and playwrights study side by side, and examine creative and dramaturgical issues from various perspectives as writers, spectators and creative collaborators.

London continues to be a major world centre for a staggering range of arts activity. It is an excellent base for the study of performance, and for making professional and other creative contacts. It is a city which continues to generate innovative practice, and provide platforms for emerging artists.

We have strong links with a large number of London-based practitioners and organisations in the field of new performance writing, and many of these contribute directly to the teaching of the programme.

Programme entry requirements

Successful applicants will normally hold an appropriate first degree (usually at 2.1 level or higher) and have some relevant practical experience (either in a professional or non-professional context).

Alternatively, they may not hold a first degree (or hold one in an unrelated discipline) but have substantial and relevant professional experience. If an applicant is not a graduate, or if her/his degree is in an unrelated field, s/he may also be required to provide evidence of her/his ability to write in a critical, analytical way.

For admission to the Playwriting option, applicants will be required to show evidence of their ability as a writer for performance, and to convince us (through their personal statement on the application, their references and their interview) of their commitment to writing for live performance, their capacity for creative collaboration, and their ability to reflect critically on their practice.

For admission to the Dramaturgy option, applicants will be required (through their personal statement on their application, their references, their interview, and any supplementary documents they provide) to show evidence of their commitment to this area of practice, of their capacity for sympathetic creative collaboration, and their willingness and ability to undertake appropriate personal writing projects as part of their study.

Aims of the programme

The educational aims of this programme are informed by Goldsmiths declared focus on 'the study of creative, cultural and social processes'; the QAA code of practice; Goldsmiths Learning and Teaching Strategy; and the Department of Drama's mission statement.

The primary aim of this MA programme is to develop the student's potential as a Writer or Dramaturg working in the field of live performance. It aims to develop the student's understanding of the craft of writing and of the diverse contexts in which new performance writing exists. During the course, s/he will examine various approaches to the generation, research and development of performance material; and to relationships between writers and other creative collaborators. S/he will examine a multiplicity of performance languages and dramaturgical approaches. S/he will analyse completed new work on the page and in performance.

The programme will enable the student to develop her/his own approach to dramaturgy and script development by enabling her/him to develop her/his practice through work on creative projects in a challenging but supportive environment; to test ideas through practice; and to develop her/his capacity for constructive self-reflection. By giving the student contact with diverse practitioners and organisations working in the field today, the programme aims to give her/him an up-to-the-minute engagement with the issues facing dramaturgs and writers, and knowledge of where to seek opportunities for professional work.

The complementary/contextual option courses taken as part of the programme aim to give the student a critical engagement with a complementary area of performance practice, in order to broaden her/his knowledge and range of awareness and to contextualise the work of her/his specialism.

What you will be expected to achieve

By the end of the programme the student should be able to demonstrate:

(* = Transferable qualities and skills appropriate to employment in a range of contexts)

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	a wide-ranging knowledge of the key sites of professional new writing practice in the UK today, and of organisations that support the development of writers and new performance writing;	Dramaturgy, Writing Projects, Creative Interventions in the Text and Final Projects.
A2	a comprehensive understanding of a range of techniques for the generation, research and development of written performance material;	Writing Projects and Creative Interventions in the Text.
A3	an understanding of the range of possible roles for the writer within the collaborative medium of live performance;	Writing Projects and Creative Interventions in the Text.

A4	an understanding of diverse approaches to formal and stylistic organisation of performance material, through a detailed, analytical knowledge of key dramatic/ performance texts;	Dramaturgy and Creative Interventions in the Text.
A5	an articulate awareness of personal areas of interest and ability, and of development as a Playwright or Dramaturg during the course of the programme.	Writing Projects and Final Projects.

Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	skills in constructive self-evaluation of the ways in which (either as writer or as dramaturg) s/he uses differing methodologies to develop new performance material *	Writing Projects and Final Projects.
B2	the ability to articulate ideas, orally and in writing, and to engage in discussion *	Dramaturgy, Creative Interventions in the Text, Writing Projects and Final Projects.
B3	the ability to conceive, develop and deliver an independent project. *	Dramaturgy, Creative Interventions in the Text, Writing Projects and Final Projects.

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	the ability to present written and other work to high academic or professional standards *	Dramaturgy, Creative Interventions in the Text, Writing Projects and Final Projects.
C2	preparedness to work (as a writer or dramaturg) in diverse areas of live performance practice and in varied professional situations *	Dramaturgy, Creative Interventions in the Text, Writing Projects and Final Projects.
C3	the ability to work collaboratively in the generation of dramatic/performance text *	Dramaturgy, Creative Interventions in the Text, Writing Projects and Final Projects.

Transferable Skills		Taught by the following modules
D1	SEE ABOVE	

How you will learn

Knowledge and Understanding

The acquisition of outcome A1 is through the compulsory lecture/seminar module New Performance Writing in the UK, which also enables the student to focus on one aspect for intense, supervised independent study. This input is developed through the teaching of specialist Writing Projects and through the contributions of visiting practitioners (agents, directors, dramaturges and playwrights) during the Final Project workshops. For some Dramaturgy students, this engagement will also be developed in a more specific way during the major supervised Placement project(s) of the spring and summer terms.

With regard to outcomes A2 and A3, the autumn term Writing Projects and the autumn/spring term Creative Intervention in Text introduce the students to diverse script development methodologies, which the students investigate in an experiential way, where the students work on four short, discrete, contrasting supervised assignments. In their various capacities as Playwright or Dramaturg, the students develop their personal engagement with these aspects during the Final Project of the spring and summer terms.

The Dramaturgy and Creative Intervention in Text courses offer seminar/workshops in dramatic text and performance text analysis to address outcome A4. Outcome A5 is addressed through seminar discussion and tutorial appraisal through the sequence of Writing Projects and the Final Project.

Cognitive and Thinking and Subject Specific Skills and other attributes

Outcome C1 is addressed through tutorial input and feedback on all written projects during the course, reinforced by written guidance on the presentation of academic work in the Department of Drama Handbook.

Outcome B1 is one focus of the seminars, workshops and tutorials throughout the Writing Projects, and a principal focus of the supervision of the Final Project, through the workshop and other structured activities provided.

Outcome C2 is one principal focus of the Writing Projects and the Creative Intervention in Text course; the awareness of diverse textual/performance strategies from the Dramaturgy classes, including the insights offered by diverse Visiting Practitioners in various aspects of the programme.

Outcome C3 is the focus of at least one of the autumn Writing Projects, which require the students to collaborate either with Performers or with other writers in the class on a short supervised project. In the spring/summer terms the various workshop and other practical activities, both in class and with external agencies, facilitate this development.

Outcome B2 is specifically developed in the Dramaturgy and Writing project seminar/workshops, and during the lecture/ seminars and essay tutorials for the two complementary/contextual courses.

Outcome B3 is addressed through the supervision of the essay projects for the option courses; through the supervision of the autumn term Writing Projects which explore these elements on an experiential basis; and in a more advanced, intensive way through the supervised spring/summer term Final Project.

How you will be assessed

Knowledge and Understanding

Outcomes are assessed through all written coursework elements.

In relation to assessed written coursework, including: critical essays, dramaturgical analyses and the final self-reflective analysis, students are assessed with regard to:

- 1) an ability to write lucidly and with focused relevance
- 2) an ability to identify and examine key issues in relation to the work in hand
- 3) an ability to draw upon and evaluate diverse primary and secondary sources as appropriate
- 4) an ability to sustain a critical response through the development of coherent analysis
- 5) evidence of insight, intelligence and stylistic aptitude in presenting written criticism
- 6) an ability to structure and sustain a coherent argument at an appropriate level.

Students' creative writing is assessed with regard to the following criteria:

- 1) the ability to originate, research and develop material in relation to a particular project
- 2) the application of appropriate techniques for the notation and/or presentation of the work in hand
- 3) the ability critically to assess the work at different stages, evaluate possibilities for change and development and account for the project's aesthetic, dramatic and/or cultural implications
- 4) the ability to relate to the circumstances of a defined performance context and to the work of other practitioners.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	Distinction. 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 demonstrates a conceptual mastery of the material, is highly original and potentially shows new insights into the topic and the application of creative process.
70-79%	Distinction	Distinction. 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 conceptual and stylistic distinction; which features a secure and discriminating acquaintance with the field of study; which engages with the subject in a notably intelligent way; and which is clearly and accurately presented. The work will be of outstanding achievement in all or a consistent combination of the above areas.
60-69%	Merit	Merit. 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 first-class work may be found in this category but the difference will be either of degree or realisation. The work will be characterised by soundness of argument or analysis, acquaintance with the field of study, coherence and relevance. The work should be of high merit in all these areas, or considerable merit in some areas and a good standard in others.
50-59%	Pass	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 clarity, precision and effectiveness. It might, for example, rely too heavily on secondary sources at the expense of personal critical activity; be insufficiently detailed; or tend towards description rather than analysis. The work should be of good standard in the areas listed in the classification above or good in some areas and of a satisfactory standard in others.
30-49%	Fail	Fail standard – 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 listed above.
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	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.
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How the programme is structured

The programme can either be studied full-time (one year) or part-time (two years). Attendance at all scheduled sessions is compulsory.

The FULL TIME programme is as follows: Autumn Term

Complementary/Contextual Course - 300 hours (20 hours seminar; 280 hours independent study)

Dramaturgy - 300 hours (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study)

Writing Projects 300 hours - (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study incl. group workshops)

Spring Term

Creative Intervention in Text - 300 hours (15 hours seminar; 285 hours independent study)

Spring/ Summer Term

Final Project - 600 hours (180 hours workshop/ rehearsal/public readings; 420 hours independent study)

For PART-TIME students, the programme is as follows:

Year One - Autumn Term

Complementary/Contextual Course - 300 hours (20 hours seminar; 280 hours independent study)

Dramaturgy - 300 hours (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study)

Or:

Writing Projects - 300 hours (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study incl. group workshops)

Part-time students must normally pass all assessments taken in Year One before proceeding to Year Two.

Year One - Spring Term

Creative Intervention in Text - 300 hours (15 hours seminar; 285 hours independent study)

Year Two - Autumn Term Either:

Writing Projects - 300 hours (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study incl. group workshops) Or:

Dramaturgy - 300 hours (30 hours seminar; 270 hours independent study)

Year Two - Spring/ Summer Term

Final Project 600 hours (180 hours workshop/ rehearsal/public readings; 420 hours independent study)

Academic Year of Study 1 - Dramaturgy pathway

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Contextual Course	DR71077A	30	7	Core	1
Dramaturgy	DR71085A	30	7	Core	1
Writing Projects	DR71086A	30	7	Core	1
Creative Intervention in Text	DR71087A	30	7	Core	2
Final Project	DR71088A	60	7	Core	2-3

Academic Year of Study 1 - Playwriting pathway

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Contextual Course	DR71077A	30	7	Core	1
Dramaturgy	DR71085A	30	7	Core	1
Writing Projects	DR71086A	30	7	Core	1

Creative Intervention in Text	DR71087A	30	7	Core	2
Final Project	DR71088A	60	7	Core	2-3

Academic support

The Department is aware that our students have different needs and we try to give particular support where necessary. We will, where practicable, endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to our modules, in order to facilitate the learning and teaching requirements of students.

Resources

Support for student learning is provided by the study resources that are available in the Rutherford Information Services Building: extensive book and audio-visual collections, computer and multi-media equipment, Library and IT staff with expert knowledge. The Library also houses the LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre) video archive. All registered students also have access to the University of London libraries network. In addition, the Department of Drama has its own dedicated specialist facilities, such as the 200-seat George Wood Theatre and three additional fully equipped studio/rehearsal/performance spaces. Technical support is provided by the availability of sound and video recording and editing studios, plus scenic construction and costume/ wardrobe facilities.

Two international arts organisations are based at Goldsmiths. The secretariat of CONCEPTS (The Consortium for the Co-ordination of European Performance and Theatre Studies) is based in the Department of Theatre and Performance and in 1997 the office of the British Centre of the International Theatre Institute moved to Goldsmiths. This UNESCO-affiliated organisation exists in over one hundred countries and provides the largest theatre network in the world. Together both organisations provide a unique research and professional contact facility.

Expertise is provided by the Department's resident faculty who are not only dedicated, experienced teachers but are also distinguished practitioners and researchers in their own right, working in national and international contexts. The Department also draws on a large pool of visiting practitioners and academics to provide a breadth of expertise and contact with current practice.

Resident tutors have a high level of professional experience in the development of new theatre writing, and continue to practise professionally (as writers, directors or dramaturgs).

Through its use of visiting tutors, the Department ensures that students have the opportunity directly to engage with diverse new writing practice at the highest regional and national levels. Visiting practitioners have included the playwrights Fin Kennedy (an alumnus of the programme), Chris O'Connell and Mark Ravenhill, the performer/directors of Frantic Assembly, the agents Joe Philips and Lily Williams (Curtis Brown) and the Director of writernet, Jonathan Meth. The programme has strong links with leading national and regional organisations involved in new writing, such as the Royal Court, the Royal National Theatre, Paines Plough, Out of Joint, Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Theatre Absolute. Such associations are kept under regular review to ensure the quality and currency of the programme.

At the end of the programme a volume of extracts from dramatic texts by students is published and distributed to key professional figures (e.g. artistic directors, literary managers, script editors) to provide an attractive and accessible introduction to the students' work.

Methods

The Department recognises the importance of supporting student learning with high-quality teaching on a predominantly small- group seminar/workshop basis with significant levels of individual tutorial support, particularly for independent projects (including Placements for Dramaturgy students).

Pastoral

Each Programme Convenor acts as a Personal Tutor to the MA students on their programme. This staff

member will offer advice, guidance or clarification of courses, options, requirements and regulations, and monitors the student's progress through the programme. They can also offer support in cases of academic difficulty. Should further advice be necessary, the Senior Tutor or one of the Department's Examinations Officers can also be consulted.

Students can also make use of the College's medical, counselling and financial support services as necessary. In the case of students with special needs or specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia), the College's Student Support Office will provide sympathetic advice and help. The College's English Language Centre can provide help with written English.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

The programme prepares graduates for professional employment as playwrights and dramaturgs in mainstream and alternative contexts, for work on community projects and for specific audiences, for original work and for adaptation to live performance of work from other media. Students are prepared for employment on professional new writing cross-art-form projects (including, for example, work in dance and in musical theatre). Sessions in writing for television and for radio (as part of the Current Issues in New Performance Writing module) provide basic skills for graduates to prepare them for work in these media, to supplement or to subsidise their live theatre work.

The end-of-programme publication of extracts of work by all playwriting students, distributed to theatre directors, script editors and dramaturgs, provides an attractive showcase for their work. For Dramaturgy students, the Placement provides opportunities to network in the profession. These elements, together with the breadth of skill acquired during the programme, provide graduates with a strong foundation for seeking employment in a notoriously uncertain environment.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Master's Degrees

All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are comprised of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points

Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of modules are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification

There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail.

In order to be awarded an overall classification of Distinction, students should have obtained:

a mark of at least 70% (or A grade) for the dissertation/project (or equivalent)

AND

EITHER a mark of 70% (or A grade) in at least half of the remaining credits.

OR an overall weighted average mark (based on credit value) of at least 70%

In order to be awarded an overall classification of Merit, students should have obtained:

a mark of at least 60% (or B grade) for the dissertation/project (or equivalent)

AND

EITHER a mark of 60% (or B grade) in at least half of the remaining credits.

OR an overall weighted average mark (based on credit value) of at least 60%

Pass: In order to be awarded an overall classification of Pass must have passed all the modules on a programme but not have met the criteria for the award of an overall classification of Merit or Distinction

Fail: If any module on a programme has been failed on more than one occasion the programme will be failed

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: <http://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/>

Programme-specific rules and facts

Attendance at all scheduled sessions is compulsory.

Part-time students must normally pass all assessments taken in Year One before proceeding to Year Two.

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.

This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (<http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/>).