MA Musical Theatre
Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Name of Final Award and Programme Title: MA Musical Theatre

Name of Interim Exit Award(s):

Postgraduate Certificate in Musical Theatre

Postgraduate Diploma in Musical Theatre

Duration of Programme: 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time

UCAS Code(s): Not applicable

HECoS Code(s): (100035) Musical Theatre

QAA Benchmark Group: Not applicable

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 7

Programme accredited by: Not applicable

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: December 2020

Home Department: Theatre and Performance

Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Not applicable

Programme overview

This unique MA will enhance your critical understanding of the musical theatre as a popular entertainment genre.

It will help you to sharpen your practical skills as a creative artist. On a practical level, it will assist you in working as a freelance writer, composer or producer of musical theatre.

The MA focuses on the dramaturgy of the musical as a key factor in the future development of the genre. Expert professionals are regularly employed as visiting tutors, to maintain direct links with the industry.

You follow one of the two pathways as either (a) producer or (b) writer or composer. You undertake an analytic case study of a musical or production, a placement project and dissertation (producers), and a creative project involving either book and lyrics or music for

a short original musical (writers and composers). Producers share some classes with the MA Arts Administration and Cultural Policy.

Programme entry requirements

Students will normally have an undergraduate degree in Arts, Humanities or Social Sciences, including drama, music, literature, dance or arts administration. Non-native speakers of English will need to achieve a score of IELTS (6.5) and will be encouraged while studying to use the resources of the Goldsmiths English Language Unit. Interviews will be undertaken in person or by phone or video conferencing software. Applications will be initially processed by the programme director to check for suitability to the programme and then passed to an admissions tutor for interview.

Aims of the programme

This MA complements a number offered by the Department of Theatre and Performance, combining practice and theory in a way that serves the needs of the creative arts industries. The programme will equip you with analytical tools to enhance a critical understanding of the musical theatre as a popular entertainment genre. It will provide an historical perspective on the economic and institutional factors that have determined the modern production history of the form. The creative project will enable individual writers and composers to collaborate in the writing of a new musical, while the production project, placement and dissertation allow producers the opportunity to experience the workings of the industry as well as encouraging critical reflection on the processes of production observed.

The programme aims to provide a context for students to develop their own thinking about the musical theatre sector in an environment where they will receive expert academic and professional supervision. The placement enables producing students to gain experience of a work environment but also to learn to critique the 'culture of the organisation' and its management practice. Students will both engage with the key issues of the discipline and develop a portfolio of work experience that can be used to build a career as writers, composers or producers of musical theatre. Over the last few decades, developments in Sociology and Cultural Studies have stimulated the widespread academic study of popular culture. Musicals account for by far the major share of box office revenue in the West End, and are occasionally staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre, there is at present little recognised training for writers or producers of musical theatre, a fact frequently lamented by the major industry players. The programme aims to promote an informed understanding of the musical as genre and of musical theatre production as the core of the British commercial theatre sector.

Through course work and individual tutorials on the creative/research project, you will acquire knowledge and skills that will benefit your own creative process as writer, composer or producer. The overview that the programme provides of the current state of the industry will enhance an understanding of the position of the freelance practitioner. The department maintains direct links with the industry through the regular employment of expert professional consultants and practitioners as Visiting Tutors; these links will form the basis for interaction between the industry and the academy that will enable graduates to act as agents of change within the industry. The MA is the first in the UK to problematise the dramaturgy of the musical as a key factor in the future development of the genre. Group based work, with colleagues from a diversity of cultures/countries enables the development of an understanding and practice of communication and leadership skills for an increasingly globalised industry.

What you will be expected to achieve

The programme's learning outcomes are correlated with its aims and with its pedagogy of integrated and cumulative inquiry, acquisition of knowledge and ability to think. For the Postgraduate Certificate to be awarded, modules to the value of at least 60 CATS will have been passed and the following learning outcomes will have been achieved:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	a thorough knowledge of the history of the stage musical as entertainment form	Genre Study, shared course
A2	a comprehensive understanding of the integrated dramaturgy through which the various components of the musical (book, music, lyrics) may be combined to create an integrated art work	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,
A3	a comprehension of the techniques employed to combine the elements of staging (acting, scenography, dance) to create a coherent production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
A4	a thorough and specialised knowledge of the industrial and economic factors that determine the production of musicals in the British theatre	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

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Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	enhanced sophistication in the reading of critical commentary	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
B2	ability to comprehend relationships between material and formal factors of theatre production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,
B3	enhanced skill in the exercise of aesthetic judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	an ability to produce close readings of musical theatre texts as scenarios for performance	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	enhanced skills of analysis and interpretation	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
D2	capacity for independent critical judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

In order to be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma, modules to the value of 120 CATS will have been passed and these learning outcomes will have been achieved:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	a thorough knowledge of the history of the stage musical as entertainment form	Genre Study, shared course
A2	a comprehensive understanding of the integrated dramaturgy through which the various components of the musical (book, music, lyrics) may be combined to create an integrated art work	Genre Study, shared course

A3	a comprehension of the techniques employed to combine the elements of staging (acting, scenography, dance) to create a coherent production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
A4	a thorough and specialised knowledge of the industrial and economic factors that determine the production of musicals in the British theatre	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
A5	an in-depth understanding of seminal musical theatre texts	Genre Study, Case Study

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	enhanced sophistication in the reading of critical commentary	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
B2	ability to comprehend relationships between material and formal factors of theatre production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,
B3	enhanced skill in the exercise of aesthetic judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	an ability to produce close readings of musical theatre texts as scenarios for performance	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
C2	inventiveness in the creative treatment of the form	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,
C3	practical skills of dramaturgical and musical composition	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	enhanced skills of analysis and interpretation	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
D2	capacity for independent critical judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
D3	sophisticated approach to the organisation and management of information	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course,

To be awarded the MA, a total of 180 CATS will have been passed and all the learning outcomes below will have been achieved. Students who successfully complete the programme will demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	a thorough knowledge of the history of the stage musical as entertainment form	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
A2	a comprehensive understanding of the integrated dramaturgy through which the various components of the musical (book, music, lyrics) may be combined to create an integrated art work	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
A3	a comprehension of the techniques employed to combine the elements of staging (acting, scenography, dance) to create a coherent production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
A4	a thorough and specialised knowledge of the industrial and economic factors that determine the production of musicals in the British theatre	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
A5	an in-depth understanding of seminal musical theatre texts	Genre Study, Case Study
A6	a critical apprehension of a range of musical theatre styles and sub-genres	Genre Study, Case Study

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Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	enhanced sophistication in the reading of critical commentary	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
B2	ability to comprehend relationships between material and formal factors of theatre production	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
B3	enhanced skill in the exercise of aesthetic judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	an ability to produce close readings of musical theatre texts as scenarios for performance	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
C2	inventiveness in the creative treatment of the form	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
C3	practical skills of dramaturgical and musical composition	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Creative Project
C4	ability to collaborate effectively in the integration of musical, dramaturgical and lyrical elements of the genre	All modules
C5	appropriate administrative/organisational skills	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	enhanced skills of analysis and interpretation	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
D2	capacity for independent critical judgement	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course
D3	sophisticated approach to the organisation and management of information	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
D4	creative skills for complex problem-solving	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
D5	constructive skills of self-reflection and self-evaluation	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D6	ability to collaborate effectively in conceptual/creative work	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project
D7	enhanced communication skills	Genre Study, Case Study, shared course, Production Project

How you will learn

Lectures by members of the established teaching staff and from specialist Visiting Tutors with expert knowledge of specific fields and topics alternate with seminars which develop students' ability to analyse and evaluate historical material and interpret video and audio recordings of key performance texts through a combination of tutor-led discussion and student presentations.

Goldsmiths recognises the importance of supporting student learning with high-quality teaching though a combination of lectures, seminars, workshops, placements, group and individual research projects with individual tutorial support. A significant amount of learning will be achieved in group projects and activities are designed to develop students' individual communication skills and to model the experience of the workplace environment.

VLE

The MA makes use of the VLE resource for the publication of module documentation and additional reference material.

Professional Expertise

Expertise is provided by departmental staff 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 programme draws on a large pool of visiting practitioners, academics and those working in the cultural sector to provide a breadth of expertise and contact with current practice.

Studying Musical Theatre in London

The UK has the largest musical theatre industry outside New York City. Many of the production companies, theatres, producers, marketing and ticket agencies and festivals of musical theatre are based in London. These organisations provide a unique research and study resource. In addition there are also further resources within industry support organisations such as MTM (Musical Theatre Matters), AMA (Arts Marketing Association), ITC [Independent Theatre Council], and Audiences London.

International Perspective

Many students on the programme come from overseas and make a valuable contribution to the learning environment by providing an international perspective on cultural policy and cultural and, creative issues from their respective countries. In addition teachers on the programme have worked or continue to work as producers, directors, writers, composers and musical theatre consultants to the National Theatre, and for Cameron Macintosh Organisation, the Ivor Novello Competition for New Musicals, the Cardiff International Festival of New Musicals, the Greenwich Theatre, the Vienna English Theatre, and have considerable experience of working and researching in Germany, Austria, Ireland, Italy, China, South Korea and the USA in areas directly relevant to the programme.

How you will be assessed

Marking Criteria

Students' written work will be assessed in a manner appropriate to the requirements of any particular assignment. See also Specific Criteria related to specific modules.

In relation to assessed written coursework 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 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 present the required work in a clear and appropriate form

In relation to the assessed producers' placement and project report students are further assessed with regard to:

1. an ability to reflect the organisation accurately in a written or report/plan format or both
2. an ability to identify and examine key issues in relation to the company's work
3. an ability to draw upon and evaluate primary and secondary sources as appropriate
4. an ability to sustain a critical response through the development of coherent analysis
5. an ability to gather information by means of observation, research and interview in order to analyse relevant production processes

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	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 both business and the application of creative process.
70-79%	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	In order to achieve 60-69%, the piece or 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.

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
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.

How the programme is structured

You will undertake four taught modules and a further creative project/dissertation component. Attendance is mandatory for all taught sections of the programme.

You will follow one of two pathways on the programme

Pathway 1: Writers and Composers

  1) Genre study – Autumn term and Spring terms 30 credits
  2) Case study – Autumn and Spring terms 60 credits
  3) Shared complementary / contextual course 1 (Autumn term) 30 credits
  4) Creative workshop – Autumn, Spring and Summer terms 60 credits

Pathway 2: Producers

  1) Genre study – Autumn and Spring terms 30 credits
  2) Case study – Autumn and Spring terms 60 credits
  3) Shared complementary / contextual module 1 (Autumn term) 30 credits
  4) Production workshop – Autumn, Spring and Summer terms 60 credits

Writers and Composers Pathway

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Genre Study	DR71034B	30	7	Compulsory	1-2
Case Study (Writers and Composers)	DR71035C	60	7	Compulsory	1-2
Creative Workshop	DR71036B	60	7	Compulsory	1-3
Contextual optional module to the value of 30 credits	Various	30	7	Optional	1

Producers Pathway

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Genre Study	DR71034B	30	7	Compulsory	1-2
Case Study (Producers)	DR71037B	60	7	Compulsory	1-2
Production Workshop	DR71038C	60	7	Compulsory	1-3
Contextual optional module to the value of 30 credits	Various	30	7	Optional	1

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the Library and information available on Learn.gold (VLE) so that they have access to department/ programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the Goldsmiths website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Disability and Wellbeing Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running The Gold Award scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

The Academic Skills Centre works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

In addition, departments are contributing to the Masters programme over 100 Partners in Learning, these are organisations in the creative and cultural sector that either contribute to the teaching of modules or take student internships.

The programme is designed to develop skills that are 'process based' and can be applied in any cultural context. Half the students on the programme come from countries outside of the EU and contribute their international knowledge and experience in particular to group projects where additional skills in intercultural communication are developed. This approach also provides alumni with an international network of professional colleagues. In addition, the programme is designed to attract early career professionals or those returning to working in cultural management or policy.

Students will study in both the interdisciplinary environment of Goldsmiths but also in London, one of the leading cities in the world where musical theatre not only plays a major part in the economy but has a global impact.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

All taught postgraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 180 credits and involve one calendar year of full-time study. Some programmes may extend over more than one calendar year and, when this is the case, they have a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Part-time students normally take modules to the value of 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section "How the programme is structured" above. Normally, all modules are at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Modules

Modules are defined as:

- "Optional" – which can be chosen from a group of modules
- "Compulsory" – which must be taken as part of the degree

Progression

Some programmes may require students to pass specific modules prior to completion of the dissertation/major project (or equivalent). Additionally, where a programme of study extends beyond one calendar year, students may be required to pass specific modules in their first year of study before progressing to the second year. Where this is the case, these requirements will be set out in this Programme Specification.

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Award of the degree

In order to graduate, students must successfully complete all modules specified for the programme, as set out within the section "How the programme is structured" above.

Classification

Final degree classification is calculated on the basis of a student's mean average mark (based on credit value) across all modules on the programme.

Masters degrees are awarded with the following classifications:

Distinction – 70%+
Merit – 60-69%
Pass – 50-59%

More detail on the calculation of the final classification is on our website.

Interim exit awards

Some programmes incorporate interim exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and/or Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the minimum value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. The awards are made without classification.

When these awards are incorporated within the programme, the relevant learning outcomes and module requirements will be set out within the "What you will be expected to achieve" section above.

The above information is intended as a guide, with more detailed information available in the Goldsmiths Academic Manual.

Programme-specific rules and facts

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

General programme costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information at gold.ac.uk/programme-costs.

Specific programme costs

In addition to these standard costs, you will also be expected to meet some costs which are specifically related to your programme, which are set out below:

In completing your programme you will be required to attend shows in the West End, and you will therefore be required to meet the costs of travel into central London.

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 are formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year, such as in departmental committees, a variety of student feedback mechanisms and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme has at least one External Examiner who reviews comments annually on the standards of awards and student achievement. External Examiner(s) attend Boards of Examiners meetings and submit an annual written report.

Modules, programmes and/or departments are also subject to annual and periodic review internally, as well as periodic external scrutiny.

Quality assurance processes aim to ensure Goldsmiths' academic provision remains 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 these procedures are published on the [Quality Office web pages](#).