

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2. Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3. Programme accredited by	N/A
4. Final award	MA, PGCert, PGDip
5. Programme title	Performance Studies
6. Pathways available	N/A
7. Mode and/or site of delivery	Taught programme at University of Worcester
8. Mode of attendance	Full-time and part-time
9. UCAS Code	N/A
10. Subject /Professional Benchmark statements	The QAA Master's Degree Characteristics document published in March 2010 seeks to provide a reference point which reflects and accommodates the wide range of programme topics currently available in Master's courses. These are then mapped onto the subject specific Dance, Drama and Performance Benchmark statement for BA degrees published in June 2007
11. Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision	First approved March 2005; revised September 2009; updated December 2010
12. Educational aims of the programme	<p>This course is aimed at graduates who are arts professionals, teachers and lecturers who wish to enhance and update their intellectual and creative engagement with contemporary trends in the theory and practice of theatre and performance. Its flexible delivery pattern is designed to accommodate varied professional and personal aspirations, commitments and constraints. In particular the course is predicated on the importance of practical exploration underpinned by theory conducted in a supportive group context at times which permits the best possible opportunity for rigorous critical engagement.</p> <p>Its educational aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a varied and flexible approach to key aspects of contemporary performance practice in a range of forms and cultural and organisational contexts; • provide Master's level students with access to recent developments in theatre and performance scholarship at a level of sophistication appropriate to their postgraduate status; • foster a mature awareness of the creative and therapeutic applications of drama and performance in the wider community; • develop a critical understanding of the interaction of practice and theory in the critical analysis of performance; • facilitate the capacity to practise and utilise the critical and analytical skills and methodologies necessary for students to undertake an advanced independent extended study or dissertation.
13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods	<p>On successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a systematic knowledge, understanding, and critical awareness of key aspects of performance studies as part of the learning and teaching experience of three taught Master's modules; • evaluate critically both orally and through written work selected aspects of current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;

- evaluate critically sophisticated models of contemporary performance practice;
- demonstrate a capacity to engage independently and collectively in the practical exploration of selected models of performance practice.

On successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma, the student will be able to:

- demonstrate a systematic knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of key aspects of performance studies as part of the learning and teaching experience of five optional taught Master’s modules;
- through successful completion of the mandatory module ‘The Theory and Practice of Performance Research’ demonstrate an advanced and systematic understanding of a range of theoretical paradigms which underpin contemporary performance studies and practice;
- demonstrate growing maturity in the ability to independently synthesize theoretical and creative practice-based material from discrete topics offered in the course.

In addition to the achievements listed in the two sections above, a Master’s degree shall be evidence of:

- demonstrate an extensive and systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of issues, themes, forms and models of creative practice addressed in the advanced academic study of performance;
- demonstrate in oral discussion and presentation and written analysis a critically aware understanding of contemporary debates, applications and emerging critical perspectives within contemporary performance practice;
- demonstrate in all assessed work the capacity to adopt a critically-informed and systematic reflective and reflexive approach to models and applications of contemporary performance practice including the student’s own practice;
- demonstrate the independent ability to initiate, critically frame and complete an autonomous extended research project conducted and presented in full accordance with agreed scholarly standards.

<i>Knowledge and understanding:</i>	<i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:</i>
A critically mature knowledge and understanding of the most up-to-date approaches to models of, and exponents of, contemporary performance practice.	Modules such as PERF4001 <i>Applied Theatre</i> , PERF4002 <i>Contemporary Theatre Practice in a Digital Culture</i> and PERF4011 <i>Writing the Space</i> introduce students to the most recent developments and innovations in both community applications of performance as an educational and therapeutic tool, and examples of Avant Garde practice. Practical teaching methodologies prepare students to demonstrate advanced competence in these models of practice for assessment purposes
A knowledge and advanced theoretical understanding of current debates in important issues of social concern such as cultural diversity and social inclusion as exemplified in contemporary applications and models of performance	In modules such as PERF4007 <i>Cultural Diversity and British Theatre</i> and PERF4001 <i>Applied Theatre</i> students are taught to engage collectively in current debates based on a wide-ranging schedule of critical reading and other relevant media outputs. All assessed written work and practical presentations have to demonstrate the extent to which this underpins contemporary practice.
<i>Cognitive and Intellectual Skills</i>	<i>Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used</i>
The development of a mature and critically-aware understanding of the relationship between theory and performance practice.	The mandatory module PERF4000 <i>The Theory and Practice of Performance Research</i> is designed to ensure that students are introduced to a range of influential theoretical paradigms and critical

	discourses. This enables them to construct appropriate critical frameworks around their own assessed writing and practical presentations. Team teaching where individual tutors teach theory as it is applied to their specialist research interests supply exemplary case studies to assist students towards advanced understanding and knowledge.
The development of a critically mature understanding of the relationship between theatrical forms and genres and contemporary critical discourse	Modules such as PERF4011 <i>Writing the Space</i> , PERF4003 <i>New Writing for the Theatre</i> , and PERF4004 <i>Conceptions of Physical Theatre</i> are based on critical reading of both written and performed texts within the context of contemporary innovation and experiment. In assessment students are asked to offer their own written critiques and practical analyses to demonstrate their advanced understanding.
Practical skills relevant to employment:	Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:
The development of advanced up-to-date physical and creative skills	Through modules in Applied Theatre, Physical Theatre and post-modern performance (PERF4011 <i>Writing the Space</i>) students are taught a range of advanced creative skills and approaches by academic tutors with substantial practitioner experience. These are then demonstrated in assessed work.
The introduction to and/or enhancement of, skills in new technologies and performance	Both PERF4002 <i>Contemporary Theatre Practice in a Digital Culture</i> and PERF4001 <i>Writing the Space</i> are taught by professional specialists who routinely use digital technology in their work. This is then incorporated into students' practical presentations.
More up-to-date knowledge of the models and structures of industrial practice	Both PERF4003 <i>New Writing for the Theatre</i> and PERF4007 <i>Cultural Diversity and British Theatre</i> explore the institutional and organisational structures of the theatre industry which enable creative innovation and opportunity. Knowledge of these forms part of the learning outcomes of both written and oral presentations based on independent research. The optional M level undergraduate module DRAM3105M <i>Running a Theatre Company</i> teaches small-scale company policy and administration. A worked through business plan forms a major part of the assessment
Transferable/key skills:	Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:
The ability effectively to pursue specific goals, demonstrating self-discipline and determination in working towards deadlines	All modules require assessments to be submitted by a deadline. However nearly all have group or individual practical and/or oral presentations which requires additional discipline and time

	management
Master structure, presentation and communication of academic discourse	This is fundamental to all learning, teaching and assessment in the course
The development of confidence in oral and practical work and assessment	This is a vital transferable skill which is integral to all drama and performance-related teaching, learning and assessment
The development of the skills required to produce written work to a high level of competence based on accepted standards of clarity and coherence	Essential to the successful completion of all written assessments
The skills appropriate to promoting a mature effective debate in a seminar or tutorial setting	All modules encourage critical discussion and mature debate

14. Assessment Strategy

In keeping with the wide range of written and performance texts and applications encountered on the course there is no one dominant form of assessment. Also there are no formal examinations. The ability to research and write and sustain a critical argument in an essay is a very important skill. However students will be required in all modules to give either individual or group oral and/or practical presentations. Other forms of assessment include a critical analysis of a written or performed dramatic text; a solo performance; business plan and a reflective commentary. At all times there is an attempt to balance written analysis with practical exploration and interrogation and adopt a holistic approach in line with the University's assessment policy.

Typically there are two assessment points, mid-semester and end of the semester. Where the module is heavily practical, a group or solo practical performance and/or presentation is given at the end of the module and time is specifically scheduled for independent group or individual rehearsal and preparation. Other more text and theory-based modules culminate in a piece of extended critical writing. On the whole assignments are evenly weighted. On practical modules students receive constant feedback on their practical exercises in class; on text and theory based modules students are set an unassessed formative exercise and are invited to give informal presentations on critical reading in class.

In addition to UW grade descriptors which are available for students to consult via the Master's Programme Handbook, the Performance Studies Course Handbook provides a comprehensive guide to subject specific assessment criteria linked to grade bands and which cover both written and practical assessment.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The course is available in part-time or full-time modes.

Award Map

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional(O))			Prerequisites (Code of Module required)
			MA	PG Dip	PG Cert	
PERF4000	<i>The Theory and Practice of Performance Research</i>	20	M	M	O	
PERF4001	<i>Applied Theatre</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4002	<i>Contemporary Theatre Practice in a Digital Culture</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4003	<i>New Writing for the Theatre</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4004	<i>Conceptions of Physical Theatre</i>	20	O	O	O	

PERF4006	<i>Contemporary Stages and Classical Plays</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4007	<i>Cultural Diversity and British Theatre</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4009	<i>Project/Extension Module</i>	20	O	O	O	
PERF4010A	<i>Dissertation (3 module) #</i>	60	M*			PERF4000 + 5 Optional modules
PERF4010B	<i>Dissertation (4 module) #</i>	80	M*			PERF4000 + 4 Optional modules
PERF4011	<i>Writing the Space</i>	20	O	O	O	
DRAM3105M	<i>Running a Theatre Company</i>	20	O	O	O	
DRAM3123M	<i>Sexuality in Performance</i>	20	O	O	O	
DRAM3121M	<i>Theatre and Disability</i>	20	O	O	O	

Requirement for the Award of PG Cert

Students must take three (3) Optional modules from those listed above; this may include one (1) of the DRAM coded modules.

Requirements for the award of PG Dip

Students must take the Mandatory module i.e. PERF4000 **plus** five (5) Optional modules from those listed above; this may include one (1) of the DRAM coded modules.

Requirements for the award of Masters

Students must take the Mandatory modules i.e. PERF4000 and **either:**

PERF4010A **plus** five (5) Optional modules from those listed above; this may include one (1) of the DRAM coded modules;

or

PERF4010B plus five (4) Optional modules from those listed above; this may include one (1) of the DRAM coded modules.

16. QAA Academic Infrastructure

The educational aims of the programme were generated in accord with FHEQ and takes account of the subject benchmark statement for Dance, Drama and Performance. The programme enables students to develop skills and competencies fundamental to the study of Drama and Performance to a level higher than expected from undergraduate work. Knowledge of the subject will be broader and up-to-date, critique and reflection on practice more sophisticated, research more thorough and extensive. Crucial at this level is the development of an individual, independent purchase on the subject area in both theoretical and practical modes. This is vital for the successful completion of the independent research project.

17. Support for students

MA Performance students experience a variety of teaching and learning:

- lectures, seminars, practical workshops and demonstrations, performance visits, group work, presentations and performances, internet resources
- Induction package, library and IT services tours, technical demonstrations
- Student Course Handbook
- A module guide for each individual module
- For PGDip and full Masters students a mandatory module provides study and research skills
- Students supported by Information Services
- Students supported by dedicated Drama and Performance technicians
- A central Student Support Service offers a range of advisory services including finance, equal opportunities/disability. counselling, careers
- A writer-in-residence is annually sponsored by the Royal Literary Fund to support students with writing skills

- A Language Unit provides English language courses for international students
- The Course Leader acts as Personal tutor

18. Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

Entry Requirements

- Normally an honours degree of at least a 2.2 in a discipline directly relevant to the course
- A good honours degree in a cognate discipline in which elements relevant to the course played a part. These might include Dance and Physical Theatre, Contemporary Art and Live Art, English and Creative Writing, Media and Cultural Studies or
- Non-academic professional qualifications and/or experience which demonstrates the possession of appropriate knowledge or professional skills

All prospective students will attend an interview with the Course Leader or nominee prior to being admitted to the course. If appropriate the student will be asked to provide a sample of written work. International students whose first language is not English must achieve an IELTS score of 6.5 in which the writing component is at that level or above.

Students are admitted in the context of an Equal Opportunities policy adopted by the University of Worcester and the Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts. The University operates a student support service that can provide individual support workers and materials in alternative formats. All modules on the MA in Performance Studies course address issues of cultural diversity, social exclusion and gender relations. The course team aims to foster an environment in which students of all backgrounds can participate successfully.

Accreditation of Prior Learning.

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for accreditation of prior learning.

Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

- Annual review of the quality of the course
- External Examiner reports
- Course staff/student management committee each semester to consider student feedback
- University Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Development and Practice Unit promote learning and teaching across the institution
- Peer observation of teaching by staff
- The University runs a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE, accredited by HEA and SEDA.

20. Regulation of assessment

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements (delete if this does not apply).
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at 50% unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module, which will incur payment of the module fee.
- For full details of submission regulations see Postgraduate Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment takes place during the following semester or during the summer reassessment period at the end of the academic year.
- If following reassessment the module has been passed, the module grade will be capped at 50%.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they will have one further and final reassessment opportunity.
- A student who fails 40 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA/MTL)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including a minimum of 40 credits from the Dissertation

The awards of PG Cert, PG Dip or Masters may be made with Merit or Distinction.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

- The External Examiner writes an annual report on the course. Thus far, the reports have confirmed that modules are pitched at an appropriate level and that feedback and tutor support is appropriate and full.
- The course conforms to the QAA Masters M level descriptor and Codes of Practice.
- University of Worcester has the Investor in People kite mark that was renewed in 2008.

In November 2005, the University was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education. The University will be next audited in 2011

22. Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

Performance Studies Master's students have an opportunity to enhance their professional development and employability. They regularly enter employment in arts administration and funding, or take on higher management or arts development roles in theatre institutions or in other branches of the creative industries. A Master's degree can lead to teaching in further and higher education. Students may also proceed to doctoral research.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module study guide and course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Key sources of information about the Course can be found in the approved Course Review Documentation completed in March 2010