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MA Acting for Screen

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION 2023/24

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# **KEY INFORMATION**

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| **Award Title** | Acting for Screen |
| **Award Aim** | Master of Arts – 180 credits |
| **Possible Exit Awards** | Postgraduate Certificate – 60 credits  Postgraduate Diploma – 120 credits |
| **Awarding Body** | University of London |
| **Mode(s) of Study** | Full-time only |
| **Full Length of Study** | 1 year |
| **Admissions Requirements** | You should normally have a first degree in the broad field of performance and drama studies, although applications from students of other disciplines may be considered if they have sufficient experience of performance. Your application may also be considered if you have appropriate professional experience, or can otherwise demonstrate your potential to undertake this form of postgraduate study successfully. An offer will normally only be made after audition and interview.  *We particularly encourage applications from groups currently under-represented in higher education, such as students with disabilities and members of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. Find out more information on*[***Central’s commitment to equality and diversity***](https://www.cssd.ac.uk/about-central/equity-at-central)*.*   * **English Language Requirements**   Applicants for whom English is not their first language are required to prove their English language proficiency by gaining an overall score of 7.0 in an [**IELTS test**](http://www.ielts.org/). We do accept equivalent English language qualifications. Applicants are advised to gain this certification as early as possible and more information can be found through the [**English Language Requirements**](https://www.cssd.ac.uk/english-language-requirements) page.   * **Auditions**   To audition for a place on the MA Acting for Screen, upon receipt of your application, we will ask you to submit a self-tape consisting of a short monologue (maximum three minutes). The monologue must be from a recognised source (play, film, television drama).  Selected candidates will be invited to attend a recall audition at a later date.  Applicants who are recalled to the second stage will be invited to:   * participate in a voice and movement workshop * participate in a group discussion where you will have the opportunity to find out more details about the programme. * **International Auditions**   In the interest of parity, Central has decided to suspend in-person auditions overseas for the MA Acting for Screen. We will, however, be delivering taster and information sessions at selected locations.  These workshops are designed to replicate the London-based experience in every aspect (other than a tour of our site!). See our [**Event Finder**](https://www.cssd.ac.uk/discover-central/visit-us) for listings of upcoming locations and dates.   * **Distance Auditions**   Please note we only accept links to self-tape auditions via YouTube, Vimeo or similar platforms. Videos must be set to ‘public’ or ‘unlisted’ to ensure the panel is able to view them. DVDs will not be considered.  Applicants invited to recall who are unable to travel to Central may be allowed to attend a group recall audition via Zoom, depending on the circumstances. |
| **Location of Study** | London |
| **Professional Accreditation** | None |

# **PROGRAMME OVERVIEW**

## Educational Aims

The aims and learning outcomes of the MA in Acting for Screen are closely informed by Central’s M (Masters) Framework principles.

The MA in Acting for Screen at Central enables you to:

* gain knowledge at the forefront of, or informed by, a focussed approach to the academic and professional discipline of acting; with specific reference to screen media
* take risks, be intellectually rigorous and show originality in your application of knowledge in, for example, practical projects and on-going skills development
* understand how the boundaries of acting are advanced through sustained and intense practice and research
* share learning with students on other courses
* in collaboration with peers and independently, show originality in tackling and solving problems and deal systematically and creatively with complex acting-related issues in unpredictable environments
* develop practice and scholarship pertinent to the filed with particular emphasis on Screen performance.
* explore existing and emerging forms of acting for screen in a variety of professional and experimental contexts.

## Programme Structure

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| **Term 1** | **Term 2** | **Term 3** | **Term 4** |
| Unit 1 & 2: 40 (Credits) Techniques for Acting on Screen | | |  |
| Unit 4: (20 Credits)  Critical Contexts: Screen Study | |  |  |
| Unit 5 & 6: (60 Credits)  Practices: Acting for Screen (Performance Projects) | | |  |
|  |  |  | Unit 7: (60 Credits)  Sustained Independent Project |

## Learning and Teaching

Practical skills are developed through tutor and practitioner led sessions in a series of structured skill based classes, which are then realised through the performance projects. The programme is delivered by a variety of specialists and draws on the expertise of working professionals including actors, directors, casting directors and producers. There may be some collaboration with film schools or other Universities; this is likely to consist of short film making projects and master classes.

A variety of learning styles are embraced on the programme, a distinct feature is the focus on the independent creative artist, which encourages students to be able to understand their own practice, rigorously prepare for performance, respond to the demands and mechanisms of the industry by marketing themselves, updating their show reels, and producing their own work. A focus on process encourages the students to extend their research skills and develop a broad knowledge of production, the current trends and developments in the field.

Students are assessed on a continual basis in classes and workshops throughout the year. The importance of a disciplined and committed attitude to the study is vital and demonstrates an understanding of the work of the professional actor. Emphasis is placed on process and performance; this allows the course team to assess how the student is able to apply the various fundamental skills to performance. Critical reflection is an integral part of the learning; this is assessed through a series of analytical accounts of your practice at the end of each tem and after every project. Students are encouraged to write a working journal will forms a crucial role in informing the course team of your working process and the extent of your consideration, investigation and analysis of processes, library research and the development of original ideas.

Throughout the programme the integration of research skills and practices encourage students to extend their knowledge, interrogate and create their own work. The sustained independent project takes place in the fourth term. Students are allocated a supervisor but a large percentage of this project is self-directed.

*Research Ethos*

Research in acting is, in part, the work done by actors themselves to develop their craft and to share these developments with others. This is embodied research that is about exploring the foundations, possibilities and limits of the performer’s craft. In this sense research can be thought of as a continuation of the training of the performer, and thus forms a thread through this programme. Other relevant research methodologies which also inform the student’s work include historical enquires into performance traditions, empirical investigations of the performer’s process, innovative training methodologies, and practice as research which explores theatre and music more broadly.

Research of the former kind includes that of Stanislavski or Michael Chekhov, for example, but it is not necessarily to be found in disseminated written form. New research is to be recognised in the work of performers at the forefront of their art form – for screen actors this often happens in response to technological developments – as well as in publications and formalised practices, and in academic practice as research.

Learning about research methodology on MA Acting for Screen is learning to recognise how the combined mental and physical practices of performance are a form of knowledge, and how, when sufficiently ambitious and advanced, they can become advances in their field. As such it is taught throughout the programme, and is assessed in Performance Projects and Sustained Independent Project.

## Assessment

**Assessment Tasks**

The programme is assessed through outcomes submitted at the end of each unit, together with a larger-scale personal project (an artefact, dissertation or a portfolio) produced over the fourth term. Written feedback is provided to students on specific units of assessment. Students receive oral feedback on general progressat regular intervals throughout the year.

Each unit within the degree has approximately four or five learning outcomes which are directly drawn from the overall degree learning outcomes. Each unit has formal assessment tasks - with a ‘magnitude’ (i.e. amount or size of task) - which will give students the opportunity to demonstrate that s/he has achieved the learning outcomes of the degree. Assessment criteria show what students will need to demonstrate – or do - to achieve the learning outcomes and in the assessment tasks (e.g. effective use of research). Assessment (or level) descriptors are directly linked to the assessment criteria and indicate the level the student has reached and therefore the level to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes (and the mark awarded to the unit therefore).

**Assessment Criteria**

Not all the assessment criteria apply to each unit although all will be incorporated *across* each Masters degree. (The compulsory units include all these criteria already.) The assessment criteria to be considered will be clear in each unit outline. Tutors will give feedback relevant to these criteria with references to specific examples from your work.

Work is assessed on evidence of the extent to which you have met the learning outcomes demonstrated through:

* sustained, independent written argument;
* progress in relevant practice-based techniques;
* taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately;
* originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit;
* analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues;
* intellectual engagement;
* understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship;
* recognising practice that is at the boundaries of the specialism;
* successful collaborative processes;
* tackling and solving problems and dealing with complex situations in professionally-related environments.

**Assessment Descriptors**

Work that is marked near a borderline is likely to have characteristics of work in the next closest bracket, but these are outweighed by characteristics described in the bracket in which the work is placed. The languages of these descriptors will be used by staff in feedback to make clear the level the student has reached. In addition, tutors will make reference to the learning outcomes and whether these have therefore been achieved.

80% and over (distinction)

Your written work demonstrates a fluent, lucid and advanced argument of a near-publishable level. You show exceptional evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated a highly impressive exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas with acuity. There is clear and sustained evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated excellent qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues throughout the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are exceptional; you have developed original knowledge making use of extensive and highly complex research. You display strikingly effective practice, demonstrating an advanced understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work at the highest of standards in group situations (if relevant), exercising most effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of exceptional ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is characterised by its sustained excellence and is of equivalent achievement to striking professional practice at the forefront of its field.

70% and over (distinction)

Your written work demonstrates sustained, advanced argument at an academically high level. You show outstanding evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated an impressive exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas with acuity. There is clear evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated very good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are impressive; you have developed areas of original knowledge, making use of extensive and complex research. You display most effective practice, demonstrating an advanced understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work at high standards in group situations (if relevant), always exercising effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of clear ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is characterised by excellence and is of equivalent achievement to professional practice at the forefront of its field.

60% and over (merit)

Your written work demonstrates a sustained and clear argument. You show very good evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated an effective exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is clear evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are good; you have made often made use of detailed research. You display effective practice, demonstrating a good understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work well in group situations (if relevant), frequently exercising effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of good ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is of a good standard and, on several occasions, is equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field.

50% and over

Your written work demonstrates a developed argument that is reasonably sustained. You show evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated reasonably good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are adequate; you have made use of research at times. Your practice is at a reasonable standard, and you have demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You contribute to group situations, adopting reasonably effective collaborative strategies for most of the time. There is evidence of some ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is of a fair or good standard and, on occasion, is equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. It is likely to be reasonably strong in some areas but less developed in others, and it may be inconsistent.

40-49% (fail)

Your written work demonstrates an argument but one that is only sporadically sustained. You show limited evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have only occasionally demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is limited or little evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated limited qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement were not always adequate; you have made little use of research. Your practice is not always of a reasonable standard, and you have rarely demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You contribute to group situations, although you do not often adopt effective collaborative strategies. There is limited evidence of ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is only of a fair standard and is rarely equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. You have not sufficiently demonstrated that you have met the learning outcomes of the unit, although it is likely that your work shows potential.

Less than 40% (fail)

Your written work does not sufficiently demonstrate an argument. You show insufficient evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have rarely or never demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is little or no evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have rarely demonstrated qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement were inadequate; you have made little or no use of research. Your practice is not of a good enough standard, and you have not demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. Your contribution to group situations is very limited, as are your effective collaborative strategies. There is little or no evidence of ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is not equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. You have not demonstrated that you have met the learning outcomes of the unit.

## Placements

This programme has no compulsory placement elements.

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do if you make full use of the opportunities for learning which the course provides. If you successfully complete the MA Acting for Screen at Central:

**You will obtain knowledge and understanding of:**

* (A1) engagement with critical debates, concepts and discourses relevant to advanced study and practice in screen acting
* (A2) relevant theories and research methodologies including those most appropriate for students of acting
* (A3) the complex demands made on screen actors in a variety of settings: on location; in the studio; in relation to screen protocol
* (A4) systematic approaches to textual and performance analysis and performance preparation.

**You will develop the thinking skills that will enable you to:**

* (B1) demonstrate your systematic understanding and critical awareness of relevant theoretical knowledge
* (B2) develop intellectual rigour and conceptual understanding enabling you to: undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies
* (B3) engage productively in the performance and evaluation of screen performance, in terms of current epistemologies of acting in screen contexts.

**You will develop the practical skills that will enable you to:**

* (C1) use and evaluate relevant practices applicable in acting, sometimes experimenting with new and/or original ideas
* (C2) enhance discipline-specific skills (e.g. vocal, physical and acting), systematically demonstrating a rigorous critical awareness of the effect
* (C3) construct character for performance (e.g. through interrogation of ‘text’, imaginative interpretation, observed behaviours, contextual research) allowing this to inform your performance on screen
* (C4) work successfully as part of a production team.

**You will develop the broader workplace skills that will enable you to:**

* (D1) negotiate the challenges of working in complex and unpredictable situations e.g. making decisions independently or in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies
* (D2) operate successfully as a professional actor (e.g. manage time and deadlines; engage confidently in debate; structure and communicate ideas effectively; engage with relevant industries)
* (D3) take creative risks.

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|  | **Techniques for acting on screen**  **(Double unit)** | **Critical Contexts: Screen Study** | **Practice: Performance projects** | **SIP** |
| **Learning**  **Outcomes** |  |  |  |  |
| **A1** |  | X |  | X |
| **A2** |  |  |  | X |
| **A3** |  |  | X |  |
| **A4** | X |  | X |  |
| **B1** |  | X |  | X |
| **B2** |  |  | X | X |
| **B3** |  | X | X |  |
| **C1** | X |  | X |  |
| **C2** | X |  |  |  |
| **C3** | X |  | X |  |
| **C4** |  |  | X |  |
| **D1** |  |  |  | X |
| **D2** |  |  | X |  |
| **D3** |  |  | X | X |

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| UNITS |

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| TECHNIQUES FOR ACTING ON SCREEN | | | | | | |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 40 | ECTS | | 20 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | Notional student study hours: 400  Timetabled hours: 300  Student managed learning: 100 | | | | | |
| Unit Leader | Amanda Brennan | | | | | |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA Acting for Screen | | | | *Compulsory* | |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | None | | | | | |

**Aims**

This unit aims to enable you to:

* broaden your knowledge base regarding the techniques of acting for screen
* explore the principles, potential and dynamics of performance for the screen
* develop your own performance abilities as a screen actor
* apply learning and research about acting for screen in practical contexts
* understand the technical terms and schedule demands of acting for screen
* develop analytic and interrogative skills in relation to your own practice and the practice of others.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you will have:

* (A4) systematic approaches to textual and performance analysis and performance preparation.
* (C2) enhance discipline-specific skills (e.g. vocal, physical and acting), systematically demonstrating a rigorous critical awareness of the effect
* (C3) construct character for performance (e.g. through interrogation of ‘text’, imaginative interpretation, observed behaviours, contextual research) allowing this to inform your performance on screen
* (C4) work successfully as part of a production team
* (C1) use and evaluate relevant practices applicable in acting, sometimes experimenting with new and/or original ideas.

Transferable Skills Developed

Students will develop an awareness of how they use their body as a tool for communication. The skill areas will help to refine their vocal and physical range bringing an understanding of how to be more present. The creative work encourages an imaginative and expansive approach to problem solving and team work which can be taken into all working environments.

Indicative Unite Content

This unit runs primarily across the first two terms. It is concerned with the principles and core practical techniques of acting and the application of these to a variety of screen media. This includes the fundamental acting skills, such as voice, movement and acting. You will build on previous practical acting experience and examine key differences between acting for theatre and screen/television. This will include understanding technical terms and working with schedule demands such as acting scenes out of context and time order; working within the frame; adapting performance from shot to shot; adjusting the scale of performance and vocal levels to the shot; preparing for shooting; script analysis; making character choices; casting; sight reading, audition skills and preparing for work in the industry. By gaining knowledge of the technical landscape and processes involved you will prepare as an actor/performer for various forms of screen production and learn to critically reflect on your own practice. Emphasis is also placed on preparation for the industry with classes in casting, audition and workshops with industry professionals.

**How You Learn**

* Lectures.
* Industries conference.
* Experimental workshops.
* Masterclass series.
* Student-led studio work.
* Staff-led studio work.

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| **Assessment Summary** | | |
| Type of task  *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)* | Magnitude  *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)* | Weight within the unit *(e.g. 50%)* |
| Term 1  Practice assessments set include*, Movement and Acting* classes |  | 40% |
| Term 1  critical refelction | 2,000 words | 10% |
| Term 2  Practice assessments set include*, Movement and Acting* classes |  | 40% |
| Term 2  Critical reflection | 2,000 words | 10% |

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| **Assessment Detail** |
| This unit is assessed through the following elements:  Term 1  Set tasks in the area of acting, text analysis, voice and movement. These will be explained  In week 5 the specialist lecturer and assessed in week nine or ten. The tasks could include  a recitation of a poem, the performance of a scene on screen, an annotated script.   * critical reflection of 2.000 words showing how you have worked towards meeting the learning outcomes for the unit in relation to the work of Term 1& 2   Term 2 & 3  Set tasks in the area of acting, text analysis, voice and movement. These will be explained  in week 5 by the specialist lecturer and assessed in week nine or ten. The tasks could include  a recitation of a poem, the performance of a scene on screen, an annotated script.   * critical reflection of 2.000 words showing how you have worked towards meeting the learning outcomes for the unit in relation to the work of Term 2 & 3 |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| * You must achieve a pass in all the above elements of assessment to pass the unit. * This unit contributes approx. 22% to the mark for the MA degree. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Progress in relevant practice-based techniques. * Taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately. * Successful collaborative processes * Tackling and solving problems and dealing with complex situations in professionally related environments |

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| CRITICAL CONTEXTS: SCREEN STUDY | | | | | | |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | Notional student study hours:200  Timetabled hours: 30 hours  Student managed learning: 170 hours approximately. | | | | | |
| Unit Leader | Amanda Brennan / Jo Shah | | | | | |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA Acting for Screen | | | | *Compulsory* | |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | None | | | | | |

**Aims**

* Identify and understand key critical issues and debates of relevance to your own practice(s) and those of other scholars and practitioners in your subject.
* Critically explore the contexts, principles and assumptions behind these critical issues and debates.
* Be prepared for advanced practice and study of your field that is informed by a solid theoretical grounding.
* Derive new knowledge from disciplinary practice and reflection.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you will:

* (B1) select and demonstrate your systematic understanding and critical awareness of theoretical knowledge relevant to your field and consider how this impacts upon your position as a scholar/practitioner
* (B3) engage productively in the performance and evaluation of screen performance, in terms of current epistemologies of acting in screen contexts
* (A1) engage with critical debates, concepts and discourses relevant to advanced study and practice in a performance related discipline.

Transferable Skills Developed

This unit encourages the student to be inquisitive and pose questions. It promotes interrogation, asking each individual to examine how performance material can be viewed through different critical lenses.

Indicative Unit Content

In this unit you will examine the work of selected film, television and other screen practitioners (including directors, writers, cinematographers, and actors) from the perspective of the screen actor. You will also study various film genres and different technical methods as they bear upon screen acting, for example, the work of Mike Leigh, Martin Scorsese, Jean-Luc Godard, Jane Campion, Steve Mc Queen, Ang Lee, Andrea Arnold, Philippa Lowthorpe. You will view film/video screenings in advance of each session, and discuss issues that arise in seminars. You will also undertake structured research and select specialist areas of study that will form the basis for your assessment.

By gaining an understanding and critical awareness of different types of practice you will be able to locate your own acting processes. The unit takes place in the autumn term.

**How You Learn**

* Staff led presentation and discussions.
* Film, television and video screenings.
* Student led group work in the format of presentations.
* Individual research.

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| **Assessment Summary** | | |
| Type of task  *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)* | Magnitude  *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)* | Weight within the unit *(e.g. 50%)* |
| Collation of footage and clips | 5 minutes | 50% |
| Presentation including question and answer session | 20 minutes | 50% |
| **Assessment Detail** | | |
| This unit is assessed by way of the following:  The collation of film footage which is relevant to the selected topic.   * 20-minute presentation in pairs (including film/video extracts of a minimum of 3 minutes) including a 5 minute Q and A. | | |
| **Assessment Notes** | | |
| * You must achieve a pass in all the above elements of assessment to pass the unit. * This unit contributes approx. 11% to the mark for the MA degree. | | |
| **Assessment Criteria** | | |
| * Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit. * Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues. * Intellectual engagement. | | |

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| PRACTICES - ACTING FOR SCREEN (PERFORMANCE PROJECTS) | | | | | | |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 60 | ECTS | | 30 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 600 hours | | | | | |
| Unit Leader | Amanda Brennen | | | | | |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA Acting for Screen | | | | Core | |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | None | | | | | |

**Aims**

The unit aims to enable you to:

* understand key practical issues and debates of relevance to your own practice(s)
* develop and apply skills and techniques relevant to the relevant contexts
* engage critically and creatively with current and emergent processes in your field
* undertake sustained practice/s, developing your understanding, application and critical processes of practice within your discipline through an extended range of experience.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of the unit, you should be able to:

* (A3) engage with the complex demands made on screen actors in a variety of settings: on location; in the studio; in relation to screen protocol
* (A4) systematic approaches to textual and performance analysis and performance preparation.
* (C1) demonstrate a capacity to apply practical understanding and skills of your field in relevant contemporary contexts
* (C1, D1, D3) demonstrate an ability to operate at a professional level appropriate to your discipline or field e.g. take decisions in complex and unpredictable situations independently and in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies; take creative risks
* (C3) construct character for performance (e.g. through interrogation of ‘text’, imaginative interpretation, observed behaviours, contextual research) allowing this to inform your performance on screen
* (C4) work successfully as part of a production team
* (B3) engage productively in the performance and evaluation of screen performance, in terms of current epistemologies of acting in screen contexts.
* (B2, D2) Evaluate your specialist practice, interrogating the application of current principles and ideas in your field paying particular attention to extended learning gained through a sustained engagement, possibly in different contexts.

Transferable Skills Developed

Practice in your field; evaluation of practice (self and others).

Indicative Unit Content

This unit runs across the first three terms. You will complete four practical performance projects that will vary in approach, style and format. You will work with a range of professionals including directors, writers, editors and other production personnel. There may be some collaboration with London based film schools or University departments. In this instance students must be prepared to travel to the partner institution.

The unit will also entail specialist workshops and master classes that address the particular developmental work in relation to the project in hand, such as devising, ADR or physical skills.

Projects may include the following:

A 2-minute non-verbal short film project.

* 1. Film script project, which focuses on methods of analysing a script and preparing a role.
  2. A short film written by a professional writer, commissioned explicitly to feature MA Acting for Screen students. The process will include a series of workshops and, potentially, a devising phase. The project will be filmed by a professional director and screened at a London based cinema.
  3. Show reel project. This will involve the selection of suitable material for each student, which will be filmed on location.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with practical activities appropriate to the particular practice of the field. You will learn, also, from an experienced professional (tutor, host, director etc.) with whom you will work.

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| **Assessment Summary** | | |
| Type of task  *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)* | Magnitude  *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)* | Weight within the unit *(e.g. 50%)* |
| Performance Project 1 | Various (see above) | 25% |
| Performance Project 2 | Various (see above) | 25% |
| Performance Project 3 | Various (see above) | 25% |
| Performance Project 4 | Various (see above) | 25% |
| **Assessment Detail** | | |
| This unit is assessed through the best four performance projects:  Each project is assessed though 50 % performance, 50% process . The process and reflection elements are evidenced though a tutorial with the project leader where students are asked to reflect on their work. All performance projects are first and second marked. | | |
| **Assessment Notes** | | |
| * You must achieve a pass in all the above elements of assessment to pass the unit. * This unit contributes 33% to the mark for the MA degree. | | |
| **Assessment Criteria** | | |
| * Progress in relevant practice-based techniques. * Taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately. * Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit. * Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues. * Intellectual engagement. | | |

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| SUSTAINED INDEPENDENT PROJECT (SIP) | | | | | | |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 60 | ECTS | | 30 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 600 hours  The exact breakdown of hourage will be specified in the unit briefing paper. A minimum of ten hours contact time is expected. Each MA has different requirements for teaching depending upon the assessed outcomes of the unit. It is the norm for supervision to be completed by July, however. | | | | | |
| Unit Leader | Amanda Brennan | | | | | |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | All MA courses | | | | *Core* | |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | All other units. (Some may run concurrently with the start of SIP.) | | | | | |

***MAASU704 Sustained Independent Project:*** *Acting for Screen Dissertation*

***MAASU705 Sustained Independent Project:*** *Acting for Screen Artefact*

***MAASU706 Sustained Independent Project:*** *Acting for Screen Case Study*

**Aims**

* Extend your understanding of critical debates and practices within a specific area of drama/theatre/performance.
* Make appropriate, intelligent and informed selections from a wide range of possibilities of approach or research materials.
* Engage in a sustained, focused, independent piece of work that constitutes a summative contribution at the end of your course.
* Develop as a contributor to the field.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

* (B2) undertake sustained and extensive research
* (A1, B1) demonstrate your understanding of critical debates and practices in your field
* (D1) demonstrate your capacity to manage complex work independently
* (D1; D3) realise a final piece of work that engages with a relevant specific context or focus, taking appropriate creative risks and that contributes to the field.

Transferable Skills Developed

Independent research, awareness of contemporary and/or historical practice, reflexivity, ability to bring an extended, independent piece of work to completion.

Indicative Unit Content

Students will undertake one of three options with the agreement of the Course Leader where they shall undertake a substantial piece of independent study and research leading to the submission of either:

* A dissertation.
* A portfolio.
* An artefact: a short film. This would be undertaken in groups of 3-5 students. Students will be marked for their individual role in the process. There will be no more than five groups.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with an individual, sustained task. This will be supported by a nominated supervisor. The chosen options are selected to enable you to draw on the practice of the course and enhance your research and reflective skills.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment Summary** | | |
| Type of task  *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)* | Magnitude  *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)* | Weight within the unit *(e.g. 50%)* |
| Artefact (a short film) | 10 – 12 minutes | 70% ( 35% on acting 35% on specialist skill) |
| Research Essay | 3,000 words | 30% |
| OR | | |
| Case Study | 3,000 words | 20% |
| Reflective Essay | 3,000 words | 20% |
| Extended research | 6,000 words | 60% |
| OR | | |
| Dissertation | 12,000 words | 100% |
| **Assessment Detail** | | |
| Students have the choice of three assessment options as outlined below. The choice of assessment option will be agreed with the Course Leader.   1. A relevant artefact (a short film) (70% 35% is the mark will be on the acting and 35% on the selected specialist skill.) with research essay of 3,000 words (30%). A joint submission from between three and five students on the course would be accepted. In addition to each student acting, the specific roles would need to be clearly defined prior to being considered by the course leader. An individual could take the responsibility for directing, producing, writing or editing. The individual‘s use of the allocated hours in creating the artefact must be clearly identifiable. Students are marked individually for each component of the artefact.   The artefact would be an original 10 - 12 minute film which would be an original script written or devised, and performed by the students. It is an option for the group to secure post production specialists, such as an editor and sound mixer. Any additional cost, i.e. the hire of a sound studio, ADR, or special effects facilities would need to be incurred by the group, however. Technical resources, camera, basic sound equipment and editing facilities are available from the college at times to be negotiated with the unit tutor and technical resources department. Note:   * each group is allocated 4 days filming and 5 days editing * the films are shot in July/ August * there is no provision from the wardrobe department for this project * there is no use of construction workshops.   The written component of the work will comprise research essay based on a topic/issue relevant to the artefact (the film) which will demonstrate sustained written argument.  *OR*   1. A portfolio comprising the following elements which together add up to the equivalent of 12,000 words:  * case Study of 3,000 words. An example could be a study of a specific director who is of particular interest to you and whose work you have drawn on during the course. (20%) * reflective essay of 3.000 words which focuses of your work on the show reel (20%) * piece of extended research of 6,000 words on a relevant topic of your choice (60%).   *OR*   1. a dissertation of 12,000 words on a relevant research topic of your choice (100%). | | |
| **Assessment Notes** | | |
| * You must achieve a pass in all the above elements of assessment to pass the unit. * This unit contributes 34% to the mark for the MA degree. | | |
| **Assessment Criteria** | | |
| * Sustained, independent written argument. * Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit. * Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues. * Intellectual engagement. * Understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship.   For the Sustained Independent Project (SIP), other criteria from the M Framework may be added for assessment as appropriate for the individual course and would then be assessed. For example, “taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately” might be appropriate. | | |

# **READING LIST**

**TECHNIQUES FOR ACTING ON SCREEN**

**Key Texts**

Brennan, A (2016) The Energetic Performer, Singing Dragon.

Chamberlain, F. (2003) *Michael Chekhov,* Routledge

Chekhov, M. (1993) *On the Technique of Acting*, Harper Resource

Churcher, M. (2004) *Acting on Camera: Truth in 24 Seconds*, London Virgin.

Linklater, K (1994 ) Freeing the Natural Voice. Nick Hern

Merlin, B. (2008) *The Stanislavski Toolkit,* Nick Hern

**Suggested Reading**

Alfreds, M (2011) *Different Every Night*. Nick Hern.

Abbott, J (2012) *The Acting Book*. Nick Hern.

Abbott, Leslie (1993) *Acting for Film and TV*, Belmont, Star Publishing.

Barr, Tony (1997) Ac*ting for the Camera*, New York, HarperCollins.

Baron, C & Carnicke, S **Reframing Screen Performance**

Benedetti, R (2000) *Action! Acting for Film and Television Needham Heights*, Allyn & Bacon.

Blair, R (2008) *The Actor, Image and Action*. Routledge

Boston, J & Cook R (2009)(Ed) *Breath in Action*. Jessica Kingsley.

Brestoff, R (1994) *The Camera Smart Actor*, Smith and Kraus.

Caine, M (1997) *Acting in Film*, New York, Applause Theatre Books.

Carlson, S (1999) *Hitting Your Mark*, Studio, Michael Wiese Productions.

Ewan, V & Sagousky K,(2019) A Movement Handbook for Actors.

Houseman, B (2008) *Tackling Text & Subtext*. Nick Hern.

Kemo, R (2012) Embodied Acting. Routledge

Linklater, K (1976) *Freeing the Natural Voice*. Nick Hern.

Mamet, D. (1999) *True or False*, Faber and Fabere Body Speaks. Methuen.

McGraw, D (2018) Training the Actor’s Body. Bloomsbury

Merlin, B (2016) *Facing the Fear*. Nick Hern

Moseley, N (2016) *Actioning*. Nick Hern.

Morris, E (2017) Rhythm in Actin and Performance. Bloomsbury

Pomerance, M. **Riddles of Cinematic Performance by Murray Pomerance**. It's a very insightful detailed analysis of actor performance with the main focus on action and gesture.

Rosenblum, R & Karen, R **When The Shooting Stops The Cutting Begins A Film Editor's Story**

Rushe, S (2019) Michael Chekhov’e Acting Technique. Methuen / Bloomsbury

Sharpe, E & Haydn Roles, J (2009) How to do Accents . Methuen

Thompson, David **How To Watch A Movie**

Tucker, P . (2002 ) The Secrets of Screen Acting

Weston, J.(1996) *Directing Actors*, Michael Wiese.

Zarilli, P. (1995) *Acting (Re)Considered A Theoretical and Practical Guide*, Routledge.

Zinder, D. (2002) *Body Voice Imagination: A Training for the Actor*, Theatre Arts Books.

Voice work Reading List

Essential Lessac: Honoring the Familiar in Body, Mind, Spirit – 19 Jan. 2014 by Arthur Lessac, Deborah Kinghorn – *simple, easy to read, first approach to voice.*

**The Use and Training of the Human Voice:** A Bio-Dynamic Approach to Vocal Life Paperback – 16 Nov. 1996 by Arthur Lessac – *deepening the student*’*s understanding of the Lessac Voice Practice.*

**Anatomy of Voice: How to Enhance and Project Your Best** Voice by Blandine Calais-Germain and François Germain | 28 Jan 2016 – *an excellent visual resource of the voice.*

**Training the Speaking Voice** by Pamela Anderson Lee and Virgil A. Anderson | 1 Mar 1977 – *more traditional, but an excellent complete vocal training resource.*

**Finding Your Voice: A Complete Voice Training Manual for Actors** (Nick Hern Books) by Barbara Houseman | 25 Jul 2002 – *contemporary*, *simple, easy to read.*

**The Voice Book: For Actors, Public Speakers and Everyone Who Wants to Make the Most of Their Voice** by Michael Mccallion | 16 Nov 1998 *- more traditional, but an excellent vocal training resource.*

**The Need for Words** (Performance Books) by Patsy Rodenburg | 22 Feb 2018 - *excellent resource for text-work*

Secondary Sources

**The Vocal Arts Workbook : A Practical Course for Developing the Expressive Range of Your Voice** by David Carey , Rebecca Clark Carey, et al. | 31 Mar 2008 *– simple exercises to apply for the voice.*

**This is a Voice: 99 exercises to train, project and harness the power of your voice** – 23 Aug. 2018 by Jeremy Fisher, Gillyanne Kayes *– simple exercises to apply for the voice.*

**CRITICAL CONTEXTS: SCREEN STUDY**

**Key Texts**

There is suggested reading for each week as suggested below.

**Week 2.**

Allen, R. C. and Gomery, D. (1993) *Film history: theory and practice. 1*. ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Thompson, K. and Bordwell, D. (2010) *Film history: an introduction*. International ed., 3rd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Burgess, J. and Green, J. (2015) *YouTube: online video and participatory culture*. Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity

**Week 3**

Bordwell, D. and Thompson, K. (2013) *Film art: an introduction*. 10th ed. New York, N.Y: McGraw-Hill.

Stam, R. (2000) *Film theory: an introduction*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell.

Hall, Stuart. (2017) *The fateful triangle*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University press.

Hall, Stuart. (2013) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices (Culture, Media and Identities series)*, Second Edition edn., : SAGE Publications.

Hooks, Bell. (2006) *Outlaw Culture*, First Edition edn., : Routledge .

Said, Edward. (2003) *Orientalism*, The 25th Anniversary Edition edn., Penguin Modern Classics.

**Week 4**

Martin, A. (2014) *Mise en scène and film style: from classical Hollywood to new media art*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan (Palgrave Close Readings in Film and Television).

**Week 5**

Rowne, N. (ed.) (1998) *Refiguring American film genres: history and theory*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nelmes, J. (ed.) (2012) *Introduction to film studies*. 5th ed. Oxon ; New York: Routledge.

Bordwell, D., Staiger, J. and Thompson, K. (2006) *The classical Hollywood cinema: film style & mode of production to 1960*. London: Routledge.

Hill, J. (1986) *Sex, class, and realism: British cinema, 1956-1963*. London: BFI Pub.

**Week 6**

Chatman, S. (2000) *Story and discourse: narrative structure in fiction and film*. paperback printing [reprint]. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Pr.

*Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 4th ed (1992). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bal, M. and Boheemen, C. van (2009) *Narratology: introduction to the theory of narrative*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Fabe, M. (2014) *Closely watched films: an introduction to the art of narrative film technique*.

**Week 7**

Gibbs, J. (2002) *Mise-en-scène: film style and interpretation*. London: Wallflower Press (Short cuts, 10).

Hope, T. and Kaufman, A. (2014) *Hope for film: from the frontline of the independent cinema revolutions*. Berkeley: Soft Skull Press, An imprint of Counterpoint.

Holm, D. K. (2007) *Independent cinema*. Harpenden: Kamera.

King, G. (2005) *American independent cinema*. London: Tauris.

**Week 8**

Stafford, R. (2007) *Understanding Audiences and the Film Industry*. London: British Film Institute (Understanding the moving image).

Jancovich, M., Faire, L. and Stubbings, S. (2003) *The place of the audience: cultural geographies of film consumption*. London: British Film Institute.

**Week 9**

Curtin, M., Holt, J. and Sanson, K. (eds) (2014) *Distribution revolution: conversations about the digital future of film and television*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.

**Week 10**

Elsaesser, T. and Hagener, M. (2010) *Film theory: an introduction through the senses*. New York: Routledge.

Biltereyst, D. and Vande Winkel, R. (eds) (2013) *Silencing cinema: film censorship around the world*. New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan (Global cinema series).

Dennison, S. (ed.) (2006) *Remapping world cinema: identity, culture and politics in film*. London: Wallflower.

Nagib, L. (ed.) (2012) *Theorizing world cinema*. London: I.B. Tauris (Tauris World Cinema Series).

Weissenborn, U. (1998) *‘Just making pictures’: Hollywood writers, the Frankfurt School, and film theory*. Tübingen: G. Narr (Mannheimer Beiträge zur Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft, Bd. 36).

**Presentation Preparation Weeks**

Rhodes, Mark. (2018) *How To Present To Absolutely Anyone: Confident Public Speaking and Presenting in Every Situtation*, Capstone.

**Supplementary Reading**.

Dancyger, K. (2011) *The technique of film and video editing: history, theory, and practice*. 5th ed. New York: Focal Press.

Murch, W. (2001) *In the blink of an eye: a perspective on film editing*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

Corrigan, T. and White, P. (2011) *The film experience: an introduction*. Boston: Bedford/St.Martins.

Elert, N. V., Vasudevan, A. and Shrimpton, L. (eds) (1997) *International dictionary of films and filmmakers*. 3rd ed. Detroit: St. James Press.

Jenkins, H. (2008) *Convergence culture: where old and new media collide*. Updated and with a new afterword. New York, NY: New York Univ. Press.

Kilbourn, R. J. A. (2010) *Cinema, memory, modernity: the representation of memory from the art film to transnational cinema*. New York: Routledge.

**Suggested Viewing**

TV Series:

(2015) *Mad Men*, Lions Gate Home Entertainment.

(2012) *Humsafar*, Hum TV.

(2019) When they see us. Netflix

Films:

*Black*, Bhansali Productions. (2005)

*The Salesman*, Memento Films Production, Asghar Farhadi Production, Arte France Cinéma. (2016)

The Koker Trilogy: Abbas Kiarostami (Director)

Where is the Friends Home? (1987)

And Life Goes on (1992)

Through the Olive Trees (1994)

**Capernaum (2018)** and **Caramel (2007)**. Both directed by Nadine Labaki.

**Swimming Pool (2003)** directed by Francois Ozon

**45 years (2015)** directed by Andrew Haigh

**The Blonde One (2019)** directed by Marco Berger.

**The Lunch Box (2013)** directed by Ritesh Batra

**Jules and Jim (1962)** directed by Francois Truffaut.

Phantom Thread ( 2017) directed by Paul Thomas Anderson

Small Axe directed by Steve Mc Queen

Moonlight directed by Barry Jenkins

Black Klansmen directed by Spike Lee

One Night in Miami directed by Regina King

Belle directed by Amma Asante

Parasite directed by Bong Joon - Ho

The Farewell directed by Lulu Wang

Nomadland directed by Chloe Zhao

PRACTICES: ACTING FOR SCREEN

**Key Texts / Supportive Reading.**

Leigh, M & Raphael, A. (2008) *Mike Leigh on Mike Leigh* Faber and Faber

Levy, F. (2004) *Short film:101* Perigee Books

Please see the key texts for Unit 1: Techniques for Acting on Screen.

The supportive reading is selected according to the nature of the project.

**SUSTAINED INDEPENDENT PROJECT**

**Key Texts/ Supportive reading**

The key texts and supportive reading will be entirely dependent upon your choice of subject matter. It is expected that you will use texts and resources referred to earlier in the course as well as material new to you at this point in the programme.