

Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	BA (Hons) Acting
Teaching Institution	University Centre Leeds, Leeds City College
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU validation	May 2021
Date of latest OU (re)validation	
Next revalidation	
Credit points for the award	120
UCAS Code	W411
HECoS Code	100067
LDCS Code (FE Colleges)	
Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.	Sept 2021
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement Dance, Drama and Performance 2019
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.	Spotlight The Actors Guild Equity
Professional/statutory recognition	N/A

For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.	N/A
Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship	FT and PT
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	1 year and 2 years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	N/A

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 student module guide(s) and the students handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

- Provide a comprehensive and challenging vocational programme in Acting which facilitate access and progression for a wide range of students from diverse backgrounds into various creative industry contexts.
- Offer a robust BA (Hons) programme that is relevant to current practice in the performing arts industries, that will support students to progress onto their chosen trajectory
- Develop students with a range of practical skills pertinent to contemporary practice
- Produce graduates who have both subject specific skills (expressive, creative, technical) and transferable skills (communication, teamwork, project management) which are key to being employable within the performance industries

- Produce graduates with entrepreneurial ability relevant to the performance industries
- Produce graduates who have an understanding of acting in the wider social and cultural environment

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

N/A

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60-credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

N/A

2.4 List of all exit awards

BA (Hons) Acting - 120 Credits
 BA Acting - 60 credits from Actor Specialism, Professional Performance, Community Practice, The Radical Actor, Personal Project

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes
 (The structure for any part-time delivery should be presented separately in this section.)

[Please insert here title(s) of exit award(s) at Level 5, if applicable]

<u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 6</u>					
Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable?	Semester runs in
Actor Specialism	20			Yes	1&2
Professional Performance	40			No	1&2
Community Practice	20			Yes	1
The Radical Actor	20			Yes	1
Personal Project	20			Yes	2

Full - time structure:

Students will have 24 hours per week delivery which includes 6 hours supervised rehearsal time.

	Practical	Practical	Academic	WRL
Semester 1	Actor Specialism (20 Credits)	Professional Performance (40 Credits)	The Radical Actor (20 Credits)	Community Practice (20 Credits)

Semester 2			Personal Project (20 Credits)	

Part - time structure:

Students will have 12 hours per week delivery. Part time students will attend sessions with full-time students.

Year 1	Practical	Practical	Academic	WRL
Semester 1	Actor Specialism (20 Credits)		The Radical Actor (20 Credits)	Community Practice (20 Credits)
Semester 2				

Year 2	Practical	Practical	Academic	WRL
Semester 1		Professional Performance (40 Credits)		
Semester 2			Personal Project (20 Credits)	

Intended learning outcomes at Level 6 are listed below:

<u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6</u>	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>A1. Evaluate theories and debates pertinent to contemporary acting practice</p> <p>A2. Critically explore issues in the performing arts industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an emphasis towards critically underpinned practical workshop learning, which underpins both contextual and industry relevant topics • The lecture programme and skills-based delivery will impart the necessary high-level principles and concepts • The seminars will be a mixture of student and tutor led sessions considering practical examples of the principles and concepts introduced in the lecture programme • Tutor and peer led reflective feedback form the basis of student learning programmes in the form of personal and professional action planning • Tutorials will take the form of individual support and feedback for student guidance • Opportunities will be provided to work within the creative industries using our strong links with working professionals and industry partners

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>B1. Critically analyse a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks to inform own practice</p> <p>B2. Demonstrate experimental and innovative practice through an openness to new approaches to acting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above

B3. Employ specialist working methodologies to resolve problems and complexities in acting practices	
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3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
C1. Act autonomously with limited supervision or direction C2. Use complex and developmental processes to produce technically excellent practical work C3. Operate to professional standards in a range of acting contexts C4. Employ specialist acting techniques to communicate effectively with a range of audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
D1. Demonstrate both employment potential and ability to manage future professional development in the performing arts industry. D2. Communicate professionally in a range of contexts D3. Reflect on and evaluate own performance to inform future personal and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above

BA(Hons) Acting

4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
 - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
 - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
 - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
 - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
 - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
 - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

The course is driven by the reality of being an actor in the real world, and is therefore driven by real industry opportunities. The course structure has been developed with local theatres and production companies as well as freelancers and the department's patrons who are prominent figures and specialists in various areas of the performance industries and as such the curriculum has been designed to move with current industry requirements. Unlike other courses that teach within a solely academic environment, from the start of the course students will be given opportunities to work with the local community and acting/production agencies that include The Playhouse, Slung Low, Red Ladder, Blah Blah Blah and Paper Birds. These links are keen to be involved with creating module briefs and providing opportunities for placements and workplace opportunities within the Community Practice module.

The Actor Specialism module has been specifically designed to reflect contemporary acting practices that have included input from industry professionals and this module will run throughout the year allowing the students to develop their sense of self and strengthen and take control of their career trajectory. As part of the assessment strategy, in semester 2 of this module students will then work towards creating a digital profile for the industry-wide recognised casting platform Spotlight.

- A complete suite of modules that enables the student to choose pathways to enable their skill development and career trajectory
- A comprehensive support system from a range of Industry professionals whilst in training.
- Employment opportunities are cultivated whilst in training for students to further pursue after graduation.
- A continued focus on Health and Wellbeing embedded through the entire course. Supporting our students' with mental health survival techniques for self-employment and industry critique.

- A rich and wide range of skills and areas of development provided through the design of the modules.
- A strong focus on employability and industry engagement throughout the year in preparation for the first year of employment after graduation.
- A close and dynamic relationship with local and national industry agencies, giving the students a 'foot up' in their first year of work by being familiar with potential employers.
- A Practical approach to level 6 training with a strong focus on the skills required for the workplace.
- Opportunities within the Community Practice module to gain experience in workshop delivery by supporting staff to deliver at level 4.
- Opportunities to engage with local practitioners and companies to enable networking strategies and professional relations.
- Personal introductions to industry professionals and potential future employers.
- A full-time practical timetable allowing students to be 'fit for work' and ready for the pressures of working in the industry.
- A strong focus on the 'sense of self' and 'own identity' will be constant throughout all modules. The student will emerge as a bespoke performer and not the product of a specific school, thus supporting the student to enter the industry with confidence in their performance skills and own creativity.
- A close relationship with other BA (Hons) students from across our HE Creative Arts provisions, enabling future collaborative projects after graduation.
- Work experience opportunities supported and provided by our course patrons and lecturers in the areas of TV/Film, radio, Animation and Theatre.

5. Support for students and their learning.

(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)

At the University Centre there is a HE Welfare and Student Engagement Officer and HE Counselling and Mental Health Officer. Both roles support student welfare and offer support including counselling, well-being and financial advice. There is also a Learning Support Officer who can assist students in their applications for DSA and provide one to one support with specific learning needs. A subject specific Academic Librarian also works within the HE library where there is an extensive range of learning resources. Students are supported by the Academic Librarian who can support students one to one with specific study skills requirements and who also provides bespoke study skills sessions for student groups.

Students are also offered pastoral support (1 hour per week) to assist their transition to Level 6, this includes one to one tutorials and also group tutorials on broader support topics such as time management, stress management, mental health and wellbeing. Students are supported through the design of the curriculum to become increasingly

autonomous and critical in preparation for the Personal Project. Throughout semester one students are invited to become increasingly critically aware, through their practical development in the Actor Specialism and through exploring theoretical debates in the Radical Actor module, of the symbiotic relationship between practice, theory and culture. Throughout Actor Specialism students are supported to develop the curriculum in response to their personal interests and aspirational career trajectories. This along with the development of their research and academic writing skills within The Radical Actor will support them to undertake the Personal Project module, and move towards being more independent practitioners.

All students have a personal tutor throughout their studies, this tutor supports the student pastorally and will also review their personal development plans throughout the programme. A supervisor system will be adopted to support and monitor the Personal Performance module to support and monitor student progress.

Students' professional and academic skills will be supported through a high number of contact hours, the full-time timetable will consist of 24 hours face to face delivery per week in order to create graduates that have a good work ethos and are well trained practitioners. They will be expected to conduct public facing performances at key points throughout the year to build confidence and to prepare them for the expectations of final performances and working with audiences beyond the programme. Student wellbeing, mental health and fitness is also supported through regular workshops weaved into timetables such as yoga, mindfulness and fitness sessions.

The location of the new Mabgate campus in the Cultural Quarter of Leeds provides opportunities for students to engage with the surrounding creative businesses. The department has fostered excellent links with Leeds performance institutions to support professional practice and to embed students into the acting community. Visiting lecturers support the breadth of techniques delivered and bring specialist industry experience to support students to engage with and understand the mechanics of a complex sector.

The Creative Arts Network Google Classroom supports students in finding collaboration opportunities within the department and promotes networking events that are arranged by the department for students from different disciplines to meet and interact with each other.

A robust communications system functions to give students access to lecturers and management; this includes e-mail, google hangouts and classrooms and all students previously studying at Foundation Degree level will have received a device to support them in using these platforms at home and in the University Centre to aid their studies, similarly, new students not progressing from the institution, on the level 6 programme will also receive a device. All necessary information about the programme is provided by means of the course handbook, module handbooks and the VLE which they can access easily using their device. Additional to this, technical services provide a check out service, so students have access to a range of high-quality equipment such as mac devices, laptops, iPads and pens, course specific equipment and bookable rooms and

studios. Equipment can be loaned and used out of opening hours to aid students to further their technical skills and become more autonomous when working on projects.

The facilities at Quarry Hill campus are open from 9am-9pm and students are encouraged to use them out of programme hours to utilise available resources and continue project work. The department technicians are available to support students in the studios with technical skills for individual projects and when working on group rehearsals and performances.

6. Criteria for admission

A typical offer is likely to be pass at Foundation Degree or a Merit profile in a relevant HND.

All external applicants are required to audition and meet the Audition Criteria to ensure the student has the requisite practical skills for the programme.

International qualifications will be assessed against these criteria. Speakers of other languages will need to possess an IELTS band score of 6.0 (with no-less than 5.5 in any one element).

We welcome applications from candidates who may not precisely match the academic criteria, but can demonstrate experience in their chosen field. Candidates in this category will be auditioned to assess their suitability for the course and asked to provide a portfolio of evidence to support their application. The course structure actively supports claims for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

7. Language of study

English

8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

N/A

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).
(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)

N/A

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

In addition to the Annual Programme Monitoring process the following mechanisms are in operation:

Peer Review

- Annual Planning
- Peer Observation
- Student module reviews
- Tutor module reviews
- Enrolment and induction reviews
- Course Committee meetings
- Pathway Committee meeting
- Student Pathway meetings

10. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

N/A

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Curriculum mapping against the apprenticeship standard or framework (delete if not required.)

Annexe 3: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level part	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes											
		A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4	D1	D2	D3
6	Actor Specialism			X	X		X	X			X		
	Professional Performance		X			X		X	X	X			X
	Community Practice	X				X			X		X	X	
	The Radical Actor		X	X						X			X
	Personal Project	X		X	X		X					X	

Annexe 1.2: Map of Teaching and Learning Methods

Level 6

	Lectures	Seminars	Tutorials	Practical	Independent research	Workshops
Actor Specialism	X	X		X	X	
Professional Performance	X	X		X		
Community Practice		X	X	X	X	X
The Radical Actor		X		X	X	X
Personal Project	X	X				X

Annexe 1.3: Map of Assessment Methods

Level 6

	Reflective Log	Workshop	Reflection	Performance	Presentation	Digital Assignment	Essay
Actor Specialism					X	X	
Professional Performance	X			X			
Community Practice		X	X				
The Radical Actor					X		X
Personal Project				X	X		