

**ROYAL WELSH COLLEGE
OF MUSIC & DRAMA
COLEG BRENHINOL
CERDD A DRAMA CYMRU**

**BA (Hons) Acting
Course Overview
3 Year Programme**

This course overview provides a summary of the BA (Hons) Acting programme as offered from September 2011. Please note that whilst the information reflects the programme offered to date, it may be subject to amendment and change in future years.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Acting Skills 30 credits	Shakespeare 20 credits	Comedy of Manners 10 credits
Vocal Skills 20 credits	New Forms 10 credits	Public Performance 1 20 credits
Movement Skills 20 credits	Acting for Screen & Radio 10 credits	Public Performance 2 20 credits
Singing 10 credits	Vocal Skills 20 credits	Public Performance 3 20 credits
Acting for Screen 10 credits	Movement Skills 20 credits	Public Performance 4 20 credits
Contextual & Professional Studies 10 credits	Singing 10 credits	Public Performance 5 20 credits
End of Year Assessment 20 credits	Contextual & Professional Studies 10 credits	Contextual & Professional Studies 10 credits
	End of Year Assessment 20 credits	

**Year 1
Acting Skills**
Credits: 30

The module has three components:

1) Improvisation and Mask work

Assessment: 33% Coursework

An exploration of the challenges, opportunities and imperatives offered through improvised and spontaneous performance and their relevance and application when dealing with text. Building on the work undertaken through improvisation, the connection between actors will be examined further through the negotiation and collaboration implicit in the use of masks.

2) Building a Character

Assessment: 33% Coursework

A sequence of practical classes and rehearsals which present the work which is required of an actor in the creation of a believable and dynamic character from the words, imperatives and ideas derived from a given play text.

3) Relationships

Assessment: 33% Coursework

A series of practical classes and rehearsals will show the need for actors to develop working methods which are integral to, and contribute towards, the common purpose of creating the world of the play. This will include a detailed consideration of relationships found within the play – between actors and the characters they inhabit, the characters themselves and the relationship between actor and audience.

Vocal Skills

Credits: 20

The module has two components:

1) Voice, Speech and Text

Assessment: 70% Coursework

Class room work will provide a thorough introduction to voice and text work. Initially focus will be on removing unhelpful physical habits and establishing healthy and effective vocal use. This is explored and applied through work on a variety of texts the main focus of which is to explore, appreciate and enjoy language - usually leading to a presentation of a piece of text in the middle of the year. At the end of the year students are given a performance opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have developed.

2) Voice and Movement

Assessment: 30% Presentation

Students are asked to devise and perform an integrated voice and movement presentation based on a given text to an audience of examiners.

Movement Skills

Credits: 20

The module has four components:

1) Movement

Assessment: 70% Coursework

Practical classes will investigate the student's personal resources for free and expressive movement and how to employ them effectively in theatrical communication. Students will explore and develop an understanding of the importance of a physical approach to the training and life of an actor.

2) Voice and Movement

Assessment: 30% Presentation

Students are asked to devise and perform an integrated voice and movement presentation based on a given text.

3) Alexander Technique

Assessment: Pass/Fail

A series of sessions introducing students to the Alexander Technique which teaches us to be aware of our alignment and improves posture, coordination, vocal quality and breathing as unnecessary tension is released.

4) Combat

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Classes will develop the student's knowledge and skill in stage combat techniques, including fencing and unarmed combat, in preparation for the Academy of Performance Combat's proficiency examinations.

Singing

Credits: 10

Assessment: 100% Coursework

Singing technique, appropriate use of breath and the structure of sound and musicianship will be taught. Students will be given the opportunity to integrate basic singing technique through group and chorus work.

Acting for Screen

Credits: 10

Assessment: 100% Coursework

Students are asked to respond to a variety of working environments familiar within the television and film industry. These will include audition and casting sessions, pressurised and time sensitive shooting, the devising and adapting of scripts and filming short scenes on location.

Contextual & Professional Studies

Credits: 10

This module has three components:

1) Introduction to Professional Studies

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Students will be asked to consider the role of contemporary actors in the light of both public and professional expectations and perceptions. Later seminars will centre around current industry practice and protocol in the theatre and recorded media industry.

2) Contextual Studies

Assessment: 100% Class Work

A series of seminars will explore a number of theatre practitioners and theorists whose work has significantly changed existing theatrical and dramatic forms, conventions and practice. The emphasis is on 'active learning' with students taking responsibility for solo and small group research projects which are then presented to the rest of the group.

3) Sight Reading

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Classes are designed to improve the particular skill of 'sight reading' - whereby an actor can swiftly assimilate the context, form and meaning from a dramatic text and thereby produce a characterisation which is fully realised.

End of Year Assessment

Credits: 20

Assessment: 100% Performance

Students undertake research, rehearsal and production of a self-generated performance that makes full use of the training undertaken in the first year of training, culminating in a performance.

Year 2

Shakespeare

Credits: 20

The module has two components:

1) Introduction to Shakespeare

Assessment: 50% Coursework

A series of group classes, observed scene work and calls where the context of the plays, the means of analysing and realising the text, and the relationships to other acting methodologies are explored. This will lead to the rehearsal and performance of a selection of scenes and speeches.

2) Performing Shakespeare

Assessment: 50% Coursework

A series of classes modelled around the rehearsal process of an Elizabethan or Jacobean play where the techniques explored in the "Introducing Shakespeare" component are further developed with particular emphasis on the realisation of a play and role leading to a final presentation of a cut version of the work.

New Forms

Credits: 10

Assessment: 100% Coursework

Classes and rehearsals will explore and challenge contemporary attitudes and conventionality through the physical realisation of both existing and original dialogue. Emphasis is placed on investigating the expressive potential of body, breath, emotional and rational content. Through the framework of a 'performance montage' - a fusion of circus, text, sound, music and visual arts - performers are encouraged to negotiate and collaborate towards the realisation of a final presentation to an invited audience

Acting for Screen & Radio

Credits: 10

The module has two components:

1) Acting for Screen

Assessment: 100% Coursework

A concentrated series of practical classes is followed by the realisation of a short film or scenes in which the skills acquired through Acting for Screen in year 1 are tested under conditions which are reflective of normal industry practice.

2) Acting for Radio

Assessment: 50% Radio Project & 50% Coursework

Classes begin with an introduction to the fundamental skills required for performing on radio - through critical analysis of professional radio broadcasts and practical experimentation in the studio. Using text and improvisation, the student becomes aware of the characteristics of his/her own voice and goes on to discover its infinite potential. Aspects covered in this module include the actor's microphone technique, solo work, ensemble work, preparation of texts, good studio practice, lifting the text from the page, truthful delivery and creating character and mood.

Vocal Skills

Credits: 20

1) Voice/Speech/Text

Assessment: 70% Coursework

Students will consolidate and extend the work covered in year 1. Initial focus will be on increasing skill and muscularity particularly with reference to using the voice in a range of different spaces and media as well as work on accent and dialect acquisition. The student will also develop their understanding of the semantic and sensory structures contained in text. As the year progresses students will encounter increasingly demanding texts.

2) Voice and Movement

Assessment: 30% Presentation

This is a performance opportunity presented to an audience of examiners requiring the students to demonstrate competence in vocal and movement skills at a standard equal to the particular stage of his/her training.

Movement

Credits: 20

This module has four components:

1) Movement Skills

Assessment: 70% Coursework

Students will explore and experience different movement styles, learning dance sequences at rising levels of intricacy and speed. Analysis of the dances' stylistic components whilst setting them in their historical and cultural context. Further exploration into building a character using the physical theatre genre.

2) Voice and Movement Assessment

Assessment: 30% Presentation

Students are asked to devise and perform an integrated voice and movement presentation based on a given text.

3) Combat

Assessment: Pass/Fail

A series of practical classes to further develop the student's knowledge and skill in stage combat techniques including fencing and unarmed combat, culminating in the higher level examinations of the Academy of Performance Combat.

4) Alexander Technique

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Building on the work undertaken in years 1 and 2 students continue to develop this awareness, learning to apply the principles of the technique in class in a more precise and detailed way.

Singing

Credits: 10

This module has two components:

1) Singing

Assessment: 100% Coursework

Individual sessions will seek to consolidate and strengthen the work undertaken in year 1 whilst developing an individual repertoire through appropriate use of technique and an understanding of the particular performance demands made by musical theatre.

2) Acting Through Song

Assessment: 100% Coursework

Student explores Musical Theatre. Students gain an insight into how the musical developed through the work of composers, lyricists, choreographers, directors and performers.

Contextual & Professional Studies

Credits: 10

The module has three components:

1) Contextual Studies

Assessment: 50% Coursework

Building on the previous year's work, students will be invited to explore further the theatre practitioners and theorists whose work has significantly changed existing theatrical and dramatic forms, conventions and practice. In particular, the emphasis is on 'active learning' with students taking responsibility for solo and small group research projects which are then presented to the rest of the group.

2) Text Analysis

Assessment: 50% Coursework

This component is taught primarily through group readings and discussions of 20th Century plays. The primary aim is to give students greater confidence in handling text by developing their understanding of how playscripts are constructed and extending their appreciation of the concept of authorial intent. The module also seeks to broaden the student's exposure to the dramatic canon by exposing them to plays which have significance in the development of modern drama, improve their sight reading skills through script in hand performances within the classroom and give a broad context to the history, geography, sociology and politics of the plays presented.

3) Audition Technique

Assessment: Pass/Fail

This component is designed to offers students the appropriate strategies, techniques and overview of the audition processes they are likely to encounter in theatre, television, film and radio. Students will be asked to take part in audition(s) held by a professional casting director(s).

End of Year Assessment

Credit: 20

Assessment: 100% Performance

Students undertake research, rehearsal and production of a self - generated performance that makes full use of the training undertaken, culminating in a performance in front of audience.

Year 3

Comedy of Manners

Credits: 10

Assessment: 100% Performance

Through practical classes and rehearsals which are intended to make clear the specific demands made upon the actor by modern and/or period comedy with particular regard to the social conventions for the period under study and the influence of class and gender.

Public Performance 1 - 5

Credits: 20 each

Students are given the opportunity to assimilate, develop and integrate skills acquired in year 1 and 2 - through rehearsal and performance under professional working conditions

Through undertaking five consecutive performance modules - each of which entailing the rehearsal and performance of a full length play in front of a public audience - students will encounter a variety of roles, styles and venues through which their readiness for professional work may be tested and subjected to exacting critical scrutiny.

The production programme for last year:

Summerfolk by Maxim Gorky (Translated by Nick Dear)

Mammals by Amelia Bulmore

Pornography by Simon Stephens

Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen (Translated by Brian Friel)

Hitchcock Blonde by Terry Johnson

Festen (A Dramatisation by David Eldridge, based on the Dogme film)

The Odd Couple by Neil Simon

Pride And Prejudice by Jane Austen (Adapted by Simon Reade)

In The Blood by Suzan-Lori Parks

Mary Stuart by Friedrich Schiller (Adapted by Peter Schiller)

The Sea by Edward Bond

The Stone by Marius Von Mayenburg (Translated by Maja Zade)

King Lear

Contextual and Professional Studies

Credits: 10

This module has two components:

1) Final Showcase Preparation

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Students will take part in a Showcase presentation which takes place in, Cardiff and London.

2) Audition Technique

Assessment: Pass/Fail

Students will be asked to take part in audition(s) and/or master classes taken by professional directors, casting directors and agents - which offer practical experience of different.