

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Drama and Theatre Studies**. For Joint and Combined Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2008**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in Drama and Theatre Studies are to

- encourage lifelong intellectual enquiry into the functions and operations of theatre and related performing arts;
- set up conditions in which the relationships between theory and practice may be tested;
- offer courses in which teaching of both theory and practice is directly informed by research activity and expertise, so as to ensure a lively learning experience for students which draws on a wide range of historical periods and cultural models;
- create an environment in which the capacity for both collaborative work and individual study are developed in the students, which is best suited to their talents and the demands of the learning process;
- promote communication skills, intellectual discipline, imaginative thinking and effective time management;
- produce graduates who have the confidence to apply both creative and conceptual skills to the arts of performance and communication;
- provide students with the skills necessary to make the most of career-specific training, to enter the world of work, to embark on research and publication, or to further develop their artistic expression.

Programmes are delivered in three stages normally lasting three years, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The exception to this is the International Theatre (Australia) programme which includes one year of study in Australia between stages two and three.

Stage one is characterised by a fixed foundation that forms a basis on which students can then pursue their own specialisms and interests. It offers an opportunity for students with different levels of experience and understanding to broaden their base of intellectual and creative skills. All courses are compulsory and seek to provide a broadly based introduction to the subject. All students take courses in textual analysis, critical theory, introduction to practical and intellectual historiographical issues and are introduced to the wide range of activities and elements that may come under the discipline of performance. Single Honours students are also given an opportunity to consolidate and extend their theoretical and practical knowledge, through case studies of contemporary performance, courses in basic practical working and creative design issues, and further engagement with theoretical traditions. All students are introduced to important health and safety issues and have an opportunity to take courses introducing them to IT.

In stages two and three, Single Honours students choose courses to the value of four units, Combined Honours students to the value of three units, and Joint Honours students to the value of two units, from a wide range of half ($\frac{1}{2}$) and whole (1) unit courses offered by the Department (courses offered may vary from year to year). These feature a wide range of assessment methods and teaching/learning processes, and students are advised closely on their choices to ensure that their assessments are spread throughout the term. All courses feature traditional academic and practical elements.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- how meaning is constructed and conveyed through the medium of performance in those traditions or genres chosen for study;
- how dramatic forms and modes of staging relate to developments in culture and society;
- different histories, forms and traditions of activity that come under or are similar to the concept of theatre and performance, plus their relation to contemporary performance practice;
- the ways in which theatre, performance and related activities affect and are affected by their historical and cultural contexts;
- the different phenomenological dynamics offered by different kinds of theatrical event (e.g., cultural function, actor-audience configuration, etc.);
- the uses, values and dynamics of the creative processes and systems of production for making new work, including group work;
- the performance skills necessary to communicate with an audience and the debates about the value of live performance;
- the range of critical and philosophical debates that have been applied to, or arisen in response to, theatrical and performance activity, and how they interplay in the discipline;
- the interrelation of key components of performance (space, time, the voice, the body, etc.) in a range of forms;
- the different representational styles and systems in global and historical theatre forms;
- the applications of theatre and performance practices to other areas of social and cultural life;
- the work of some key practitioners and/or theorists, and their cultural and/or historical contexts;
- the significant sources and main research methods used to collect and analyse data within the discipline;
- how to find, analyse and apply appropriate knowledge, concepts and skills from other disciplines;
- the diversity of theatrical and paratheatrical activities across different periods and cultures;
- the fundamental elements of performance and stage production acquired in stage one, which is extended in stage two and three through the study of chosen specialisms to BA level.

Skills and other attributes

- applying critical perspectives to interpretation of performance;
- developing students' own practical and creative skills in projects within chosen areas such as acting, performing, designing, devising, directing, dramatherapy, movement, playwriting;
- describing, interpreting and evaluating performance texts and performance events from a range of critical perspectives;
- critically handling theatrical materials from different historical periods, understanding the relation between their own historical context and our own;

- reading the performance possibilities implied by a script or other documentary sources, then realising these in public performance;
- engaging in performance, based on an acquisition and understanding of appropriate performance vocabularies, skills, structures and working methods, through performance, choreography, writing, stage management, lighting, set and costume design, publicity, administration or set construction;
- engaging in independent research whether investigating past or present performances or as part of the process of creating new performance and creating an 'original' performance based on a knowledge of performance traditions and contexts;
- using performance techniques associated with identifiable cultural forms or practitioners;
- identifying and interpreting the cultural frameworks that surround and affect performance and upon which these events impinge;
- engaging with current debates on theatrical and cultural value and developing capacity to analyse and critically examine diverse forms of discourse and their effects on cultural representation
- assessing the merits of contrasting theatrical and philosophical theories;
- identifying questions and problems arising from theatrical materials, describing, interpreting and evaluating texts and performances;
- developing reasoned arguments, conducting independent research, critically judging and evaluating evidence, testing ideas through rigorous practice, taking responsibility for their own learning and developing habits of reflection on that learning;*
- developing critical, analytical, physical, creative and imaginative skills as shown through the realisation of practical research projects;*
- effective communication in a variety of oral, written, visual, digital and performance media;*
- awareness of interdisciplinary approaches to study and the capacity to engage with different theories or paradigms of knowledge;*
- developing ideas and constructing argument and the capacity to present them in appropriate ways;*
- understanding of group dynamics and an ability to work with them in practical contexts;*
- information retrieval skills, involving the ability to gather, evaluate, synthesise, organise and present material independently;*
- information technology skills such as word processing, e-mail, accessing electronic data, and using, where appropriate computer-aided design technology, and other multimedia-based performance-related software;*
- acquiring a range of valuable skills, including personal motivation, group working, time management, reflexive and independent thinking, ability to handle creative, personal and interpersonal issues, presentational skills, expressive confidence, self-awareness and self-management, empathy and insight, intellectual integrity, flexibility and adaptability, creativity, awareness of cultural, social, philosophical and political issues and an interest in lifelong learning.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, seminars, practical workshops, performance, fieldwork, group work and guided independent research. In addition, each student is assigned a personal adviser who is regularly available to give assistance to students who need help with particular key skills. Assessment is typically by essay writing, performance, creative writing, design, directing, devising, installations, continuous assessment, formal examination, performance analysis, seminar presentations and group work. Written feedback is given on all assessed work. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that the list of available optional courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department](#).

Single Honours Degree programmes and Joint Honours Degree programmes with Drama and Theatre Studies as an equal element:

Stage one:

Single Honours students must take

DT1000 Contemporary Theatremaking (½ unit) [pass required for all programmes]

DT1011 Writing and Performance (½ unit) [pass required for English/Drama]

DT1012 Staging Histories (½ unit)

DT1021 Critical Theories 1: Culture & Ideology (½ unit) [pass required for all programmes, except English/Drama]

DT1022 Critical Theories 2 Language and Identity (½ unit)

DT1030 Boundaries of Performance (½ unit)

DT1080 Space, Body, Design (1 unit)

- International Theatre (Australia) students also follow this curriculum.
- Joint Honours Drama/English students take only DT1000, DT1011, DT1012, DT1030 and also take two units in the English department.
- Joint Honours students in other combinations take only DT1000, DT1012, DT1021, DT1030 and also take courses adding up to the value of two units in their other department.
- Joint Honours (Drama and Creative Writing) students take CW1010 Introduction to Creative Writing (1 unit) and CW1020 Why Write? (1 unit) as the Creative Writing half of their degree.

Stage two:

Single Honours students must take

DT2740 Extended Essay (linked to PRP) (½ unit)

and choose one from a number of Performance Research Projects from the range DT2741–DT2746 (1 unit) offered each year,

and choose options equal to the value of 2½ units from a list of stage two and three courses offered by the [Department](#). This must be a half-unit course in the Spring Term, a full-unit course taught across two terms, and another full unit taught in the Spring Term.

- International Theatre (Australia) students also choose courses to the value of 4 units in stage two; however, they must take DT2140 or, if for some reason this course is not running, one of the other post-colonial theatre courses.
- Joint Honours (Drama/English) students take core courses DT2091 Shakespeare from Page to Stage (1 unit) and EN2320 Critical Theories: Language, Identity, Body, Space (1 unit), which constitute 2 units of their stage two complement. Students then take one further unit in the drama department, taught over two terms, and one in the English department.
- All other Joint Honours students, including Drama and Creative Writing, take the Performance Research Project and a single course unit taught in the Spring Term, in addition to two units taught in the other department.

Stage three/four:

Single Honours students must take

DT3950 Final Year Project (1 unit) which has three possible strands:

1. Dissertation
2. Group performance
3. Special study

and choose options equal to the value of 3 full units from a list of stage two and three courses offered by the Department.

- International Theatre (Australia) students complete their year abroad study at the University of Queensland, Brisbane; marks obtained there are converted to UK equivalents using a conversion chart supplied by Academic Development Services (Registry) at Royal Holloway and an average mark is then calculated. This average mark is entered as the final mark for DT3005 Australian Studies (1 unit), which, as a 13th unit, counts towards the final year average when the student's degree classification is calculated.

- Joint Honours (Drama/English) students take an interdisciplinary dissertation (DT3100), which may be supervised in either department, and a pathway (DT3302/3303/3304/3311). Students then take one further unit in the drama department and one in the English department. Students may choose a course taught in one term only, if they wish to concentrate on the dissertation in the other term.
- All other Joint Honours students, including Drama and Creative Writing, choose two units of drama, in addition to two units taught in the other department.

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Drama as a major component:

Stage one:

Students must take

DT1000 Contemporary Theatremaking (½ unit) [pass required]

DT1011 Writing and Performance (½ unit)

DT1012 Staging Histories (½ unit)

DT1021 Critical Theories 1: Culture & Ideology (½ unit) [pass required]

DT1022 Critical Theories 2 Language and Identity (½ unit)

DT1030 Boundaries of Performance (½ unit)

plus specified courses in the other subject.

Stage two:

Students must choose:

one from a number of Performance Research Projects from the range DT2741 –DT2746 (1 unit) offered each year,

and choose options equal to the value of 2 full units from a list of stage two and three courses offered by the Department,

plus specified courses in the other subject.

Stage three:

Stage three/four:

Single Honours students must take

DT3950 Final Year Project (1 unit), which has three possible strands:

1. Dissertation (one student only)

2. Group performance (4-8 students)

3. Special study (4-8 students)

and choose options equal to the value of 2 full units from a list of stage two and three courses offered by the Department,

plus specified courses in the other subject.

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Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass courses to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. In addition to this, in stage one this must include a pass in the following courses: DT1021 (Critical Theories I), DT1000 (Contemporary Theatremaking). Joint honours Drama/English students are required to pass DT1011 (Writing and Performance) in lieu of DT1021. Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three (a total of eight course units for three-year full-time students or nine units in the case of International Theatre (Australia) students. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

In addition, with effect from September 2010, all first year students on single, joint or combined honours programmes offered by the Department of English are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Certificates of Merit are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: *Conditions for progression to the next stage*) but fail

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to pass the Moodle-based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

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Student support and guidance

- Personal Advisers: All students are allocated a personal adviser who meets with them regularly through the programme. The adviser's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. Regular meetings are arranged through the programme, and advisers are available for consultations within office hours.
- Academic Co-ordinator oversees registration and curriculum issues. Course leaders, seminar leaders and departmental administrators provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All staff available via their e-mail addresses, which are published in the student handbook and are accessible through a dedicated office hours system.
- There are dedicated members of staff with particular responsibility for each of the joint programmes.
- Induction course during the first year.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service Liaison Officer. The department also arranges careers evenings, usually once a term, bringing in external speakers to advise on careers of particular interest to Drama graduates. A document directing students to members of staff with particular career advice expertise is available in the departmental office.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.

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Admission requirements

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from Drama degree programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions, while some have continued onto postgraduate studies. For further details, please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent, outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The Department of Drama and Theatre was ranked joint 9th in the top 10 universities in the country in terms of proportion of 3* and 4* research, with 75% of its research profile of 3* and 4* standard.

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List of programmes

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Drama and Theatre Studies are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statement in Dance, Drama and Performance describes the general features that one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Single Honours Degree programmes in Drama and Theatre Studies

BA Drama and Theatre Studies (W440)
BA International Theatre (Australia) (W423)

Joint Honours Degree programmes with Drama and Theatre Studies as an equal component

BA Classical Studies and Drama (QW84)
BA Drama and Creative Writing (WW48)
BA Drama and German (WR42)
BA Drama and Italian (WR43)
BA Drama and Music (WW43)
BA English and Drama (QW34)
BA French and Drama (RW14)
BA Drama and Philosophy (WV45)

Combined Honours Degree programme with Drama and Theatre Studies as a major component

BA Drama with Philosophy (W4V5)

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