

BA (Honours) Theatre and Performance Technology

Module Information

Year 1 - Programme Credit Structure

- Design and Construction Skills – 24 credits
- Essential Lighting – 24 credits
- Essential Sound – 12 credits
- Essential Stage Management – 24 credits
- The Context 1 – 12 credits
- Professional Development 1 – 12 credits
- Fundamental Skills – 12 credits

Design and Construction Skills

This module aims to introduce you to a wide range of design and construction skills and develop an understanding of the design, realisation and fabrication processes associated with live performance. You will also be introduced to the role that scenic construction plays within the whole production process.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- Develop, communicate and realise an idea following a given brief, distinguishing the appropriate methods and influences relevant for an effective concept.
- Work effectively within a group in the production of scenic elements with sensitivity, tact, enthusiasm, team spirit and appraise your role in the production process.
- Examine and develop a range of design, production and construction techniques and tools safely, competently and appropriately.
- Evaluate the production process in relation to workshop skills and the scenic workshop department.

Essential Lighting

This module will introduce you to the theory and practice of stage lighting, from design to rigging, first specifications to live show operation. It will encourage a critical, artistic and technical appreciation of the elements of a lighting design for live performance, and provide practical, technical experience and confidence for the production and performance environment. You will re-affirm your knowledge of safe working practice, and be introduced to the professional standards of work required to gain and maintain employment as a lighting technician or designer. You will develop an understanding of the different roles, modes of communication and responsibilities within a professional lighting team.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Appreciate and articulate how lighting is developed throughout the rehearsal and production process, and employed most effectively to communicate to an audience
- Question and implement current Health and Safety issues within the design and production of lighting for live performance.
- Discriminate and employ the technical, design and production tasks associated with lighting for live performance and the general skills and vocabulary such as designing, drafting, rigging, focusing, plotting and operating a lighting system.
- Communicate and express ideas and information articulately, creating the appropriate paperwork to present design ideas intelligently and intelligibly.
- Evaluate the roles within a lighting team and how they collaborate together and with other departments, examining their own performance.

Essential Sound

Essential Sound is a ground up introduction to the basic theories, skills and technologies used in theatre sound reinforcement and design. This will provide you with the opportunity to translate creative need into technological achievement and will equip them with a broad range of skills and understanding.

You will learn safe working practice and be introduced to the professional standards of work required to gain and maintain employment as a sound technician or designer as well as the different roles within a professional sound crew, their responsibilities and how they relate to each other. Standard processes and techniques will be examined as will the appropriate planning documentation required for a successful production. The module will introduce the various technical components of a sound reinforcement system and provide a clear set of methodologies for its design, implementation and optimisation.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Examine physical and acoustic principles in relation to live sound, recording and reproduction to develop a good theoretical knowledge
- Experiment with the recording, editing and playback of music, speech and FX using both analogue and digital systems to develop effective skills in sound reproduction.
- Design, rig, optimize and operate a small PA system for use within a theatrical performance environment.
- Examine Health & Safety issues relating to sound reinforcement systems and value the ability to work well in a team.
- Evaluate the process of sound design and the roles and responsibilities of key personnel in a theatrical sound department.

Essential Stage Management

The aim of this module is to introduce the organisational patterns, skills, and knowledge essential to execute the stage managers duties in pre-production work, rehearsal, and performance of theatrical productions. Essential Stage Management will look at the roles of each of the stage management team. It will give you the opportunity to experience making up a prompt copy, the principles of blocking, finding and creating properties and as well as providing a basic introduction to understanding a scale floor plan and operating flying systems. You will learn about the protocol of calling a show and be expected to operate within professional standards of behaviour. You will also learn how the role of the SM team fits into the production as a whole, including how they work alongside actors, designers, directors and production managers. The module will also introduce you to the health and safety expectations and regulations that fall within the responsibilities of the stage management team.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Differentiate, evaluate and employ the roles and responsibilities of the stage management team.
- Participate in, and document production processes, testing best working practice in industry; creating the required supporting paperwork. Analyse a text using effective production methodology and terminology.
- Research and discriminate period detail and social context when making and buying properties.
- Assess and record progress and apply self-evaluation methodology.
- Employ and evaluate good health and safety practice.

The Context 1

The Context 1 aims to provide a shared understanding of the broad, current, performing arts landscape and the disciplines that constitute it, as well as an understanding of the Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, Technological and other forces that shape the evolution of and employment in performing arts disciplines. It also intends to provide you an understanding of essential research and writing skills.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the key external contextual forces and how they shape the practice and evolution of specific sectors within individual performing arts disciplines.
- Apply research, writing skills and appropriate academic conventions in communicating research outcomes.

Professional Development 1

The Professional Development module provides you with the foundation for your journey towards sustained employment. Essential skills include an informed understanding of the event process, collaborative working and the realities of work in the performing arts. Underpinning these skills is a fundamental essential: being a learner.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Apply reflective evaluation tools in learning and personal planning processes.
- Display an awareness of career development options within an individual performing arts discipline.
- Demonstrate an ability to engage in effective team working processes.
- Present evidence of a basic understanding of essential enterprise skills.
- Propose a personal strategy for the use of web, social networking and other relevant technologies as a component of the career development process.

Fundamental Skills

There has always been a need to equip first year students with basic safe working knowledge and practical competency in design and technical tasks so that they can begin to work on LIPA's production programme as soon as possible after they enrol; some come with a lot of previous experience, but are unaware of in-house safe working practices, or need some further information to be able to become a fully involved. LIPA also has legal obligations to ensure students have been assessed as competent by the production staff, outside of academic requirements, so that the

Institute can ensure safety at work, particularly on potentially hazardous tasks. Most of these proficiencies do not lend themselves to qualitative assessment on traditional grading criteria; students either understand how to perform that task or they do not. These are however, key practices that will form a strong foundation for future careers, and so the team would like to focus the student's attention onto the acquisition of key skills. This will be a main foundation for their personal development planning throughout their study at LIPA, and they will supplement class-acquired skills with experience from voluntary work on shows in their first year of study.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Value a responsible and informed attitude to good health and Safety practice, current UK and European legislation, within areas such as risk management, manual handling, COSHH, electrical protection and testing, rigging and flying, working at height, lone working and fire and public safety.
 - Calculate and assess project specifications in the examination of detail, such as electrical calculation, materials lists and loading limitations.
 - Accept responsibility for your own learning and, appreciating the gaps in your knowledge and understanding, take the initiative to seek opportunities to learn appropriately.
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Year 2 - Programme Credit Structure

- The Production Process – 24 credits
- Placement Project - 24 credits
- CAD and Computer Visualisation – 12 credits
- Production Management – 12 credits
- The Context 2 – 12 credits
- Professional Development 2 – 12 credits
- Vocational Skills – 24 credits

The Production Process

The aim of the module is to involve you within projects and performances to be presented to a public audience. The nature of your participation is to be focused on the learning experience, rather than the final presentation, or expectations of professional standards of work. Experience, role and responsibility will vary according to the project to which you are assigned. Emphasis will be put on the further development of collaborative and interpersonal skills, through the realisation of group projects.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Research independently and effectively, exploring wider documentary sources and texts, to enhance presentation and improve production processes.
- Evaluate and employ a variety of design and production skills appropriately, applying an understanding of production processes, with a degree of autonomy and initiative, to communicate to an audience effectively.
- Engage in collaborative endeavour, negotiate effectively and sensitively, and contribute to a group process with tact and enthusiasm.
- Accept collective responsibility for setting goals, meeting deadlines and fulfilling set briefs.
- Evaluate and articulate their current level of knowledge and skills, to deepen understanding and identify areas for development.

Placement Project

The aim of this module is to provide you with an opportunity to gain experience and insight into at least one professional work environment. This will be achieved by undertaking a period of industry study with a host organisation or company involved in the performance, design and production industries. The work placement should enable you to utilise and practice many of the skills learnt during levels one and two, develop new practical skills and make possible contacts for future employment.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Appraise professional roles and responsibilities within specific performance design and production industries.
- Evaluate their own work in relation to professional practice.
- Develop self-presentation and communication skills.
- Reflect upon future opportunities for employment, discriminating potential career opportunities.

CAD and Computer Visualisation

This module will develop the skills, understanding and knowledge required to draw-up, develop, edit and present designs and plans using Computer Aided Design applications. Communicating technical detail effectively and accurately is a vital skill for a theatre technician or designer, and this module will be assessed on the quality of that information and its layout. Creating working elevations and plans showing all functional elements, especially the masking around a set is a vital process for set designer, production manager, lighting, stage management and sound teams alike, and the ability to read and edit accurate detailed computer drawings is becoming essential.

It will also examine the creative visualisation of a three-dimensional space using graphic rendering packages, translating wire frame drawings into more expressive visualisations.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Communicate and express ideas and information accurately, creating text, graphics, visual and technological designs in two and three-dimensional forms, developing the appropriate visual and organisational skills to present ideas clearly.
- Evaluate and document the design and production process, through the effective and accurate use of sketches and significant technical computer plans of working spaces and setting.

Production Management

The Production Management module will outline the extensive role of the production manager, discussing the implications of being a member of the senior management team of a theatre with all of the related management duties. You will develop the required technical understanding of performance with ability to problem solve and cope well under pressure, excellent 'people skills' including good written and verbal skills and an ability to motivate staff to work under extreme pressure. The module will also highlight the importance of health and safety regulations.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Distinguish and demonstrate the processes of live performance and the role of the Production Manager in supporting and facilitating this process through people management skills and a comprehensive range of technical paperwork.
- Apply initiative and creativity to calculate and evaluate project specifications, scheduling & budgetary issues, using production management skills to solve varied problems within the limitations of specific working environments and briefs.
- Value a professional attitude to good health and safety practice, and operate safely.
- Communicate and express ideas and information articulately and analyse and investigate ideas thoughtfully.

The Context 2

This module aims to set the performing arts within a contemporary cultural, social and political context and to develop your understanding of the major cultural movements in the

last 40 years that have influenced the production of the performing arts. It should provide a framework for understanding the historical relationship between design, technology and the performing arts and help to develop critical and analytical skills. Emphasis will be on how research informs critical debate as both theorist and practitioner.

It will increase confidence in group discussion, explain the importance of being an informed practitioner (within contemporary cultural debate) and use practical examples to articulate the meanings and methods of contemporary arts, performance and technology.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Appraise and argue how cultural, historical, social and political issues have shaped output within the contemporary creative sector and the way it is received.
- Evaluate the contemporary creative sector through questioning lectures, seminars and fieldwork trips.
- Evaluate how theatre and performance design and technology both inform and are informed by other creative disciplines in terms of the aesthetic and production process.
- Communicate information articulately in visual, oral and written forms, informing critical analysis with research and intelligent enquiry.
- Present work to an appropriate academic standard, assimilating and assembling material, using relevant scholarly formats or conventions.

Professional Development 2

The aim of the Professional Development module is to provide you with additional depth in generic employment and enterprise skills (i.e. employment and business structures and practices, business and event planning, negotiation, self employment, financial and tax planning, etc.).

Professional Development also aims to consolidate generic and the allied discipline-specific skills through focused application in the context of employment, career or enterprise planning.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Assess the fundamental financial and organisational structures and systems employed in the performing arts economy (both generic and discipline specific).
- Identify potential business and enterprise opportunities within the performing arts economy.
- Apply generic and discipline-specific skills in the development of career or business planning.
- Demonstrate the skills required to construct and manage an enterprise or event.

Vocational Skills

This module will extend the range of skills taught at Level One, and allow a degree of specialisation within areas chosen by you, as appropriate for your personal career choices. It will involve a detailed study of two specific areas of theatre and performance design and technology. You will have a greater understanding of the current professional context of these specialist areas of production, and the opportunity to apply them in a practical project. These skills extend to the use of specialist equipment and current professional working practices, and look at choices of design materials, management techniques and specialist software.

The lectures, seminars and workshops will examine key areas of work such as the following:

- Puppetry techniques in performance
- Stage and company management

- Sound reinforcement for live performance
- Lighting design from text
- Intelligent lighting programming and operation
- Live art and site-specific installation
- Video projection and multimedia for live performance
- Stage Technology, flying and pyrotechnics
- Video editing and camera techniques

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Evaluate contemporary styles, practices and contexts of aspects of performance design and production.
- Examine, select and employ specialised production processes effectively in a performance context, or in the preparation for performance.
- Create a design or system of work from initial idea or client's brief, and finesse to finished product with guidance.
- Appraise a range of design, production and construction techniques, and operate tools safely, competently and appropriately, and with a degree of autonomy and initiative, questioning and applying appropriate Health and Safety considerations.

Year 3 – Programme Credit Structure

- Vocational Practice – 48 credits
- The 21st Century Venue – 24 credits
- The Context 3: Research Project – 24 credits
- Professional Development 3 – 24 credits

Vocational Practice

The aim of this module is to provide you with experience of simulated professional practice within a specific industry defined role, reflecting your employment/career aspirations. The module engages you in an exploration of how their chosen area of the industry functions, and enables you to realise in full at least two projects from conception to evaluation.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Create and complete design or production work from initial idea to finished product, in response to set briefs or in the generation of new independent work.
- Value and embody a professional level of practise in the design or technical tasks associated with live performance, consolidating and extending their knowledge and research skills.
- Be resourceful and enterprising in their working processes and in their support of others, managing own workloads, setting goals and fulfilling set briefs with responsibility and meeting deadlines.
- Document the design and/or production processes, through created sketches, notation, evaluation, audio and visual still or moving recordings.
- Articulately judge the work, developing the appropriate analytical and linguistic skills to present and discuss ideas and processes intelligently.

The 21st Century Venue

The 21st Century venue module aims to prepare you for the changing infrastructural, architectural and technological nature of contemporary and future performance venues. It will also aim to develop an understanding of the emerging roles of theatre consultants,

acousticians, architects, control system designers and stage engineers. It will examine the new issues such as automation, network technology, health and safety, ecological and economic factors affecting current entertainments production. In response to the growth of site-specific work, the module will also equip you with the skills to understand the processes behind transforming a found space for public performance, including the necessary communication systems, audience considerations and licensing regulations.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Research, evaluate and audit the operating structures of a range of performance venues, including their box office systems, marketing strategies, FOH organisation, staging technologies and control systems.
- Distinguish the appropriate infrastructural needs, current standards of good practice and licensing requirements to construct a performance in a found space.
- Researching in depth a subject area covered within the module, constructing an effective presentation of that knowledge to communicate to others.
- Respond with knowledge, creativity and enthusiasm to create a project design from a client led brief.

Advanced Visual Presentation

The aim of the Advanced Visual Presentation module is to enhance visual presentation skills through media and methods suitable for the production of a professional portfolio. You will also produce a portfolio that represents the best examples for creative practice to date as a concise coherent whole, and construct a Curriculum Vitae suitable for immediate use, with an understanding of directed content

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Utilise time management skills independently and effectively, to document production work, through the effective use of sketches, notation and audio and visual still and moving recordings.
- Recognise the potential of materials, software, technologies and styles of production in order to use the most appropriate techniques for creating a professional portfolio.
- Demonstrate creativity and imagination by realising inventive and proficiently executed design and presentation ideas.
- Present a collection of work in a form that communicates at a professional level, with clarity, to a specified audience.

The Context 3: Research Project

This module aims to enable you to investigate an idea at the forefront of your own practice, using and building upon the theoretical knowledge and research skills developed in The Context 1 and The Context 2. You will carry out research in an area that is useful and relevant to their own practice and career aspirations, synthesising and evaluating information, ideas and concepts from a wide range of sources. They will develop their research and writing skills to a high level, enabling them to produce a coherent, evidence based and persuasive argument.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Propose and implement a programme of research in relation to an aspect of their musical practice and potential career.
- Analyse and critically evaluate this aspect of their musical practice and potential career within a framework of relevant theoretical debates.

- Construct a coherent and well-evidenced argument, communicated using academic writing skills and conventions.

Professional Development 3

Professional Preparation prepares you for seeking out, developing and securing employment opportunities in a chosen field by furnishing you with the confident ability to understand your own practice as well as providing support in developing a personal industry database. You are directed towards developing a deeper understanding of the performing arts sector; identifying transferable skills, leading practitioners, funding structures and artistic and commercial trends and policies. You will discuss and develop interview techniques and use a range of research skills in order to compile a detailed portfolio that supports a Career Action Plan.

After completing the module, you should be able to:

- Evaluate the potential issues and processes leading to employment in chosen fields and construct a clear plan for personal management and administration.
- Research, prepare and present a research file in a work-friendly and clear format, designing a career action plan and personal development plan.
- Communicate and express ideas and information articulately, in interview format, developing the appropriate analytical, investigative and linguistic skills to argue and appraise ideas effectively.
- Articulate a sound knowledge of professional practices, evaluating the possibilities of other disciplines, new practices or environments within a potential career network.

Please note: This document is intended to give you a flavour of the course content in your first, second and third year. All of this information can be subject to change as LIPA programmes change to reflect the changing needs of the arts and entertainment industries.