

Performing Arts (Acting) National Foundation Diploma level 3

Course Overview

Our level 3 acting course is packed with opportunities to perform and prepare you for the creative industry. This course is delivered as a one year plus one year programme. You start by studying the National Foundation Diploma in the first year and then top up to the Extended Diploma in year 2. Students must pass year 1 to progress to year 2. Both years carry UCAS points and universities recognise the qualification as a method of progressing to relevant degree courses. You will also develop the vocational skills and professional practice required to perform well. The course involves high levels of studio-based practice where you will learn a range of acting principles and techniques. Our highly qualified staff - many with a strong professional background working in theatre, film and television - are dedicated to giving you those skills. On the course, you will study stage performance, acting for the camera, classical theatre, devising, drama improvisation, musical theatre, contemporary theatre, theatre in education and engage in a vibrant range of performance opportunities. Our strong links with industry and professional conservatoires enhance the student experience. Examples include our Dementia project in year 2 with The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London's leading drama conservatoire. If you are aged 16 to 18, you will be enrolled on a study programme. This will include retaking GCSEs or undertaking Functional Skills in English and maths if you haven't already achieved a grade 4 or above. You will take part in activities that help you to develop your personal skills, such as building your character and confidence. This will help you to live well and move into your chosen career. If you are 16-19 years old these activities will be timetabled as will work experience and placement. You can also choose to take part in other activities. For other age groups, activities will be tailored to your needs.

What you will learn

The course involves a variety of core units which are related to the creative industry. The programme is structured through three practical performance projects which examine different approaches, styles and techniques as well as individual units. On the course you will perform in a friends and family evening; a devised project; a performance workshop project; and a scripted play based on a contemporary playwright. Additional subjects include improvisation, movement, voice, acting for camera and the development of musical theatre skills. Performances will take place in our own Sue Townsend Theatre based in Leicester city centre.

If you wish to top up on in year 2 on the Extended Diploma you will create short theatre projects for different audiences. Examples include a devised TIE (Theatre in Education) project which can be toured around local schools and/or an applied theatre project working within a community setting. Projects also include a contemporary theatre project and short film projects with media students. Alongside these projects, you will also attend voice and movement classes, classical theatre and audition skills sessions. At the end of year 2 you will work with a director to create a final major production which will take place at the end of the year in our Sue Townsend Theatre. Examples include The Kitchen, Lord of the Flies, Our Country's Good, As you Like it and Little Women. This full scale production is an exciting opportunity to apply all of the skills and knowledge learnt throughout the programme to a public audience. In addition to the project work, you will study theory units which look at how to run yourself as a business in the professional performing arts industry. Over the course, you will gain an in-depth knowledge of the creative industries and understand what you will need to start a career in this industry.

Entry Requirements

Entry to this course requires five GCSEs at grade 4 (C). English and maths are desirable. You will be required to provide one reference and it is desirable that you can demonstrate 90% attendance at your last place of work or study. You will be invited for an audition. You will take part in workshops and meet staff. Additionally, you will be required to prepare and present an audition piece (monologue lasting 2 minutes) and attend an interview to show you have a suitable level of experience in acting. This is to support your careers choice and ensure that we place you on the right programme for you. Consideration will be given to all applicants over the age of 19 who do not hold formal English and maths qualifications.

How you will be assessed

Assessment is via coursework and performance. You will need to demonstrate in your work that your skills and understanding are sufficient to pass each unit or achieve higher grades. Your assignments are assessed internally by the college, and standards are verified by Edexcel. You will be assessed in a variety of ways including rehearsal, performance, workshops, journals, projects, portfolios, blogs, presentations, and essays.

Course Fees

If you are 18 or above when starting this course, you may incur fees if you continue to the second year of the programme. Please see our guidance on 19+ fees on our website. There are theatre trips and visits from practitioners throughout the year which form part of the course and come at an additional expense. There is a mandatory kit requirement which consists of black joggers, a black t-shirt, and black indoor rehearsal shoes. Approximate costs for the kit are £50 (men); £70 (women).

Course Progression

Course Details

Course Code	P00185
Start Date	08/09/2025
Study Hours	Full Time
Duration	1 year
Campus	Abbey Park Campus
Level	3

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Whether you want to become a stage actor or work on screen this course will give you the confidence and skills set to pursue a career in this industry. Once you have successfully completed your full level 3 course you will be eligible to study for a degree at a university or drama school or be employed in a wide range of subject-related jobs in the industry. Each year some of our students achieve a place in a top drama school to continue their training and many of our students progress to university-level courses. When studying with us acting students continue their training in Higher Education on the BA Acting (Creative Performance Practice) 2-year accelerated degree.

What Happens Next

Apply online via the college website, or if your school uses the Positive Steps @16 (PS16) application system please apply through this and speak to your careers advisor if you are unsure. You will need details of your qualifications, a reference, and a personal statement to complete your application. Once your application has been successfully processed, you will be sent a conditional offer and be invited to a Welcome Event at the college to meet your tutors, learn more about your chosen course of study and tour the facilities. You will then need to confirm your acceptance of the course offered to you.