

Programme Specification: *MA Musical Theatre*

Programme	MA Musical Theatre (Musical Direction/Performance/Devising and Performance)
Awarding Institution	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Location of study	Laban Building/King Charles Court/Laurie Grove/Blackheath Halls
Mode and duration	1-year full time
UK Credits	180
ECTS	90

Summary Description

The MA Musical Theatre (Musical Direction/Performance/Devising and Performance) is a distinct programme offering bespoke specialist training at level 7. The programme is designed to stimulate creative thought and interrogate theatrical boundaries, encouraging inter-disciplinary approach, imaginative application and the development of creative confidence and professional identity. The programme offers the opportunity to redefine musical theatre as a genre, challenging the theatrical paradigm and moving beyond existing boundaries, through conceptual development, experimentation, innovation, and reinvention.

Led by an experienced team of practitioners, artists and industry leaders, the curriculum focuses on the development of industry relevant skills and techniques exploring arts-based practice through the creation of co-authored and co-produced group and ensemble work within inclusive collaborative settings. Workshops, lectures, and creative development seminars, offering work-based, collaborative and student led approaches to developing exciting theatre and performance will be facilitated that meets 21st century artistic expectations.

Projects will be created that explore social, educational and cultural impact, extending knowledge and understanding of how arts-based practice can instigate positive social change within communities and through the development of new audiences.

Students will be immersed in Trinity Laban's vibrant creative community, with the programme designed to ensure engagement and exposure to a range of

interdisciplinary practice that will enhance theoretical and practical understanding and develop vital artistic connections.

Students will be allocated to one of three interconnected pathways:

The **Performance** pathway offers specialist training in musical theatre performance congruent with the UK's world leading theatre industry. Recruiting and operating as a company of 25 highly skilled theatre artists, the programme will centre around the development of **creativity, performance and enterprise**. Led by an experienced team of practitioners, artists and industry leaders, the curriculum will focus on the development of skills and techniques, whilst promoting creative thought and probing theatrical boundaries. Students can expect to explore work that engages with a broad range of performance pieces including new Musical Theatre writing, reimagined work and standard book-based musicals.

The **Musical Direction** pathway aims to offer specialist and bespoke training in musical direction congruent with the UK's world leading theatre industry. Recruiting a small cohort of 3-6 highly skilled musicians, teaching and learning will, for the most part, be delivered by industry creatives recruited to deliver performance projects offering a work-based learning approach. The pathway aims to develop a broad industry-relevant skillset that extends the portfolio of proficiencies beyond traditional musical direction training, forging further employment pathways. Centring around the development of **performance leadership, creativity and enterprise**. The programme aspires to work across the Trinity Laban campus offering potential to engage with the artistic community across the faculties.

The **Devising and Performance** pathway aims to develop arts-based community practice that facilitates the advancement of leading creative theatre makers/performers. The pathway aims to develop three strands of creative practice as **creator, performer and educator** reimagining the model of 'triple threat' within the industry. Recruiting and operating as a creative company of highly skilled theatre artists, students can expect to explore work that engages with all areas of the community that may include theatre for young audiences within schools, youth work, care homes, community services and prisons.

The programme aims to:

- develop arts-based musical theatre practice that facilitates the advancement of leading creative theatre makers/performers.
- develop broad industry relevant skillsets that extend the portfolio of proficiencies beyond traditional musical theatre training, forging further employment pathways.
- offer a distinct specialist and bespoke training in musical theatre/direction that matches the UKs world leading theatre industry.

- facilitate students' development of leadership with performance, creativity and enterprise.
- facilitate the exploration of work that engages with a broad range of performance.
- stimulate creative thought, exploring the creation of theatre through a world lens with projects that explore social, educational and cultural impact.
- extending knowledge and understanding of how arts-based practice can instigate positive social change within communities and through the development of new audiences.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this programme, a student will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1. demonstrate an advanced technical and theoretical understanding of concepts pertaining to musical theatre pathways
- A2. engage with enquiry relating to knowledge development beyond the predetermined skills set of standard musical theatre techniques and practices that facilitates cross disciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary working.
- A3. display advanced knowledge and understanding of professional industry expectations.
- A4. evidence broad contextual knowledge and understanding relating to musical theatre and demonstrate the ability to imagine, recognise and seize opportunities for innovation and new venture creation.
- A5. demonstrate advanced knowledge of the various contexts in which musical theatre is performed and consumed today and of the relationships between theatre and society
- A6. show critical awareness of current problem-based questions and/or new approaches within artistic research and development as applicable within musical theatre practice
- A7. articulate, examine and synthesise concepts arising from research and its wider context.

Skills

- B1. apply advanced technical and performance skills that meet professional industry expectations.
- B2. engage with different stylistic demands of various musical theatre expectations with sophisticated application, adaptability, flexibility and versatility.
- B3. apply a highly developed critically reflective approach to theatre performance and development.

- B4. demonstrate the ability to be a self-critical and motivated learner, able to produce complex individual and/or collaborative work of high quality.
- B5. articulate and debate creative practice and manage continuing professional development by investigation of further relevant skills and concepts that will support a professional career.
- B6. define and propose appropriate frameworks for research that demonstrate an advanced contextualised understanding of practice.
- B7. formulate and discuss ideas that stimulate creative exploration and articulate an informed perspective and the questions that arise from it.

Value and Attitudes

- C1. exhibit high standards of professional conduct and take responsibility for one's own professional development.
- C2. recognise the relevance and value of a range of supplementary practices for enhancing musical theatre training and the development of careers.
- C3. commit to engagement with creative development, new knowledge and discoveries.
- C4. develop an appreciation of the rigours of a research process, which arises through independent inquiry.

Graduate Attributes

Trinity Laban Graduate programmes align with the strategic plan 2018-2028, designed to prepare artists and practitioners to contribute to the leadership and future development of the global creative ecology in a sustainable and responsible way. Those who have participated in a graduate programme should be able to:

1. Investigate and interrogate their practices in relation to existing bodies of knowledge and associated theoretical, critical and creative contexts to understand how their practice is situated
2. Design systematic and creative research processes and practices, transferring these into a variety of practical and performance contexts
3. Adopt play and openness within research processes to complement frameworks that enable purposeful engagement in practice
4. Demonstrate original thinking, and understand how this relates to practice and the conceptualisation of work in their discipline
5. Develop significantly refined practice skills in order to produce socially and ethically aware processes and products, enabling the individual to participate as creative and artistic leaders and as global citizens.

Curriculum

Structure

MA Musical Theatre: Level 7		
Musical Direction Pathway	Performance Pathway	Devising and Performance Pathway
Applying Musical Direction Skills in Performance (Core) 60 Credits	Applying Musical Theatre Skills in Performance (Core) 60 Credits	Applying Musical Theatre Skills in Devising and Performance Performance settings (Core) 60 Credits
Developing Techniques for musical direction (Core) 40 Credits	Developing techniques for performance (Core) 40 Credits	Developing techniques for Devising and Performance (Core) 40 Credits
Developing a Professional Portfolio (Core) 40 Credits	Developing a Professional Portfolio (Core) 40 Credits	Developing a Professional Portfolio (Core) 40 Credits
Creative Research Project (Core) 40 Credits	Creative Research Project (Core) 40 Credits	Creative Research Project (Core) 40 Credits

Key Progression Points

There is a progression point at the end of the taught programme (summer term). Students who have yet to complete the taught modules due to failure or deferral may be required to complete any outstanding assessments before embarking on the project.

Where an assessment component is failed, one resit may be permitted by the Assessment Board (or by the Interim Assessment Panel subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board). The mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark of 50%. The date and mode of reassessment will be set by the Interim Assessment Panel or by the Assessment Board (depending on the timing of the assessment).

Learning and Teaching

Total contact hours

- **Performance Pathway – 552 hours**
- **Musical Direction Pathway- 494.50 hours**
- **Devising and Performance Pathway - 552 hours**

Total self-directed study hours

- **Performance Pathway – 1248 hours**
- **Musical Direction Pathway- 1305.50 hours**
- **Devising and Performance Pathway – 1248 hours**

Total learning and teaching hours - 1800 hours

Learning and teaching methods

Learning takes place through a blend of tuition, experiential learning and personal study, using an integrated learning model within a variety of formal, informal and student-determined settings. Group and individual practical skills-development sessions form the core training in musical theatre singing, acting and dancing. Group lectures and seminars enable a more interrogatory approach to learning in which you will be able to apply and adapt your knowledge, analytical and reflective skills. Workshops enable a flexibility of response that facilitates your integration of practical and intellectual approaches to learning, reflecting on and improving practical outcomes as they are achieved within a creative setting; the use of professional practitioners in these and rehearsal settings exposes you to different views and approaches current within the industry.

Informal and student-determined learning settings currently include: students' own individual (and sometimes group) practice; further research into aspects of the programme of particular individual interest; rolling programme-related discussions on networking, social and digital media; the institution's Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle); student-led classes, workshops and peer-peer sharing and specifically created projects.

The majority of formal learning takes place within group settings in which there is a high degree of collaboration, supporting each other's learning, and strong sense of team working towards a shared goal.

The teaching, learning and assessment strategies used on the MA Musical Theatre are based on the notion that Musical Theatre students learn most effectively by doing, by thinking about what and why they are doing, by applying and adapting learning in relevant creative contexts, and by reflecting on, interrogating and evaluating that learning with a view to determining the success of their efforts and developing as a creative artist as a consequence.

Focused research and reflective practice are part of the normal working life of the professional Musical Theatre performer-maker: much of the operation of the programme is thus embedded in real world models of professional practice. All performance outcomes are project-based and project-focused, as is typically the case of the professional Musical Theatre performer. Traditional separations between research and practice are considered unhelpful to the student learner: all purposeful and considered work-based activities contribute to and assist in the creation of high-quality performers and performances.

Taught sessions are underpinned by the expectation that the tutor explicitly models good practice in their preparation and delivery of stimulating learning experiences. Creative practitioners are likewise encouraged to articulate and explain their creative process in order that you gain insight into non-performer roles.

Assessment

Overview

The Musical Theatre assessment strategy has been designed in line with Trinity Laban's institutional guidance on assessment and feedback, created to facilitate the opportunity for successful outcomes for all students studying on the programme. Innovatively designed assessment methods have been constructed to cover learning outcomes at both module and programme level, ensuring assessment criteria is carefully linked to learning outcomes that are appropriate at each level of study.

Careful consideration has been made in relation to the assessment process and the development of assessment literacy, with formative assessment and feedback opportunities embedded in programme design. Assessment has been constructed to be rigorous and transparent with teams constructed to ensure balance and elimination of bias within practical assessments and clear and identified strategy for moderation to include sampling and recording.

Assessment is communicated and outlined within handbooks and the VLE, with a clear overview provided with both submission and return dates identified to support students in managing workload and expectation across the year. Timescales for resits, deferrals and extensions have also been considered to ensure seamless progression, whilst also managing tutor workload.

The types of tasks required have been carefully crafted, ensuring variety of assessment, considering the skills and knowledge valued by industry professionals and employers, and recognising the breadth of learning undertaken. Academic integrity is important, and assessment has been reviewed to ensure that tasks are fit for purposes and promote good academic practice, recognising the changing impacts of technology such as artificial intelligence (AI). Tasks have been designed to consider authentic learning and inquiry-based knowledge, requiring learners to demonstrate skills beyond knowledge exchange. Critical thinking, collaboration and problem solving within real life contexts and performance-based outcomes support the development of tasks are designed to be accessible and inclusive, whilst minimising the potential for academic misconduct.

Formative assessment points and opportunities to gain vital feedback prior to summative submission have been fully embedded and communicated within the programme handbook with clear narrative and timeline to ensure students have opportunity for experimentation and critical reflection, and are able to respond to feedback and develop learning outcomes prior to final submission.

Assessment has been designed to ensure validity and clear parity with industry expectation supporting the development of a tangible portfolio of materials that will support skill set promotion, development of personal brand, artistic identity and transition into industry careers. The aim is to provide further value and connection between educational expectation and enhancement of industry engagement from the outset. Assessment has been designed to promote flexibility, individuality, and inclusivity, whilst eliminating barriers to achievement and progression. Students will engage with a wide range of assessments used for diagnostic, formative and summative purposes.

Assessment activity includes:

- portfolios
- research projects and independent research project
- group presentations
- practical research tasks
- performance activities
- rehearsals
- class-based assessments
- peer to peer sharing and reflection

What do I have to do to pass?

In order to pass the programme you must achieve the credit for each module. You must pass each module with an overall mark of 50 (except where compensation

applies). There may also be a requirement for you to achieve a minimum mark in each assessment. Where this is the case it will be stated in the module specification.

Awards

Award	HE Level	Credits
Master of Arts	7	180
Postgraduate Diploma	7	120
Postgraduate Certificate	7	60

Classification	% required
With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
With Pass	50

Accreditation and additional qualifications

Students may choose to register with Equity and Spotlight to support their transition into employment.

Admissions criteria

Applicants are expected to have an appropriate first degree (or an equivalent qualification) or 5 years' professional experience. Applicants who do not meet the standard entry requirements are invited to complete a recognition of prior learning (RPL) process to establish their suitability for level 7 study.

Entry to the programme is dependent upon selection at audition.

Applicants for whom English is not their first language should demonstrate proficiency in English equivalent to IELTS 6.5 overall with a minimum of 5.5 in all four areas. Trinity Laban website provides guidance on the standard expected by reference to acceptable English Language qualifications.

In addition, meeting external requirements of UK Visas and Immigration is essential.