



Programme change proposals

At York each degree programme has its own, tailored set of distinctive learning outcomes. These won't change, no matter what your location or mode of delivery, and our academics are working hard to ensure your programmes and modules next year continue to inspire and motivate you.

Your health and safety is our number one priority and in light of the Covid-19 pandemic we have needed to make changes to some of your programmes of study for the coming academic year. This document summarises the changes that are proposed and we have provided a consultation form for you to complete if you have any feedback on these proposals:

<https://forms.gle/MnioNThQgCo6P2wRZ>

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| Programme(s) | BA in Theatre: Writing, Directing, and Performance |
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Summary of Overall Plans

Across all years of the BA in Theatre: Writing, Directing and Performance, we will be adopting a mixed method of teaching that will see us tailor our activities to the best and safest mode of delivery, while staying true to the programme learning outcomes and our unique mix of practical and production work alongside historical and textual investigation.

The methods of delivery chosen for the academic year have been selected as the best pedagogical responses to the current situation, while also maximising the time you are allocated for practical elements, including developing your performance and production skills and exploring the use of technology, equipment, and facilities.

Delivery methods will include pre-recorded lectures, discussion boards, online and face-to-face seminars, discussion-, and project work, as well as face-to-face practicals and on-site practice sessions with equipment and facilities. All this will be done in line with government guidelines. The modes and patterns of engaging with each other, your lecturers, the material, and your assessments will differ from module to module in order to provide the best fit for each type of content.

Face-to-face teaching sessions will be complemented with an online equivalent for those unable to attend so as to make sure all programme learning outcomes are fulfilled and everyone has access to the teaching material needed to succeed.

We appreciate that for our second and third years, your main concern is probably how practical and production work will be carried out next year. Social distancing limitations do pose a problem but we have sought to solve these by reconfiguring the way the years are scheduled, as follows.

Programme Structures

Second Year

In order to manage our aims to stay true to the learning outcomes of your degree, preserve the practical components of your modules, and keep everyone safe, we are making two big changes to your second-year programme. We're moving Political Theatres from the Spring to the Autumn Term and what was formerly known as Performance Styles and Traditions – newly titled as Theatre Texts and Contexts - is moving from the Autumn to the Spring Term. Political Theatres is a significantly theoretical module whereas Theatre Texts and Contexts incorporates some important practical components, so swapping these around will minimise disruption to you and maximise the chances that you'll be able to work in the Scenic Stage or Black Box theatre spaces with a broad spectrum of production facilities available to you. The assessments for each remain unaffected although their timings will obviously move: dates to be confirmed in due course.

| Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term |
|--|---|--|
| Political Theatres (TFT00004I) | Theatre Texts & Contexts (TFT00002I) | Political Theatre Project (TFT00023I) |
| Theatre Design & Production (TFT00020I) | Comedy Genres & Sub-Genres (TFT00001I) | Research Skills (TFT00022I) |
| Scriptwriting 2 (TFT00019I) | | |

Third Year

| Autumn Term | Spring Term | Summer Term |
|---|---|--|
| Independent Dissertation Project (TFT00044H) | Independent Dissertation Project (TFT00044H) | Pre-1900 Production Project (TFT00002H) |
| Independent Playwriting Project (TFT00043H) | Independent Playwriting Project (TFT00043H) | |
| Independent Group Project (TFT00045H) | Independent Group Project (TFT00045H) | |
| Current Trends (TFT00032H) | Directing for TFTV (TFT00033H) | |

The Pre-1900 Production Project is now being pushed back to the Summer Term. Moving the most collaborative, largest-scale practical production work to as late as we can in the academic year means that we maximise the chances you'll be able to work in the Scenic Stage with a broad spectrum of production facilities available to you. We also think that this is an exciting shift as it means that your year will finish on a high, working collaboratively with your friends on the course towards a big production.

Moving the Pre-1900 project means that we have also had to move the Independent projects - your dissertations and your group or playwriting projects. You will now start these in the Autumn Term, continuing them through into the Spring Term, with both the Festival and playwriting submission date now due to take place towards the end of the Spring term. The submission date of your dissertation is to be decided, but with a deadline no earlier than the end of the Spring Term.

Moving these modules makes sense in that they are individual, independent, and relatively small scale so, as we continue to respond to the challenges presented to us by Covid, we can support you both online and face-to-face in the Department with minimal issue. The Independent Group Projects will be perfectly manageable given the modest group sizes as we continue to put your health and safety first. However, this shift means something important. It means you each need to start thinking carefully about your independent projects much sooner than you usually would. You will hear from the module convenors of these modules during the Summer break. In the meantime, here is some important information about each of these independent modules in turn:

Dissertation

The Independent Dissertation Project module will run much as it has in previous years, except that it will shift to Autumn and Spring Term and will incorporate more online forms of teaching and discussion. You will still have the same supervisory support, and the same amount of time to work on your dissertation (in fact, you may end up with slightly more than students in previous years). The module convener (Mark Smith) will open the VLE and release some short lecture videos and other online resources towards the end of the summer. In the Autumn Term you'll also have seminars in which you can shape your project and develop your research skills.

For now, all you need to do is to start thinking - and talking! - about a *general* topic which appeals to you. This could be a movement or trend in theatre/performance/etc, specific writers or theatre-makers who intrigue you, an aspect of the industry you'd like to learn more about, and so on. Let your passions guide you. You won't be expected to present a concrete proposal or research question until we've worked with you on this in Autumn Term, after which we'll pair

you up with a suitable dissertation supervisor.

Independent Group Production Project

If you're considering taking Independent Group Project, the key things you'll have to think about before Autumn Term begins include:

- (a) the kind of role you might like to be assessed for (actor, director, designer, festival producer)
- (b) other people in the year group you might like to work with (groups have a minimum of three and a maximum of eight assessed students)
- (c) the sorts of playtexts or approaches you might like to explore

By the end of July, we'll be sending you a list of plays to choose from and a clear set of instructions about exactly what we'd like you to do before Autumn Term. We recognise that this is more than you would normally have to do over the summer, but we want you to be able to hit the ground running in Autumn Term, ahead of the module teaching beginning in Week 6.

Independent Playwriting Project

Independent Project Playwriting will run largely as it has in previous years, except that a) it will begin in the Autumn rather than in the Spring, and b) teaching in the Autumn term will be done with proper social distancing and the possibility of online access. Because of the shift to autumn term, we will ask you to indicate your preference for IPG or IPP by early August (we'll send further information soon to help guide your decision), and to propose a topic for your play by late September, so that we can match you with an appropriate supervisor early in the Autumn term. During the Autumn term, lectures in weeks 2, 4, 6 and 8 will be delivered online. R&D seminars in autumn term weeks 6-9 will be conducted in smaller groups to maintain social distancing for those able to attend live; those attending online will join us by Zoom.

So, for now, all you need to do is think about a) your preference for IPP versus IPG and b) if IPP, ideas for your play.

Important Note: You will be emailed more detailed information about IPG and IPP shortly after 22nd July (after the end of this consultation period).

Further changes or information of note

One of the key and exciting identifying features of our Theatre programme here in the Department of Theatre, Film, Television, and Interactive Media is the access

we have to technological support and resources and the ways in which we encourage our students to think and work with technology as they practice theatre. (Note the hugely successful Summer Term Online Third-Year Online Theatre Festival, which delivered an outstanding programme of performances founded upon rehearsal processes conducted entirely online.) In summary, Theatre: Writing, Directing and Performance is fundamentally well-placed to pose its questions about plays and the possibilities of performance to hybrid and technological theatrical and educational contexts, as well as to conventional physical ones.