

Drama, Performance and Theatre Arts

Information for New Level 4 Students

Welcome to the department of Drama, Performance and Theatre Arts (DPTA) at Staffordshire University. We look forward to meeting you when you arrive for your induction week. Your Drama lecturers and tutors will be Derrick Cameron, Paul Christie, Jo Dawson, Paul W. Jones and Robert Marsden. (Have a look at our website <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/dta> for more information about us, detailed information about the Course and lots of photographs of our students in performance.) You will meet and work with other tutors and many professional theatre and performance practitioners during your time with us. We hope you'll enjoy your undergraduate studies in the Faculty of Arts, Media and Design, and that you'll value the opportunity to expand your knowledge, skills and experience and make new friends during your time here. This is an exciting and, at times, demanding course which we are sure will challenge and stimulate you. We are a friendly and informal team and our students always become a close-knit and sociable group - but we expect professional standards of discipline, dedication, teamwork and creative initiative as well as good academic standards. The following is to provide you with some advance information and some initial "house rules".

Choosing modules: During your first week we will help you to understand, plan and sign-up for your first-year timetable. Many of your modules are 'core', that is to say, you will not have any choice but to take them. Some modules, however, are "options", that is to say, you will be able to choose which subjects or activities you would like to study or take part in. (Have a look at our website for the Drama options.) During the second semester, (the period after Christmas) for instance, you can choose between a module that looks at theatre directing or one on performing Shakespeare. You can even choose modules outside Drama. (A full list of options will be made available when you arrive.)

Attendance: You must attend all the lectures, seminars and workshops timetabled for each of your modules and all rehearsals and performances scheduled for your presentations and stage productions. Be punctual, arrive five minutes early if you can - lateness is unacceptable and, for rehearsals particularly, may be recorded as non-attendance. (The University has strict regulations about non-attendance.) Please do not take any part-time employment that might clash with important evening rehearsal and performance sessions.

Theatre Visits: We have made a special ticket deal with our local repertory theatre. You will be required to pay around £35 at the

beginning of the year, for a selection of plays at the "New Vic", plus a visit to the Regent Theatre in the second semester. Payment must be made by cheque or cash during Induction Week. We may also arrange other subsidised trips to theatres during the course, for which there will be an additional charge. Further details will be given after you have enrolled on the degree. Please note that theatre-going (whether or not it is linked to course assessment) is *compulsory*. If you anticipate any financial difficulties, please let us know and we can discuss the problem confidentially. If you have any suggestions for theatre trips let us know - we often arrange other outings to theatres outside the district (for example, to Stratford-upon-Avon).

Dress code: For most practical sessions and backstage work we will require you to wear *loose* comfortable clothing (no tight, hipster or flared jeans, please). Drama, Performance and Theatre Arts (DPTA) students will require trainers/dance shoes or bare feet; Theatre Studies and Technical Stage Production students will require stout shoes or boots. *For presentations and some productions*, we require you to have the following:

- Black trousers or trackpants (no 'go faster' stripes please),
- 2 *baggy* black T-shirts (no bare midriffs please!),
- Stout black shoes (*not* trainers: Theatre Studies and Technical Stage Production students)
- Lightweight black shoes (*not* trainers: DPTA Students).

NB: No logos please, and please make sure your black clothes look smart and not "washed out" grey.

You may need to remove visible piercings for some stage productions.

Rehearsals: You must be changed and ready for rehearsals on time. There will be a warm-up session before any physical workshop or rehearsal. Your tutor will leave you time at the end of rehearsals to change out of your rehearsal clothes and "freshen up" before your next lecture. For some practical workshops you may be asked to work in bare feet. Please do not wear short skirts to movement or technical workshops, and ensure your mobile phone is on 'silent' or 'off' before the session begins. Please note that filming and/or recording of workshops and rehearsals is not permitted.

Room bookings: Other than timetabled slots, the Drama spaces can be booked by students in advance for module-related rehearsals. Check the timetable in the Performance Centre. Please ensure that you do use the room if you've booked it, and try not to 'hog' the time or the available space. Rooms must be left tidy for the next group.

Smoking is not allowed in any of the offices, classrooms, rehearsal rooms or workshops. Food, snacks, soft drinks and sweets must not be consumed in the Drama Studios. Bottled water is allowed but you must ask permission to bring hot drinks into the studios or workshops.

Books and Reading Lists

Many of the books that you will be required to read are available, in limited numbers, from the University Library. Here is a list of some of the books you will be advised to buy. Copies of set texts have been ordered via John Smith's University Bookshop, which is in the Thompson Library, here on the Stoke campus: keep an eye out for discounts on 'packs' of books for particular modules. If you wish to order books locally elsewhere, there is a branch of Waterstone's in nearby Hanley (City Centre) along with Webberley's local book/art shop. If you buy the plays elsewhere - make sure you get the correct editions/translations.

Semester 1

Early Stages: Drama From Sophocles to Ibsen

Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*. In: *Three Theban Plays* (trans. Fagles) (Penguin) [Week 2 reading]

Anon. *The Second Shepherds' Play*, in *Everyman and Other Medieval Miracle and Morality Plays* (Dover)

Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus* (A & C Black/New Mermaids)

Behn, Aphra. *The Rover* (A & C Black/New Mermaids)

Boucicault, Dion. *The Corsican Brothers* (photocopy available from the module tutor)

Ibsen, Henrik. *Ghosts*. In: *Plays: One* (trans. Meyer) (Methuen)

Introduction to Acting Techniques

Benedetti, Jean. *Stanislavski: An Introduction* (Methuen)

Gillett, John. *Acting on Impulse* (Methuen)

Merlin, B (2010). *Acting: The Basics*. Routledge

Stanislavski, Constantin. *An Actor Prepares* (Methuen)

Theatre Production

White, Christine A. *Technical Theatre, A Practical Introduction*. (Arnold)

Technical Theatre Arts (Technical Stage Production students only)

Baugh, Christopher. *Theatre Performance and Technology* (Palgrave Macmillan)

Computer-Aided Lighting Design (Technical Stage Production students only)

Texts to be announced in Induction Week

Semester 2

The Theatre Industry

Course information will be available in Semester 2. Students will attend plays at the New Vic and/or Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent.

Script and Text in Performance

Play texts will be announced in Semester 1.

Performing Shakespeare (An option module - you may not need these books)

Noble, A. (2009) *How to Do Shakespeare*. Routledge

Rodenburg, P (2005). *Speaking Shakespeare*. Methuen.

Making Theatre (An option module - you may not need these books)

King, P. *Pix and Mix: A structured approach to Devising Stylised Theatre*. (Pearson)

Oddey, A. *Devising Theatre, A Practical and Theoretical Handbook*. (Routledge)

Introduction to Theatre Directing (An option module - you may not need to buy these books)

Course and Play texts will be announced in Semester 1.

Useful background reading (both semesters)

Brandt, George W. *Modern Theories of Drama* (Clarendon Press)

Braun, Edward. *The Director and the Stage* (Methuen)

Copley and Kilner. *Stage Management, A practical guide* (Crowood Press)

Please note you can also find further suggestions for plays to read via the 'Resources' link on the DPTA website.

I look forward to welcoming you in September and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on securing a place at University and on a course that we feel is unique, innovative, exciting and rewarding - Well Done.

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Award Leader

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