

BA Film & Theatre
For students entering Part 1 in 2007

UCAS code: W480

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading
Teaching Institution: The University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s): Dance, Drama and Performance Studies; Communications, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Programme length: 3 years
Date of specification: September 2007
Programme Director: John Gibbs
Programme Adviser: Lib Taylor
Board of Studies: Film, Theatre & Television
Accreditation: not applicable

Summary of programme aims

The central aim of the programme is to develop students' critical understanding of film and modern theatre as cultural forms in their own right and in terms of their historical relationships. Students will become familiar with the varied achievements of film and theatre practitioners, developing critical skills through close study of films, plays and theatre performances, underpinned by debates and theories which have influenced analysis of theatre and cinema. Students also undertake practical work, closely informed by critical issues ('critical practice'), which is designed both to extend understanding of how film and theatre create meaning, and to develop appropriate practical expertise.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. In addition, on completion of this programme, students are expected to have developed a range of specific transferable skills including: critical analysis and coherent argument; the ability to formulate and evaluate their own arguments and those of others; researching and evaluating evidence; effective communication using the methods of theatre and/or video; undertaking self-directed, independent work; developing projects through co-operation and dialogue; taking leadership and management roles; effective time management.

Programme content

Each Part of the degree comprises 120 credits. At Part 1 students will normally take Course A and Course B. Students taking Course B only may be admitted to the degree but will be ineligible for the critical practice modules. Course B may be taken either as 40 credits (in which case students will take FT1CHA only) or as 60 credits. For students taking Course B as 40 credits, the remaining credits can be made up from modules available elsewhere in the University. In Parts 2 and 3 (and/or 4), up to 20 credits can be taken from modules available elsewhere in the University.

Part One (three terms) Certificate Level

	Credits	Level
Course A		
FT1PFT Critical Practice in Film & Theatre	60	C
Course B		
FT1CHA Introduction to Film and Theatre	40	C
FT1TFC Introduction to Television Studies	20	C

Part 2 (three terms) Intermediate level

	Credits	Level
Compulsory modules		
Students taking the programme with critical practice will normally take the following modules:		
FT2USIA+B Studies in US Cinema I	20 + 10	I

FT2BTA+ B Studies in British Theatre	20 + 10	I
FT2AFA+B Alternative Forms in Film and Theatre	20 + 10	I
FT2PO Practical Option	30	I
Students taking the programme without critical practice will normally take:		
FT2US1A+B Studies in US Cinema I	20 + 10	I
FT2BTA+B Studies in British Theatre	20 + 10	I
FT2AFA+B Alternative Forms in Film and Theatre	20 + 10	I
FT2IP Second Year Independent Project	20 + 10	I
Optional Module		
FT2BP Bulmershe Production	10	I

Notes

Students taking the Bulmershe Production optional module will substitute this for 10 credits in any Part 2 module. 10 credit modules **MUST** be taken together with a relevant 20 credit module.

Students wishing to take a 20 credit Faculty module will take two of the Film & Theatre critical modules as 20 credits each.

The following component is compulsory. Its credits are distributed through Part 2 of the degree:

Careers Management Skills 5 I

Part 3 (three terms) Honours level

Students will normally take either:

	Credits	Level
FT3IP Independent Project	40	H
[various] Critical Option	20+20	H
[various] Critical Option	20+20	H
Or		
FT3DISS Dissertation: Film & Theatre	40	H
[various] Critical Option	20+20	H
[various] Critical Option	20+20	H

Each Critical Option comprises two linked 20 credit modules with the suffixes A and B, which must be taken together. A complete list of Critical Options is available from the Director of Teaching and Learning in Film Theatre & Television. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Director of Teaching and Learning.

Optional Module

FT3BP Bulmershe Production 10 H

Notes

Students taking the Bulmershe Production optional module will substitute this for 10 credits of assessment in any Part 3 module.

Progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
- achieve not less than 30% in any module taken in Part 1, except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits will be condoned provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to:

- achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- achieve not less than 30% in any module taken in Part 2, except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits will be condoned provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

In addition, students intending to present a practical Independent Project in Part 3 must achieve an aggregate 40% in the related Practical Option, including a pass in the practical component.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching styles are varied to encourage active engagement by students, to encourage independence and foster initiative and effective time management. Interaction in seminars is central to the programme and weekly seminars are common to all critical modules, with lectures designed to provide informing perspectives for the module and for individual seminars. Theatre visits are integral to the programme. Practical modules are taught through group and individual projects, based on workshops, group work and tutorials. Assessment of critical modules in Part 2 and 3 is mainly by coursework, which includes formal essays as well as other written assignments such as take-away exam questions. In practical modules assessment is by a combination of practical work and critical documentation. In Course B at Part 1 assessment is by coursework and formal examination. The Dissertation and Independent Project modules in Part 3 are supported by individual supervision.

The weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

Assessment criteria for each of the Levels are given in the appropriate Departmental Handbook.

The University's honours classification scheme is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% below Honours standard

0% - 34% Fail

Admission Requirements

A minimum of 300 points from 3 full A Levels. These must include a Grade B (or better) in at least one of the following subjects: English Literature, Drama, Theatre Studies, Film Studies.

As an alternative 340 points from A Levels and no more than two AS Levels. The full A Levels must include a Grade B (or better) in at least one of the following subjects: English Literature, Drama, Theatre Studies, Film Studies.

Admissions tutors:- Tom Brown, Ashley Thorpe

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union. Students in the Department of Film, Theatre & Television receive a Handbook, which gives details of the Programme, guidance on study skills such as note-taking and essay writing, and information about staff, facilities, and sources of specialised help within the University, such as the Study Skills Advisor and the Counselling Service. Academic feedback and guidance is given through detailed written comments. Academic and personal support for students in their studies is also provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) scheme, in which students meet their personal tutors regularly to review their progress. From a highly structured introduction in Part 1, in Parts 2 and 3 students take increasing responsibility for their learning and module choice. In practical work the move to individual projects is supported by detailed supervision and advice. The Department has a range of film/video viewing rooms and specialist studio and theatre spaces for practical drama, together with extensive technical facilities for small scale production in theatre and digital video. It also houses an extensive collection of films and television programmes. The Library, which has buildings on both the Whiteknights and Bulmershe campuses, has an extensive collection of printed materials as well as electronic databases. The Bulmershe Library holds one of the country's leading academic collections of film and modern theatre material. Specialist subject librarians are available to give students advice and guidance to library resources.

Career prospects

Career possibilities for Reading graduates in Film & Theatre are very wide ranging. Graduates find that the specific as well as the transferable skills developed by the programme enable them to enter many fields of work including education, publishing, journalism, the media, management, administration, public relations, advertising and the media and performance industries. A Reading Film & Theatre degree provides graduates with a range of communication, analytical, practical and social skills that will serve them in good stead in the world of work. A number of graduates each year go on to further professional training, academic study and research.

Educational aims of the programme

The central aim of the programme is to develop students' critical understanding of film and modern theatre as cultural forms in their own right and in terms of their historical relationships. It aims to produce students who can express this understanding in speech and writing and also through practical work. Students will become familiar with the varied achievements of film and theatre practitioners, developing critical skills through close study of films, plays, theatre performances, and some aspects of television, underpinned by debates and theories which have influenced analysis of theatre and cinema. At the same time they will undertake practical work, closely informed by critical issues ('critical practice'), which is designed both to extend understanding of how film and theatre create meaning, and to develop appropriate practical expertise.

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Film and theatre texts from a range of national and cultural contexts, mainly produced between the late nineteenth century and the present day.
2. A variety of genres and approaches to filmmaking and theatre.
3. Methods of critical analysis appropriate to film and theatre
4. Ways in which theatre and film have informed each other historically
5. Ways in which social, cultural and historical contexts inform theatre and film/television texts
6. A range of critical and theoretical approaches in Film and Theatre studies.
7. Selected special fields of film, television and theatre
8. Methods and skills of small scale film/video and theatre production
9. How critical and theoretical perspectives can inform practical work.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Knowledge and understanding of 1-7 are gained through formal teaching (lectures, seminars), feedback on coursework, required and recommended reading and viewing, and the writing of essays and other assignments. 8 and 9 are based on group and individual practical work with accompanying documentation, under staff supervision, Part 1 offers an introduction to critical and historical study of film and theatre, and to 'critical practice'. The combination of core and optional modules in Part 2 extends understanding and skills acquired in Part 1 in more selected areas of study through seminars, lectures, individual feedback and supervised individual practical work. Part 3 includes very challenging areas of theory and practice, as well as requiring students to undertake, under individual supervision, an independent practical project or dissertation.

Assessment

In Parts 1 and 2, knowledge and understanding are tested through a combination of essays, unseen written examinations, and group practical work with accompanying documentation. In Part 2,

assessment is through written course work, including essays and takeaway exams plus individual practical work with documentation. Part 3 contains the same range of assessment but is characterised by the large scale challenge of dissertation or independent practical project.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills :

1. Capacity for independent analysis and research
2. Identification of problems and issues
3. The ability to read, watch and interpret closely and critically
4. An ability to reflect on one's own ideas and those of others
5. Apply conceptual frameworks and methods of analysis to new contexts and material
6. Ability to integrate critical thinking with creative work

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are acquired through independent reading and viewing (1), preparation for and discussion in seminars and workshops, essay writing (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), essay feedback (2, 3 and 4, 5), supervised practical work and documentation (5 and 6).

Assessment

1 – 3 are assessed both formatively in coursework essays, and summatively in essays, seen and unseen exams. 1- 4 are assessed formatively through seminar discussion and essay feedback. 5 and 6 are assessed formatively and summatively through practical work supervision and documentation of practical projects. Formative assessments are for the guidance of the students, and do not contribute to the module mark.

C. Practical skills:

1. The ability to criticise and formulate interpretations of literary, drama and film texts (including theatre performances)
2. An ability to engage in critical argument using relevant theoretical approaches
3. Research skills
4. A knowledge of appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work
5. An ability to relate the study of Film and Theatre to cultural and social issues
6. Basic skills of video and theatre

production

7. An ability to express critical understanding through exploratory practice in either film/video or drama/theatre

8. An ability to evaluate practice in the light of critical study

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1 – 5 are developed in seminars, workshops, written coursework and feedback on coursework. 6 - 8 are developed through practical work and feedback on practice and associated documentation.

Assessment

1 - 5 are assessed through formative and summative written coursework. 1 – 2 and 4 - 5 are also tested in seen and unseen examinations. 6 - 7 are assessed both formatively and summatively through practical work , and 8 through documentation accompanying practical work. Formative assessments are for the guidance of the students, and do not contribute to the module mark.

D. Transferable skills:

1. Effective communication in speech and writing

2. Critical analysis and coherent arguments

3. Critical evaluation of evidence and argument

4. The ability to find and use relevant information resources

5. Time-management skills and the ability to manage personal workloads.

6. A creative approach to problem-solving

7. The ability to develop projects through co-operation and dialogue

8. The ability to take leadership and management roles

9. Undertaking self-directed, independent work.

10. Basic computer skills, including wordprocessing

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are developed through seminar discussions , seminar presentations, preparation and writing of written assignments, feedback on written work, seen and unseen examinations (1 - 5, 9, 10). 5 - 8 are developed particularly through group and individual practical assignments, which also demand the skills listed as 9 and 10. We require that all essays and documentation after Term 1 are word-processed (10).

Assessment

1 – 5 and 10 are formatively assessed through written coursework and seminar presentations, and summatively assessed through coursework, seen and unseen examinations. 5 - 9 are expressed in and affect the formative and summative assessment of practical projects. Formative assessments are for the guidance of the students, and do not contribute to the module mark.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.