



Kingston University's Drama modules enable students to explore the practice, history and theory of drama in a range of contexts and settings. Students have the chance to work with leading professionals and be actively involved with productions. The drama team has links with a range of theatre companies and practitioners, a close association with the town's [Rose Theatre](#) and is engaged in cutting-edge research. Within the module range, there are four key themes: performance histories; creative

theatre-making; performance texts; and performance in relation to culture. Each theme integrates theory and practice.

Level 4 modules are introductory and approaches and ideas that are central to the study of drama and theatre and culminates in a performance project. Students will develop their skills as a performer and enhance their knowledge of a variety of methods of theatre-making. Students study key approaches to interpreting performance by examining play texts and productions and will acquire understanding of basic principles in theatre design and explore significant phases in theatre history.

Intermediate level (Level 5) modules develops students' understanding and practical knowledge of theatre arts. They offer practical experience of devised performance and the impact of naturalism on the work of the actor. Students will study modernist directors and playwrights such as Stanislavski, Ibsen and Brecht, and will consider the impact of these practitioners on contemporary performance practices. Other modules allow you to focus on clowning, scriptwriting, directing, Shakespeare, and contemporary British drama.

Advanced (Level 6) modules assume substantial prior study. Subjects covered include popular performance, experimental playwriting or postdramatic performance.

Updated April 2024/PJW

Entry requirements: GPA of 2.75 or above (out of 4.0) or equivalent

Pre-requisites:

- Level 4: there are no formal pre-requisites, though prior study/practice is an advantage.
- Level 5/6: prior study/experience at university-level is essential.

Taught at: Penrhyn Road campus

Key to Module Descriptors

Suitability of Module for Students Visiting KU on Study Option ____

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

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The University makes every effort to ensure that module availability & content is correct at the time of publishing, but it cannot accept responsibility for subsequent changes, as part of the University's policy of continuous improvement & development.

Drama Modules for Visiting Students 2024/25

1: Indicates module is suitable for students visiting KU on Study Option 1 (Whole Year)

2: Indicates module is suitable for students visiting KU on Study Option 2 (Autumn)

3: Indicates module is suitable for students visiting KU on Study Option 3 (Spring)

Notes:

- All modules are at undergraduate level only.
- Students enrolled on Study Option 1 are required to study the entire module.
- Whilst the University makes every effort to ensure that this information is correct at the time of updating (April 2024), it cannot accept responsibility for omissions or subsequent changes. Module availability and content may be subject to change, as part of the University's policy of continuous improvement and development.
- Details of assessment for students enrolled on either Study Option 2 or 3 where provided are **indicative** only and may also be subject to change as part of the above policy.

CODE	TITLE	SUITABILITY KEY		
LEVEL 4 – INTRODUCTORY				
DA4003	The Actor and the Text	1	2	3
DA4007	Popular Performance 1: Making Performance	1	2	3
DA4008	Staging Contexts 1: Histories	1	2	3
LEVEL 5 – INTERMEDIATE				
DA5010	Actor/Director: Stage & Screen	1		
DA5012	Popular Performance 2: Mask and Clown	1	2	3
DA5013	Staging Contexts 2: The Play	1	2	3
LEVEL 6 – ADVANCED				
DA6016	Popular Performance 3: Cabaret and Variety	1	2	3
DA6017	Staging Contexts 3: The Experimental	1	2	3

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

LEVEL 4 – INTRODUCTORY

Module Code	DA4003
Module Title	The Actor and the Text
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	4
Prerequisites	None, though previous study/practice useful
Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Options 1 or 2 or 3 • Not open to Erasmus students as Level 4
Module Content	<p>This module focuses on the relationship between the actor and the written playtext. There are two interweaving strands each designed to serve as a foundation for ongoing studies.</p> <p>Students will explore fundamental components of drama such as plot, action, character and dialogue and examine ways in which each is presented in a series of written playtexts. These plays are studied in detail, and each is identified as a pretext for performance. Students will be introduced to ways of interrogating the texts and develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the relationship between what is written on the page and what is presented on the stage.</p> <p>The same playtexts are used to explore a range of differing performance methodologies for identifying the performance potentials of a text in a workshop environment. Students will be led through cycles of Preparation, Exploration and Realisation - understanding what these terms mean and the actions they consist of will be an important aspect of the module - and not only learn appropriate ways in which to create intelligent and imaginative performance informed by a written text but also develop a range of acting skills necessary to perform them effectively.</p> <p>Topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to key concepts in the Study of playtexts informed by a range of traditional and contemporary approaches. • Close study of a range of playtexts, both on the page and in production • Approaches to actor training and psycho-physical preparation. • Concepts, principles and techniques including neutrality, energy, rhythm, presence and focus. • Exploration of the relationship between the actor and the character • The importance improvisation and play

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of academic skills in relation to reflective writing • Introduction of the concept of argument • Group and collaborative working
Teaching	Weekly lecture-seminars and practical workshops
Assessment	Study Option 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group performance 8-12 minutes (60%) • 1,500-word reflective essay – reflection upon an aspect of the creative process undertaken on the module (40%)
	Study Option 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-minute group performance from a playtext (100%)
	Study Option 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical assessment (100%)
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Module Code	DA4007
Module Title	Popular Performance 1: Making Performance
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	4
Prerequisites	None, though previous study/practice useful
Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Options 1 <i>or</i> 2 <i>or</i> 3 • Not open to Erasmus students, as level 4
Module Content	This industry-focused module will introduce students to skills, vocabularies and methods associated with making theatre, creating performance and exploring ways in which these may be applied within a range of dramatic and theatrical contexts.

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
 Study Option 2 = Autumn
 Study Option 3 = Spring

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	<p>Professional skills such as creative problem solving, collaboration, adaptability, and enterprise are developed alongside theatre-making skills. The main features of this module are the study and practice of key elements of performance such as: the use of movement and voice, play, ensemble collaboration onstage and off, devising methods, professionalism, critically reflective practice, performance structure and dynamics, connecting to an audience, and the creation of dramatic meaning and theatrical effect.</p> <p>In the first part of the module, students will participate in a variety of tutor-led exercises to develop their understanding and skills in these areas. These are drawn from methodologies and techniques developed by 20th and 21st century practitioner-theorists such as Jacques Lecoq, Anne Bogart, Ellen Stewart, Philippe Gaulier, Rudolph Laban, Keith Johnstone, Joan Littlewood, and Augusto Boal.</p> <p>In the second part of the module, students will apply what they have learned in a student-led, staff-supervised project: a 15-minute ensemble-devised performance that draws on the methods and techniques explored in the module.</p> <p>Topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of warm up • Exercises in focus and concentration • Exercises in precision and clarity • Physical and vocal techniques • Compositional skills • Creative play, sketch comedy, improvisation and groupwork • Creative principles and methodologies of key practitioners such as, e.g. Jacques, Lecoq, Philippe Gaulier, Keith Johnstone, Anne Bogart, Tina Landau, Rudolf von Laban, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski, & Ellen Stewart • Viewing and analysis of performances by companies such as Complicite, DV8, Improbable, Kneehigh, Sh!t Theatre, Clod Ensemble • Basic principles of dramaturgy and dramaturgical analysis • Devising strategies for making performance. • Reflective writing skills.
Teaching	Weekly practical workshops
Assessment	<p>Study Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Performance (15 min) (60%)

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
 Study Option 2 = Autumn
 Study Option 3 = Spring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective essay (1500 words) (40%)
	<p>Study Options 2/3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of assessment for study option 1
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Module Code	DA4008
Module Title	Staging Contexts 1: Histories
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	4
Prerequisites	None, though previous study/practice useful
Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Options 1 or 2 or 3 • Not open to Erasmus students as Level 4
Module Content	<p>This module introduces you to approaches and research methods associated with the study of World theatre histories, organised across 4 sections: rituals, formalisations, popularisations and reactions.</p> <p>Within these separate thematic sections, you will study a variety of global historical practices which may include ancient Greek choral practices, Yoruba ritual processions, the Spanish Golden Age, Noh Theatre, Beijing Opera Victorian Melodrama and early twentieth century experiments. You will study a wide range of performance texts and styles to investigate how we make theatre history, what evidence we draw upon, and what implications these histories have for our current performance making.</p> <p>In the first part of the module, you will investigate key periods in theatre history which might include English renaissance, classical Indian dance, the popular Victorian stage, Nritya, postcolonial formal interventions the post-war theatre of the absurd or British and American Black theatre. Particular attention will be given to the material conditions in which theatre artists worked and the relationship with the theatre and the culture at large in any given period and place. In the latter part of the module, you will apply your knowledge and research skills in a performance presentation.</p>

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
 Study Option 2 = Autumn
 Study Option 3 = Spring

Teaching	Tutor led lectures, seminars and workshops
Assessment	Study Option 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical performance presentation (15 minutes) (50%) • 1,500-word essay (50%)
	Study Option 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,500-word essay (100%)
	Study Option 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical performance presentation (15 minutes) (100%)
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LEVEL 5 – INTERMEDIATE

Module Code	DA5010
Module Title	Actor/Director: Stage & Screen
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS)
Level	5
Prerequisites	Successful completion of study in drama at university level
Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Option 1 only
Module Content	This module gives students the opportunity to continue advancing their acting training and begin exploring the discipline of directing for live and filmed performance. These two electives complement each other allowing the student actors to be directed by the student directors. This module will advance students' understanding of the theatre industries through collaborative practice that develops specific skills and experience in direction, devising, script reading, but also transferrable skills of time-management, producing, critical thinking, active listening, communication, and presentation skills.

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

	<p>Within the acting elective students will explore the themes and principles of Naturalism in theory and practice on stage and screen.</p> <p>Within the directing elective, student directors navigate contemporary theatre practitioners and theoreticians and are given the opportunity to lead a group of creative artists towards their own unified vision for a performance. The role of the stage and film director is examined through the lenses of design, script analysis, working with actors, proxemics and semiotics.</p> <p>Acting Elective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close study of a range of playtexts both on the page and in production • Approaches to actor training and psychological preparation such as those developed by Stanislavski • Contemporary industrial contexts and professional networks • Analysis of film/TV scenes looking at context, character and structure • Digital platforms for professional profiles • Practically exploring methodologies for performing film/TV scripts/scenes • Rehearsals and practical and technical direction • Informed risk-taking and learning from failure • Teamworking • Time management skills • Film recording techniques <p>Directing Elective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production-focused play analysis including key contextual information from the text • Interpretation and dramaturgy: identifying key ideas within a play • Workshopping the text with actors: getting to know the cast, exploring key ideas and themes, establishing shared principles and vocabularies; establishing a way of working; taking creative risks. • Rehearsing scenes: developing character, scene objectives, shape, rhythm and dynamics; giving notes and feedback; framing or highlighting key moments • Skills and strategies of leadership, organisation, communication • Set and costume design: • Lighting and sound design: basic information about how technical elements work • Detailed critical analysis of live or recorded theatre productions in relation to direction, dramaturgy, acting and design • Reflect on personal creative approaches to the tasks of a director
Teaching	Combination of lecture-seminars and practical workshops

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Assessment	Study Option 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting in or Directing a Staged Scene – 8 minutes (45%)• Acting in or Directing and editing a Short Film – 5 minutes (45%)
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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

Module Code	DA5012
Module Title	Popular Performance 2: Mask and Clown
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	5
Prerequisites	Successful completion of study in drama at university level
Suitability	Study Options 1 or 2 or 3
Module Content	<p>For some, popular performance is simply a style of performance that is well liked by many people. For others it is commercial performance that is produced and sold for mass consumption. Others still believe it is an “authentic” style of performance made by “the people” for “the people”.</p> <p>These are just some of the definitions of popular performance examined in this highly practical module. This module explores the history, theory and practice of theatre and performance traditions that might include but are not limited to: commedia dell’arte and other forms of masked performance; clown, pantomime and physical comedy; bouffon and political satire; carnival, festival and pageantry. The practical exploration of these traditions, through games, exercises, improvisation, and performance, will enable you to encounter concepts such as presence, play, and the role of the spectator in the creation of meaning as well as common themes such as marginality, transgression, and chaos. This embodied learning will be supported by critical engagement with the work of artists and academics such as Jacques Lecoq, John Rudlin, Dario Fo and Franca Rame, Natalie Palamides, Carlo Mazzone-Clementi, Red Bastard, Domnica Radulescu and Louise Peacock.</p> <p>Over the course of the module, students will construct knowledge and understanding of histories, theories and methods exemplified by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • popular culture – definitions, meanings, values • antecedents of European popular performance, for instance, carnival, classical comedy and medieval farce • the history of specific popular performance forms informed by the work of, for example, Tristan Remy, Mel Gordon • defining characteristics, concerns and characters associated with these forms, informed by the work of, for example Domnica Radulescu, Carlo Mazzone-Clementi • theories associated with the mask and its use in practice, drawing on the work of, for example, Jacques Lecoq, John Rudlin • developing performance material using approaches developed by, for instance, Barry Grantham, Natalie Palamides, P. Nalle Laanela, Red Bastard, and The Dell’Arte Company • theories of presence and play

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the relationship between performer and spectator
Teaching	Lectures, practical workshops, mentored/supervised rehearsals and performances
Assessment	<p>Study Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance – 15-20 minutes in length depending on group size (70%) Creative portfolio – 1500 words or equivalent in length (30%) <p>Study Options 2/3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part of study option 1 assessment
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Module Code	DA5013
Module Title	Staging Contexts 2: The Play
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	5
Prerequisites	Successful completion of study in drama at university level
Suitability	Study Options 1 or 2 or 3
Module Content	<p>This module explores the centrality of the play in the Anglophone world across two elective strands: <i>Global Shakespeares</i> and <i>Contemporary Plays and Playwriting</i>. Each of these strands will serve to investigate the primacy of dramatic literature in the context of historical and contemporary Anglophone theatre production, through a mix of academic research methods as well as a creative portfolio of work in written or performed form.</p> <p>Students will delve into details and questions raised by plays assigned over the module, covering the playwright's intention, style of writing, dramatic structure, characters along with the context in which the work was completed – whether this be the social and historical climate or the production environment. Specific attention will be given to the production of Anglophone plays in a global context to reflect on the role of theatrical culture in either maintaining or challenging global hierarchies of power.</p>

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
 Study Option 2 = Autumn
 Study Option 3 = Spring

	One semester will focus on the close exploration of a set number of plays through a combination of lectures, practical workshops and student presentations. The other semester will be dedicated to the collaborative development of either performance or dramatic writing skills leading to a creative portfolio of either written or performed play extracts.
Teaching	Guided-workshop form, plus some elements of lecture-seminars.
Assessment	<p>Study Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study: close analysis of a chosen play or production studied in class – 2000 words (40%) • One act of a play/one act play or 15 – 20 min recorded scene study (60%)
	<p>Study Options 2/3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of study option 1 assessment
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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

LEVEL 6 – ADVANCED

Module Code	DA6016
Module Title	Popular Performance 3: Cabaret and Variety
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	6
Prerequisites	Substantial and successful completion of study in drama at university level
Suitability	Study Options 1 or 2 or 3
Module Content	<p>This module provides an opportunity to study a range of contemporary popular performance forms such as cabaret, variety, music hall, revue, stand-up comedy, drag, and burlesque from historical, theoretical, and practical perspectives. Students are supported to develop relevant techniques and performance skills, such as crafting a stage persona, creating rapport with the audience, generating material, presence and spontaneity. Students will have the opportunity to apply ideas and creative skills to explore the role of performance in identity construction, the significance of liveness in performance, perceptions of theatre’s agency and issues of power and representational visibility.</p> <p>It therefore enables students to investigate issues such as the impact of Modernism and the emerging avant garde on the cabaret culture that spread throughout Europe and Africa; the importance of these forms in the development of popular culture; the birth of alternative cabaret and subsequently alternative comedy and the current popularity of neo-burlesque. Students are responsible for the overall development of a popular performance piece, enabling them to develop key industry skills related to collaborative working practices as well as practical performance experience in the arts industry.</p>
Teaching	Practical workshops, lectures, technical rehearsals, performances
Assessment	<p>Study Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance task (part of group) – 30-40 minutes (70%) • Creative portfolio – 2,000 words. Collation of research, analysis of application of feedback and interplay between theory and practice (30%) <p>Study Options 2/3:</p>

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Versions of Study Option 1 assessment
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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

Module Code	DA6017
Module Title	Staging Contexts 3: The Experimental
Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Year: 8 (US) 15 (ECTS) • Single Semester: 4 (US) 7.5 (ECTS)
Level	6
Prerequisites	Substantial and successful completion of study in drama at university level
Suitability	Study Options 1 or 2 or 3
Module Content	<p>This module explores the breakdown of boundaries between different theatre and performance forms in the late 20th century, focusing on avant-garde performance and how it has developed from the mid-twentieth century to the present day.</p> <p>Postmodern cultural theory and Hans-Thies Lehmann’s notion of the ‘post-dramatic’ provide context for the study of a range of avant-garde approaches to performance such as conceptual performance art, live art, site-specific and autobiographical performance, and a wide array of post-dramatic, experimental theatre practitioners, for example, Forced Entertainment, Gob Squad, Peeping Tom, Rimini Protokoll, Jérôme Bel, Blast Theory and Belarus Free Theatre.</p> <p>➤ Autumn Semester:</p> <p>The first part of the module is a practice-based study of live art and performance art lineages. You will explore how, e.g. feminist, postcolonial, critical race, queer, crip, and performance theory intersect with your own work and that of such artists as Marina Abramovic, Tehching Hsieh, Hannah Wilke, Coco Fusco, Adrian Piper, Bob Flanagan, Franko B, Maurizio Cattelan, Senga Nengudi, Noemi Lakmaier, and ORLAN.</p> <p>➤ Spring Semester:</p> <p>The second part of the module allows students to explore post-dramatic approaches to text across two elective strands: Experimental Playwriting: Beyond Text and Post-dramatic Performance: Creative Research. Each of these strands investigates how avant-garde performance since the mid-twentieth century evolved toward contemporary practice through a mix of academic research methods and creative textual responses.</p>
Teaching	lectures, workshops and work in progress sharing
Assessment	<p>Study Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live Art Performance (50%)

Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artist's statement (10%) • 2000-word research essay or performance text (40%)
	<p>Study Option 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live Art Performance (100%)
	<p>Study Option 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000-word research essay or performance text (100%)
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Study Option 1 = Whole Year
Study Option 2 = Autumn
Study Option 3 = Spring