

Programme Specification

Award and title: BA (Hons) Acting

<i>School:</i>	Arts
<i>Subject area:</i>	Performance
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2027-28
<i>in the month(s) of:</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York Campus
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	N/A
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education Acting Diploma of Higher Education Acting BA (Ord) Acting
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	N/A
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Dance, Drama and Performance (2024)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full time 3 years part time 6 years
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	Yes

Introduction and special features

Overview

The BA (Hons) Acting degree at York St John University is a unique, practice-led and socially engaged programme that explores acting as both a craft and a transformative experience. You will study contemporary performance for stage and screen, developing the creative, technical and reflective skills essential for professional practice in the performing arts industry. Throughout your studies, you will act, devise, write, and collaborate on innovative performance projects, learning from a team of experienced practitioners and scholars in a supportive, inclusive environment.

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated; please refer to the Regulations for Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate/Professional Doctorate Awards <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/regulations/> for information on standard periods of study

Performance (Delivering)

You will develop your skills as a performer, exploring diverse acting methodologies and performance styles for theatre, film and digital platforms. Through studio-based workshops, rehearsals and live performance, you will hone your stage presence, imaginative capacity, and ability to embody and communicate character, emotion, and story. From ensemble productions to solo work, you will engage in rigorous acting processes designed to expand your creative range and confidence as a performer.

Production (Making)

You will gain hands-on experience in the creation and production of performance, engaging with devised theatre, text-based work, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Working both independently and in ensembles, you will explore the visual, textual and physical dimensions of acting, experimenting with contemporary forms and innovative storytelling techniques. The programme encourages a “maker’s mindset” – to play, experiment, and take creative risks in the development of new performance work.

Professional Practice and Communications (Networking and Collaboration)

Professional development is embedded throughout the degree. You will build a Professional Acting Portfolio, preparing you for careers in the creative industries. Through partnerships and collaborations with industry professionals, visiting artists, and professional bodies such as Equity, you will gain insight into current practice and professional expectations.

You will work across disciplines with students from programmes such as Media Production and Music, fostering a culture of networking, communication and creative collaboration.

Reflective Practice (Safe, Ethical and Informed)

Acting at York St John is grounded in an understanding of ethical, inclusive and sustainable practice. You will develop skills in self-reflection and critical awareness, considering the social, cultural and political contexts in which performance takes place. Our approach promotes a safe and supportive environment, encouraging you to understand your responsibilities as an artist and as a member of creative communities.

Research for Practice and Methodology (Relevant, Engaging and Impactful)

Central to the teaching and learning of BA Acting is the understanding (physically, intellectually and emotionally) of what is required in the creation of a work, which is composite and resonant with meanings for an audience. You will explore the history, theory and contexts of acting, drama and theatre within 20th and 21st century performance.

Research underpins practice: you will learn to investigate and apply a range of methodologies to inform your creative process and deepen your artistic understanding. Your studies will culminate in research-informed performances and written work that are relevant, engaging, and impactful — demonstrating your ability to think critically and creatively about performance in the modern world.

Learning Environment and Opportunities

Our excellent studio facilities and access to touring companies via *The Performing House*, our in-house platform for solo and company touring work, support your development as both performer and maker.

You will benefit from:

- Field trips, **National Theatre screenings**, and specialist workshops.
- **Collaborations with visiting companies and directors.**
- **Festival performances** and opportunities to showcase work publicly, including eligibility for the **York Theatre Royal Prize**.
- Engagement with a broad range of **visiting international practitioners**, who share their expertise through talks and workshops.

In Summary

This programme invites you to get hands-on experience in the subject, embracing creative risk, collaboration and reflection as you prepare for a professional life in the creative industries. You will be equipped for a career as a performer and maker in the wider field of the creative industries.

BA (Hons) Acting at York St John University offers a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and socially engaged pathway for those passionate about making, performing, and understanding acting in a changing world.

Special Features

- The academics who teach on the programme are experienced theatre practitioners, writers and researchers whose works are performed and presented both nationally and internationally.
- Visiting Artists
Students are offered opportunities to work with visiting artists/practitioners in the fields of theatre and screen.
- York Theatre Royal
We have a long history of working with York Theatre Royal and they are key partners in developing and sustaining this unique programme.

Study Abroad

You will have an opportunity to study abroad as part of the University exchange programme (semester 1 of Level 5). In recent years students have gone on to exchange at: University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada; Pacific University, Oregon, USA; Keene State College, New Hampshire, USA; Juniata College, Pennsylvania, USA; Metropolia University, Helsinki, Finland.

Field trips are a valuable part of your learning that ensures you are immersed in the real world of work. Please note that if you wish to attend field trips then you may be required to fund, or part fund your trip.

Transferable skills

The learning activities you will take part in during your time on the degree will also present the opportunity to accumulate a set of skills which are highly valuable to employers, such as; creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, the ability to collaborate, contextual awareness, problem solving, independence, the ability to meet deadlines.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage. In addition, you must have:

- Practical experience in the subject area, shown in personal statement and/or audition.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

1. Produce confident and multiskilled graduates who can perform within a range of theatre and screen practices and allied fields, as well as employing their acting and performance making skills in a variety of professional contexts.
2. Facilitate students' understanding of the political, social and cultural significance of acting processes and theatre making and spectating through the analysis of historical and contemporary practices.
3. Foster individuals with a lifelong interest in embracing new learning opportunities and in making positive, creative contributions to the world around them.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

- 4.1 Demonstrate a foundational understanding of acting techniques and dramatic processes and apply them within live and mediated performance contexts.
- 4.2 Recognise and respond to performance texts, scores, and live briefs for dramaturgical and production purposes.
- 4.3 Use performance vocabularies as facilitative tools within work-related settings such as workshops, festivals, or community contexts.
- 4.4 Explain modes of performance using basic reflexive methodologies and begin to engage with critical debates in acting and performance studies.
- 4.5 Reflect on your own creative processes using research and ethical considerations.
- 4.6 Evidence creativity in developing performances underpinned by emerging production values, collaboration, and ethical communication.
- 4.7 Identify and describe contemporary acting practices and applied performance cultures and relate these to a range of roles within the context of cultural industries and wider social contexts.

Level 5

- 5.1 Evidence a developed understanding of acting techniques and dramatic processes and apply them flexibly across live and mediated performance contexts.
- 5.2 Explain and realise complex performance texts, scores, and live briefs for dramaturgical and production purposes.
- 5.3 Utilise performance vocabularies to communicate, collaborate, and engage responsively with diverse audiences across community and professional contexts.
- 5.4 Outline and analyse different modes of performance using reflexive methodologies and participate in debates around critical research practices.
- 5.5 Articulate an ethical and research informed critique of your own creative processes.
- 5.6 Devise and manage creatively engaging performances underpinned by professional production values, collaboration, and ethical communication across live and/or digital media.
- 5.7 Interpret contemporary acting practices and applied performance cultures and reflect on your creative work within the context of cultural industries and wider social contexts.

Level 6

- 6.1 Demonstrate a sophisticated and versatile command of acting techniques and dramatic processes, and apply them across live, recorded, and mediated performance contexts.
- 6.2 Analyse, interpret and evaluate complex works of performance—including texts, scores, and live performances—and articulate findings using appropriate academic and professional formats.
- 6.3 Employ performance vocabularies as ethically engaged, transformative and facilitative tools that communicate purposefully to an audience across a range of professional contexts, including community settings and festivals.
- 6.4 Critically differentiate modes of performance through reflexive methodologies and engage with contemporary debates and research in acting and performance studies.
- 6.5 Construct an informed and ethical critique of your own creative processes, situating your practice within interdisciplinary, intercultural, and professional performance environments.
- 6.6 Conceive, compose, and manage engaging performance projects underpinned by professional production values, collaboration, and ethical communication across live and digital networks.
- 6.7 Evaluate contemporary acting practices and applied performance cultures, situating your methodologies and creative work within the wider cultural industries, reflecting on how they position you for graduate employment.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
PER4023M	4	1	An Actor's Body	20	C	X
PER4024M	4	1	Voice as Action	20	C	X
PER4025M	4	1	Performance Analysis and Research	20	C	X
PER4032M	4	2	Screen Project	20	C	X
PER4030M	4	2	Workshop Facilitation	20	C	X
PER4031M	4	2	Character Development	20	C	X
PER5023M	5	1	Text and Performance	20	C	X
PER5024M	5	1	Devising Ensemble Theatre	20	C	X
PER5025M	5	1	Politically Engaged Practice	20	C	X
PER5031M	5	2	Performance in Community Context	20	O	X
PER5029M	5	2	Acting for Screen	20	O	X
PER5030M	5	2	Physical Performance	20	O	X
PER5032M	5	2	Acting Through Song	20	O	X
PER5033M	5	2	Performance Activism	20	O	X
PER5034M	5	2	Contemporary Scripts	20	O	X
PER6014M	6	1	Acting Showcase	20	C	X
PER6013M	6	1	Company: Research	20	C	X
PER6017M	6	2	Company: Commission	20	C	X
PER6019M	6	2	Professional Portfolio	20	C	X
PER6016M	6	1&2	Performance Research	40	C	NC

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level with a mark of 40 in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Central to teaching acting is the understanding that learning takes place through physical, intellectual and emotional engagement. The objective being the creation of acting technique, drama processes, theatre and film images and experiences that are resonant with meanings for an audience. The creation, composition, performance and documentation of these images occur with a strong sense of social engagement, i.e. these images and experiences have a purpose. On this programme you will develop your understanding through a feeling-thinking-action loop embracing critical enquiry, contextual awareness and creative actualisation.

The programme is designed so you, the student, can work, create and study alongside the tutors co-creating your enquiry-based learning, and take charge of developing the individual direction of your learning. This will be captured through the creation of live works for public consumption, field trips, meeting and working with various community groups and creating documents. Alongside the doing and making of performance you will also be required to engage with creative, critical and philosophical theory, reading inspiring texts that enhance the way we can think about the world. You will be required to analyse these texts in order to deepen your own learning and bring this understanding to bear on the development of actor technique, creation of drama processes, theatre images and experiences.

You will experience a range of teaching styles: workshops; seminars; lectures; tutorials; ethnographic field trips; technical demonstrations; tutorials; peer-to-peer collaborative learning; etc. You will be taught through practical workshop, lectures, seminars in small groups, tutorials, and visiting guest artists.

The complementary combination of practice and theory enriches the learning experience allowing skills and knowledge introduced in year one to evolve throughout the duration of the programme. This will be delivered through:

- Acting (voice and movement techniques) normally assessed through an extended small group piece from a pre-existing play text.
- Working as an ensemble in bringing a dramatic text to performance.
- Developing skills as a workshop leader in voice, a key skill in acting, theatre and screen whether working with communities or young people to running a rehearsal with professional actors.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission, Culture and Values](#)
- [University for Social Impact Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: