



**SCHOOL OF PERFORMING & DIGITAL ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA, THEATRE & DANCE**

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024/2025

Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2024 and was correct at that time. The department* reserves the right to modify any statement if necessary, make variations to the content or methods of delivery of courses of study, to discontinue courses, or merge or combine courses if such actions are reasonably considered to be necessary by the University. Every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum, and to give as much notice as possible.

* Please note, the term 'department' is used to refer to 'departments', 'Centres and Schools'. Students on joint or combined degree course should check both departmental handbooks.

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1 Introduction to your department

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the University') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences. Welcome to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the College') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences.

Royal Holloway's Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance places particular importance in our work on reaching out beyond the conventional limits of a university drama degree. We have very strong connections with the theatre industry and you will get many opportunities to work with visiting practitioners both here and in London. Being only 40 minutes by train from London, one of the great theatre cities in the world, is one of the unique assets of Royal Holloway's drama degrees and we urge you to make good use of that resource. The more theatre and dance you see, the better your frame of reference for your own work. You will find that many of your lecturers are themselves successful, professional theatre makers; when you work here, you are often working with practitioners involved in some of the most exciting theatre work of the time.

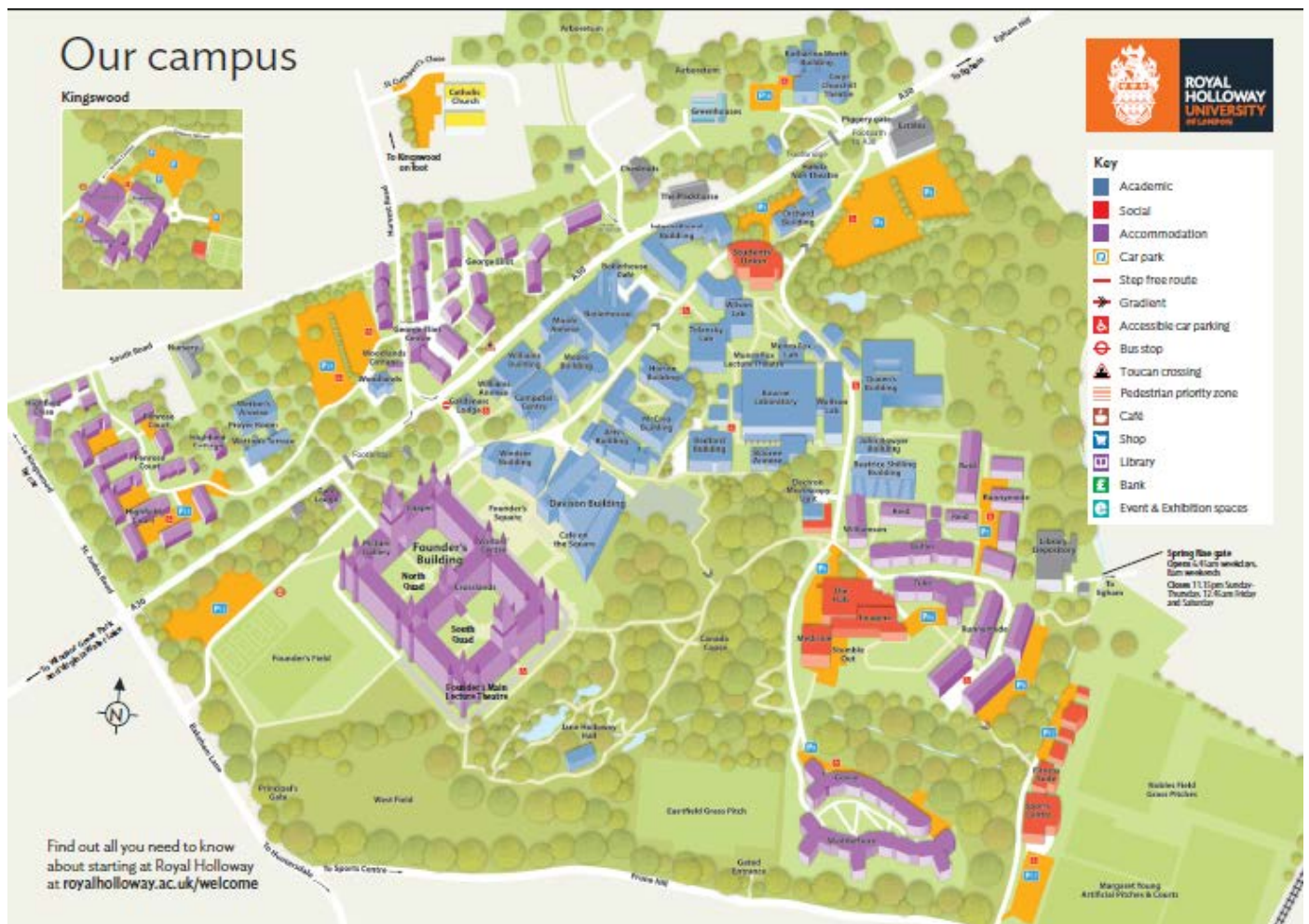
The course reaches out in other ways. We have great strength in applied theatre, which involves connecting with local communities, youth groups, schools, prisons, and the elderly to find new forms of theatre that will capture and explore their experiences. Our courses reach out historically and geographically: you will have opportunities to explore theatre from the third century BCE to the present day, and from Australasia, South-East Asia, Africa, the Americas, East and Western Europe and the UK. We also aim to reach out across the boundaries of the discipline to consider how our work can be illuminated by partnering with colleagues in other disciplines – Media Arts, Music, Geography, English, Philosophy, Languages and others – and also to explore how theatre might illuminate other areas of life.

We hope you have a rewarding time studying at Royal Holloway's Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance, and we look forward to working with you.

1.2 How to find us: the Department

The Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance is located primarily in the Katharine Worth building on the opposite side of Egham Hill to the main Royal Holloway campus. This can be found on the College [campus map](#). The Department also has spaces on the main campus, including the Boilerhouse Theatre and its adjacent spaces. Students will find themselves making use of central spaces, such as lecture theatres, but also Royal Holloway's distinctive grounds and its famous buildings.

1.3 Map of the Egham campus



Please note, student parking is very limited and is not available if you live in Halls or within 1.5 miles of campus. If you do live more than 1.5 miles away or have a particular reason why you need to come to campus by car, you must apply for a parking permit. If you have a motorbike or scooter you must also register the vehicle with University. Find more information about the Parking Permit portal [here](#).

1.4 How to find us: the staff

CONTACT DETAILS

Head of School:	Roberta Mock Roberta.Mock@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 414106	KWB102
Head of Department:	Jen Parker-Starbuck jen.parker-starbuck@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 414106	KWB102
Academic Staff:	A full list of academic staff and their contact details can be found here .		
Technical Staff:	Sean Brennan Production Manager S.Brennan@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 443933	KWB008
	Bruce Asher Theatre Electrician bruce.asher@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 414302	KWB009
	Chris Irwin Digital Media Technician Chris.Irwin@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 443937	KWB009
	Liz Blanshard Production Technician Liz.Blanshard@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 443934	KWB009
	Nicola Hewitt-George Design Technician nicola.hewitt-george@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 414290	KWB024
School Manager:	Louise Mackay Louise.Mackay@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 443532	KWB103
Student & Programme Administration Manager:	Jackie Marty Jackie.Marty@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 443916	KWB001
Helpdesk & D&N Network Member	Reem Rafat PDA-school@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 276885	KWB001
Information Consultant:	Rachel White Rachel.White@rhul.ac.uk	+44 (0)1784 414017	Davison Building

1.5 How to find us: the School office

The School office is located in room KWBo-01 on the ground floor of the Katharine Worth Building. Term-time opening hours are Mondays to Fridays between 10:00am and 4:00pm. The Helpdesk is your first point of contact for administrative queries.

If you have any issues relating to your ability to perform academically, please consult with your course tutor and/or your personal tutor. You can also contact Louise Mackay, School Manager or Jackie Marty, Student & Programme Administration Manager, if any academic or administrative issues arise for which you feel you would benefit from a private consultation. The college website provides much of the information that you will need, plus contact details, during your time with us: www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students.

1.6 The Department: practical information

Access to the building is via swipe cards which are created by Student Services. All students are issued a new College Card at the start of their course at Royal Holloway.

1.7 Staff research interests

Detailed information on staff profiles and interests can be found online at:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/research-and-teaching/departments-and-schools/drama-theatre-and-dance/contact-us/?department=drama%2c+theatre+and+dance&page=1>

1.8 Support within your School

The School Helpdesk is there to help you with any questions or concerns you might have about your studies. It is situated in room 0-01 of the Katharine Worth Building. Term-time opening hours are 10:00am to 4:00pm. The Helpdesk can also be contacted via +44 (0)1784 276885 or pda-school@rhul.ac.uk. Depending on your query, the Helpdesk will answer your questions then and there, put you in touch with a colleague who can help, or find out the answer and get back to you.

Your first point of reference for advice within the Department is your personal tutor, or if you have a specific question about your class please contact the module convener. Inevitably, problems will sometimes arise that staff within the department are not qualified to deal with. The College offers a high level of student welfare support which includes a highly regarded Counselling Service, dedicated educational and disability support, as well as a wealth of student wellbeing financial, career and other advice. There is also an NHS GP practice (the Health Centre) on campus located in Founder's East. Further details of each service can be found on the College web on the Student Welfare page: <https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx>.

2 Communication

2.1 Notice boards

The official student notice boards (and an information screen) are on the walls in the foyer of the Katharine Worth Building. Every effort is made to post notices relating to classes well in advance.

It is your responsibility to check the times and venues of all class meetings and of any requirements (e.g. essay deadlines) relating to your courses, so, if in doubt, please ask!

2.2 Personal Tutors

A personal tutor is assigned to every student and regular meetings are arranged by the tutors (at least once a term). These meetings will provide an opportunity for students to discuss any matters of concern, whether relating to their academic progress or to other aspects of their life and work in the department. Personal Tutors have a duty of confidentiality about issues raised by their advisees. Your Tutor will have regular office hours which are usually displayed on their office door. You can visit your Personal Tutor, or speak to them via Microsoft Teams, during their office hours. You may also make an appointment to see your Personal Tutor if you have anything you wish to discuss outside their office hours.

Students with a serious case for a change of personal tutor should approach Jen Parker-Starbuck, Head of Department, or Rosie Kennedy, School Senior Tutor, as appropriate.

2.3 Questionnaires

Towards the end of Term 1 and then in Term 2 you will be asked to fill out a course questionnaire for each course you take. This is completely anonymous and will ask for your thoughts and opinions on various aspects of the module.

2.4 Space

Please note that eating, drinking and smoking are not permitted in any of the department's teaching spaces. In addition to this, the special flooring in the Boilerhouse and Rehearsal Studio 1 means that shoes must not be worn in these rooms, and furniture must not be used.

3 Teaching

3.1 Study weeks

As a general rule, scheduled classes will not take place in Study Week (the 6th week of term), but your tutor will confirm plans for each module. If classes are not scheduled, you will be set specific tasks, such as rehearsal or project work, or have supervision with your tutors, during Study Week. Students should not make plans to leave campus during Study Week.

4 Degree structure

Full details about your degree course, including, amongst others, the aims, learning outcomes to be achieved on completion, modules which make up the course and any course-specific regulations are set out in the course specification available through the [Course Specification Repository](#).

4.1 Department specific information about degree structure

All UG courses **EXCEPT** in course handbooks with Humanities, PDA and PIRP as a minor, major or single honours:

To help you make good progress in your studies at RHUL, we have a simple on-line module SS1001 in 'Academic Integrity' which will guide you through preparing your assignments using the best academic standards. You will need to successfully complete this short module in your first year, and you can have as many attempts as you like before the deadline to pass it.

Theatre studies, as a university subject, has transformed over the sixty-five years since it was first introduced in Britain at Bristol University in 1947. Some of the most dramatic transformations have taken place over the last two decades, and at Royal Holloway we have been keen to ensure that the degree reflects the current state of thinking across the discipline, giving you an introduction to the leading edge of research and practice in drama, theatre and dance.

Our degrees offer specialist teaching and training in a very broad range of topics, modes, periods and cultures of theatre and performance making and dance. The course aims to bring together critical and creative exploration, the careful use of evidence, analysis and argument in one, complementing the rigorous exercise of imagination, play, insight and experience in the other. The department numbers several successful theatre and performance makers amongst its staff and creative work – whether that is through performing, devising new work, creative writing, theatre design and directing, and more – is at the heart of our curriculum.

We also aim to reach out across to other subjects, making Drama, Theatre and Dance at Royal Holloway truly inter-disciplinary subjects, which involve exploring, alongside theatre itself, philosophy, psychology, geography, the sciences, sociology, politics, media, music, law and creative writing. Our courses are informed by the cutting-edge research of our academic staff and visiting lecturers, with content that is updated every year to place students at the forefront of developments in our field. Some courses are taught by visiting theatre practitioners and playwrights who offer invaluable industry perspectives.

In the first year, all students (single, joint and combined honours) take **DT1100 Theatre & Performance-Making** and **DT1200 Theatre and Text**. **Theatre & Performance-Making** introduces key approaches to creative theatre work, exploring devising, workshop, and rehearsal techniques, before employing these ideas and others in a project studying and practising the work of a particular theatre maker or company. At the second-year level, students specialise in studying a particular area of theatre practice, such as physical theatre,

stage acting, acting for camera, playwriting, theatre design and more. **Theatre & Text** explores the place of text and writing in theatre, from play to performance; at the second year, particular periods, cultures, or communities of theatre writing are examined. Each year the module culminates with a performance demonstrating the knowledge gained about the particular forms and practices studied.

DT1300 Theatre & Culture, meanwhile, offers, at first-year level, an introduction to thinking more broadly about performance as a means of exploring the wider culture – geographically, politically, globally – testing the complex overlaps between performance and culture, identity and place. At second-year level, students have an opportunity to explore a particular case study in which these dynamics can be seen working. If you are on the Drama with Acting degree, you take **DT1500 The Expressive Actor**, instead of Theatre and Culture, in the first year. The Expressive Actor offers a foundational programme of vocal and embodied techniques for the actor. The module draws on both practical and conceptual approaches to learning the skills of the actor.

DT1400 Theatre & Ideas draws from other disciplines to explore how theatre and other fields of intellectual enquiry can mutually enlighten each other. In the second year, focussed 'case studies' allow in-depth exploration of the interplay between the theatre and an 'idea,' from ecology to live art, from histories of acting and casting to the idea of the musical. **DT1600 Skills Lab** offers an introduction to key technical, professional, academic and creative skills that you will need for success at university and beyond.

At first- and second- year level, all courses are assessed through creative and critical work. We see these methods as mutually informing and complementary. Developing your critical skills can valuably inform your work as a practitioner and greater creative exploration can valuably inform your critical work.

The second year is the time to develop and pursue more specialised interests. In the second year, students choose their programme of courses from options housed under four umbrellas, named according to the same principle as the first year: **Theatre & Performance Making, Theatre & Text, Theatre & Culture and Theatre & Ideas**. Within each of these baskets of courses, a range of innovative courses is offered, such as **Acting for Camera, Staging the Real, The Idea of Casting** and **Making Musical Theatre**. Single honours students take one course from each basket, while joint honours students may select from different combinations, depending on their programme of study.

In their third and final year, students have the opportunity to study a huge range of options that cover all aspects of theatre, historically, culturally, philosophically, artistically and politically. In the autumn term, single honours students select from a number of 15 credit workshop-based Advanced Options, and 30 credit seminar-based Advanced Options. Joint honours students may choose two or three of these modules, depending on their programme structure and module credit weighting. The content of these modules typically changes each year, and is always informed by lecturers' latest research. Examples of modules that may run as workshop-based Advanced Options include: **Acting 360; Advanced Movement Workshop; Site-Based Performance; Actor Training: The Actor's Physicality in Beijing Opera**. Examples of modules that may run as seminar-based Advanced Options include: **Performance and Visual Art; Naturalist Theatre in Context; Theatre and Power; Black Lives Matter: Theatre, Film and Activism**.

All single honours Final Year students, and joint honours by choice, undertake the **Final Year Group Performance** in Term 2. This practical strand represents the creative capstone of the degree. Guided by tutors, students form small companies and produce their own work for public performance. As well as being assessed formally, students are given the opportunity to present their work to the Department, industry guests, and the public at the annual Summer Festival.

In the second term, students also take either a Dissertation or Creative Dissertation, which is an original, student-led piece of work, guided by a supervisor that each student works with 1:1.

4.2 Change of course

You may transfer to another programme subject to the following conditions being met before the point of transfer:

- (a) you must satisfy the normal conditions for admission to the new programme;
- (b) you must satisfy the requirements in respect of mandatory courses and progression specified for each stage of the new programme up to the proposed point of entry;
- (c) the transfer must be approved by both the department(s) responsible for teaching the new programme and that for which you are currently registered.
- (d) if you are a student with Tier 4 sponsorship a transfer may not be permitted by Tier 4 Immigration rules.
- (e) you may not attend a new programme of study until their transfer request has been approved.

Further information about changing programmes is available in Section 8 of the [Undergraduate Regulations](#). If you hold a Tier 4 (General) student visa, there may be further restrictions in line with UKVI regulations.

Any student who wishes to change degree at the end of first year (e.g., from a joint honours programme to single honours) to move directly into the second year must have achieved a 2.1 average for their first year.

5 Facilities

5.1 Facilities and resources within your department

The Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance at Royal Holloway boasts a variety of professional-standard performance and rehearsal spaces located across campus.

From the new Caryl Churchill Theatre to the Victorian Boilerhouse Theatre, the Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance has a wide and varied selection of performance and rehearsal spaces for the exclusive use of our students.

Room Booking

Out of class rehearsal space is available to students to book for all class related or Student Workshop rehearsals. Students wishing to book a room within the Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance must follow the guidelines laid out below. Failure to follow these guidelines can result in rehearsal room booking privileges being taken away.

- Post graduate students must email this address dramaroombooking@rhul.ac.uk by 16:00 on Wednesdays to book spaces for the following week.
- Third year Thursday 16:00 via dedicated MS Teams Channel
- First and second year Friday at 13:00 Via Dedicated MS Teams Channel.

Postgraduate and finalist students have first choice of times and locations, followed by second and first year students studying within the Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance. Student Workshop are required to wait until all academic course requests have been made.

The person who books a room or space for an out-of-hours rehearsal session is automatically responsible for that room or space and must be present for the duration of the rehearsal.

KEYS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE RETURNS BOX LOCATED IN THE TECHNICAL CORRIDOR AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE KEYS TO BE GIVEN TO ANYONE OTHER PERSON

The student who has been issued a key or swipe card to a Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance building is responsible for ensuring that at the end of the rehearsal session all relevant doors and windows are locked; all lights turned off; curtains closed and – where relevant – alarms set.

All Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance buildings are locked down at 18.00 on weekday evenings (performance schedules permitting). During the weekend, all external doors are locked and must remain locked until Monday morning when the Security department attend. This means that external doors are not to be wedged open under any circumstances.

On weekday evenings all people attending a rehearsal session must be in the Katharine Worth building by 18:00.

People who smoke must close the external doors and stand a **minimum 5 meters** distance from the building.

All Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance teaching, rehearsal and performance spaces are no eating, drinking or smoking rooms. Unlike other college departments, the Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance strictly enforce and regularly monitor this ruling.

5.2 The Library

The Library is housed in the **Emily Wilding Davison Building**.

Details, including Library Search, dedicated subject guides and opening times can be found online from the [Library home page](#).

The Ground Floor of the Library contains a High Use Collection which includes many of the books assigned for undergraduate courses. The rest of the Library collections are on the upper floors. There are plenty of study areas and bookable rooms to carry out group work, as well as many areas to work on your own. The Library contains a large number of PCs and has laptops to borrow on the ground floor to use in other study areas.

The Information Consultant for Drama, Theatre & Dance is Rachel White, who can be contacted at Rachel.White@rhul.ac.uk.

5.3 Photocopying and printing

The departmental printers and photocopier are reserved for staff use. Copier-printers (MFDs) for students are located in the Library, the Computer Centre and many PC labs, which will allow you to make copies in either black and white or colour.

If you require copying to be done for a seminar presentation, you need to give these materials to your tutor to copy on your behalf. Please make sure that you plan ahead and give the materials to your tutor in plenty of time.

5.4 Computing

[How to find an available PC](#)

There are ten open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including three in the Computer Centre. For security reasons access to these PC Labs is restricted at night and at weekends by a door entry system operated via your College card.

6 Assessment Information

6.1 Anonymous marking and cover sheets

All summative coursework is submitted and marked anonymously. Performance and seminar presentations are necessarily not marked anonymously, as are written evaluations used to moderate a performance piece.

For electronic submissions to Turnitin, you must:

- Append the coversheet as the first page of your essay (download the coversheet, and then paste your essay to the bottom of the form. You will then need to save and rename the final file).
- Enter the name of your file submission as your candidate number to enable us to easily check your submission (7 digit number with the format 2xxxxxx)

6.2 Submission of work

Work to be assessed is submitted electronically via Moodle and, on rare occasions if required by your tutor, in hard copy to the PDA admin office. The submission time for Moodle takes precedent over a hard copy. Assessments that are received after the required time for Moodle submission will be considered late.

The steps you have to take in order to submit an electronic copy of assessed assignments are described in detail on the Moodle page 'Avoiding Plagiarism' under 'My Courses'. Your work is sent to the Joint Information Services Committee (JISC) Plagiarism Detection Site (PDS) for comparison with the contents of that system's databank and is returned to the markers at Royal Holloway annotated to show any matching text and its source(s). The purpose of this step is not to detect plagiarism – we do not expect it to occur and would be very disappointed to discover that it had – but to help the markers to check that you are referencing quoted material appropriately.

6.3 Penalties for over-length work

Work which is longer than the stipulated length in the assessment brief will be penalised in line with Section 13, paragraph (7) of the University's [Academic Taught Regulations](#):

Section 13 (7)

Any work (written, oral presentation, film, performance) may not be marked beyond the upper limit set. The upper limit may be a word limit in the case of written work or a time limit in the case of assessments such as oral work, presentations, films or performance. In the case of presentations, films or performance these may be stopped once they exceed the upper time limit.

In addition to the text, the word count should include quotations and footnotes. Please note that the following are excluded from the word count: candidate number, title, course title, preliminary pages, bibliography and appendices.

What to do if things go wrong – Extensions to deadlines

Please refer to the Extensions Policy and guidance on the University's webpage about [Applying for an Extension](#).

Please note: Not every assessment is eligible for an extension.

Listed below are the assessments for which extensions cannot be granted (i.e. are exempt):

- NO FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR AN EXTENSION.
 - NO GROUP PERFORMANCES, INCLUDING GROUP PRESENTATIONS, WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR AN EXTENSION.
1. No extensions can be granted for the practical assessment element of any of the final year Advanced Workshop modules.
 2. No extension can be granted for DT3202 – Final Year Project: Group Performance.
 3. No extensions can be granted for presentations for DT3201 – Final Year Project: Dissertation and DT3203 – Final Year Project: Creative Dissertation.

6.4 Support and exam access arrangements for students requiring support

Some students at the College may have a physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act (2010) that is, "a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". It is for such conditions and SpLDs that [Disability and Neurodiversity Services](#) (D&N) can put in place adjustments, support and exam access arrangements. Please note that a "long-term" impairment is one that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more.

If you have a disability or SpLD you must register with D&N for an assessment of your needs before adjustments, support and exam access arrangements can be put in place. There is a process to apply for special arrangements for your examinations – these are not automatically put in place. D&N can discuss this process with you when you register with them. Please see guidance [here](#) about registering with D&N.

Please note that if reasonable adjustments, including exam access arrangements, have been put in place for you during the academic year, the Sub-board will not make further allowance in relation to your disability or SpLD.

6.5 Academic misconduct - Plagiarism

'Plagiarism' means the presentation of another person's work in any quantity without adequately identifying it and citing its source in a way which is consistent with good scholarly practice in the discipline and commensurate with the level of professional conduct expected from the student. The source which is plagiarised may take any form (including words, graphs and images, musical texts, data, source code, ideas or judgements) and may exist in any published or unpublished medium, including the internet. Plagiarism may occur in any piece of work presented by a student, including examination scripts, although standards for citation of sources may vary dependent on the method of assessment.

Identifying plagiarism is a matter of expert academic judgement, based on a comparison across the student's work and on knowledge of sources, practices and expectations for professional conduct in the discipline. Therefore it is possible to determine that an offence has occurred from an assessment of the student's work alone, without reference to further evidence.

7 Attendance and Engagement Requirements

Please refer to the central [Engagement web pages](#) and [Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) for full details

8 Health and safety information

The [Health and Safety webpage](#) provides general information about our health and safety policies.

8.1 Code of practice on harassment for students

The University is committed to upholding the dignity of the individual and recognises that harassment can be a source of great stress to an individual. Personal harassment can seriously harm working, learning and social conditions and will be regarded and treated seriously. This could include grounds for disciplinary action, and possibly the termination of registration as a student.

The University's [Code of Practice on personal harassment for students](#) should be read in conjunction with the [Student Disciplinary regulations](#) and the [Complaints procedure](#).

8.2 Lone working policy and procedures

The University has a 'Lone Working Policy and Procedure' that can be found [here](#).

Lone working is defined as working during either normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace or when working outside of normal hours

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the Departmental Health and Safety Coordinator or the University Health and Safety Office.

It is likely that most activities will take place on University premises. However, the principles contained in the above section will apply to students undertaking duties off campus.

9 Core Student Handbook

The [University's Core Student Handbook](#) has further information about the following: -

- Support and Advice
- Communication
- Teaching
- Attending Classes and Engaging with your Studies
- Degree Structure
- Facilities
- Assessment Information
- Careers information
- Complaints and academic appeals procedure
- Equal opportunities statement and University codes of practice