

University of Plymouth

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and
Business

School of Humanities &
Performing Arts

Programme Specification

MFA/MA PERFORMANCE TRAINING

Amended by Minor Change:
16/11/2015 & 28/11/2016

1. **MFA/MA Performance Training**

MFA Performance Training (240 Credits) MA Performance Training (180 Credits)

PGDip Performance Training (120 Credits) PGCert Performance Training (60 Credits)

UCAS code: N/A

HECos code: 100071 / performing arts

2. **Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth
Teaching institution(s): University of Plymouth

3. **Accrediting body(ies)**
N/A

4. **Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

Students will join a thriving artistic and research community, and will be offered support and mentorship from experienced staff and visiting practitioners. Staff expertise and research is in performance training, live art, improvisation, integrated performance practice, digital performance, contemporary cross-cultural performance, site-specific performance, somatic movement practice, and articulating practice as research.

Students benefit of wide range of spaces in both the Roland Levinsky Building and The House, offering them the possibility of work in specially designed state of the art facilities. These facilities allow students from different years, and programmes to collaborate in dynamic and flexible way. Furthermore, the Subject has created a series of platforms and events (such as 'Scratch Night') where collaboration is not only encouraged but also sought after.

The subject has an extensive relation with renowned practitioners, groups and companies. The programme aims to make full use of those connections and will offer the opportunity to students be mentored and taught by highly skilled practitioners and scholars through guest lectures, workshops, and/or master classes.

The Subject also has a growing relationship with local, regional and national arts organisations. These links will allow the programme to provide students with networking and performance opportunities.

The Dance, Theatre & Performance Subject offers to all their students a series of extracurricular activities free of charge. Students will have access to the Inner-departmental Training Scheme and all performances brought to the university as part of the Theatre Visits Scheme (a Public Performance Programme which, in collaboration with Peninsula Arts, brings professional practitioners to perform at Plymouth University).

The Dance, Theatre & Performance Subject is committed to offer a programme with the principles of equality, diversity, accessibility and inclusivity at its core. The new building,

for example, has been designed to offer wheelchair users enhanced possibilities of access to the whole building (including the lighting grid). It is also expected that a number of mature students will be attracted to the possibility of pursuing their studies part-time.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that the present programme will appeal to a wider group of people by making some of the content available through CPD courses. As the modules in the programme will be delivered in a wide range of modes (e.g. weekly; fortnightly or in an intensive pattern during a number of weekends) this may allow some members of the larger community to do some of these modules (or part of their content) through a CPD route.

5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

Currently, there is no QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Dance, Drama, and Performance at a Masters' level (the July 2015 QAA SBS refers only to the Bachelors degree with honours). However, the QAA provides a number of generic criteria for M level programme that serve as useful benchmarks (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/MAsters-degree-characteristics.aspx>). The present programme has made use of those criteria aiming to provide the students with both 'subject specific attributes' ('an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the discipline informed by current scholarship and research, including a critical awareness of current issues and development in the subject') and a 'range of generic abilities and skills' (e.g. 'use initiative and take responsibility'; 'solve problems in creative and innovative ways'; 'make decisions in challenging situations'; 'continue to learn independently and to develop professionally' and 'communicate effectively, with colleagues and a wider audience in a variety of media').

Furthermore, the programme has been designed following closely the descriptors provided in *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ, 2008), and all modules have made use of the *SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education* (2010) in the articulation of their learning outcomes.

6. Programme Structure

This MA/MFA Performance Training is aimed at emergent professional theatre and performance makers, theatre and performance workshop leaders/instructors and graduates who wish to advance their understanding of and proficiency in performance training processes. As current research shows, 'training has become integral to performance practice in the early twenty first century' (Matthews, 2011). Training in this context is understood in its widest possible meaning. In that respect, prospective students will be able to follow a specific training pathway (for example, acting-performer training, live art training, theatre/performance pedagogic training, and even spectating training).

The degree will seek to produce confident practitioners who are interested in developing or consolidating their practice, future educators who want to enhance their teaching methods and scholars, spectator and critics who look to acquire tools to understand and analyse performance. The programme will foster a heightened level of critical reflection that will also prepare students for practice-based research degrees at a higher level (i.e. MPhil/PhD).

Other potential Graduate Destinations include:

- Actor/ Performer/Choreographer Freelance Practitioners
- Workshop leaders
- Company Directors
- Theatre & Performance Community Practitioners
- Lecturers at HE level
- Arts Events Organizers/Promoters
- Creative Industries
- Entrepreneurial and Business-related activities
- Arts Organisations

The MA and MFA will share 180 credits. A further 60 credit placement module differentiates the award exits.

The MA will be offered as a one-year full time programme and a two-year part time programme whilst the MFA will be offered as a two-year full time programme taught over 4 semesters. Each MFA cohort will attend all taught sessions at the same time as students in the MA pathway. As such, teaching in the MFA pathway will be more intensive during the first 2 semesters and during the second year MFA students will have the opportunity to work off campus for up to 6 months in a placement module after which they will complete their final MFA extended project. The award will offer students the opportunity to explore their own interests by pursuing a training pathway of their own choosing (which will be explored in-depth during their placement and Extended project modules).

It is anticipated that some of the modules in this programme, will be delivered in an intensive pattern. Also, some of the modules in the programme will be offered as short CPD courses to the wider community.

Modules MAPT704 (Training Processes: Doing) and MAPT705 (Processes of Training: Making) can be taken as CPD credit rated or non-credit rated courses. MAPT704 is delivered in intensive blocks of teaching during the weekend making it more accessible and attractive to mature students and those in employment who may wish to undertake postgraduate study or professional development. Aiming to offer students the possibility to specialise in a distinct field, students will be offered the choice to pursue either MAPT703 (Philosophies of Training), a module which explores in depth the conceptual issues raised by the notion of training or MACH703 (Choreography Lab 2: Choreographic Process and Development), a module which focuses on the exploration of choreographic strategies and devising processes.

Students will also have a strong anchoring in a series of theoretical and methodological approaches through the exploration of a series of methodological processes of research in MAPR700 (Researching Performance).

MFA students will be engaged in either a 3 to 6 month placement as part of their work in MAPR701 (Placement: Workplace Cultures and Environments) during the first term of their second year or in two 30 credit modules: MAPR703 (R& D: Engagement with the Cultural Industries) and MAPR704 (Documentation, Dissemination and Critical Reception).

Finally, in the Final Major Project module MAPR702 students will produce an independently managed artistic and/or academic project underpinned by relevant research, analysis and critical reflection.

Proposed pattern of teaching delivery for each module, credit rating and CPD profile.

Module	Credits	CPD option Y/N	Pattern of delivery
MAPT704 Training Processes: Doing Core	30	Yes Credit rated (MAPT704PD) & Non-credit rated (MAPT704SC)	Weekly sessions, semester 1.
MAPT705 Training Processes: Making Core	30	Yes Credit rated (MAPT705PD) & Non-credit rated (MAPT705SC)	Taught over 5 intensive Working weekends plus Studio based tutorials and Rehearsals, semester 2
MAPT703 Philosophies of Training (Optional Module)	30	Yes Credit rated (MAPT703PD) & Non-credit rated (MAPT703SC)	Weekly sessions through semester 2
MACH703 Choreography Lab 2 (Optional Module)	30	No	Weekly sessions through semester 2
MAPR700 Researching Performance	30	No	Weekly sessions, Semester 1
MAPR701 Placement Module: Workplace Cultures and Environments (Optional Module for MFA students only)	60	No	3 – 6 months placement, Semester 1
MAPR703 R& D: Engagement with the Cultural Industries	30	No	Through supervisions, semester 2.
MAPR704 Documentation, Dissemination and Critical Reception	30	No	Through supervisions, semester 2.

MAPR702 Final Project	60	No	Through supervisions, semester 2.
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MA/MFA PERFORMANCE TRAINING
MA (FULL TIME) - Course Diagram

**SEMESTE
R 1**

**(15
WEEKS)**

MAPT704
Training
Processes:
Doing

Core Module
(30 Credits)

MAPR700
Researching
Performance

Core Module
(30 Credits)

**SEMESTE
R 2**

**(15
WEEKS)**

MAPT705
Training
Processes:
Making

Core
Module
(30 Credits)

MAPT703
Philosophi
es of
Training

Optional
Module
(30
Credits)

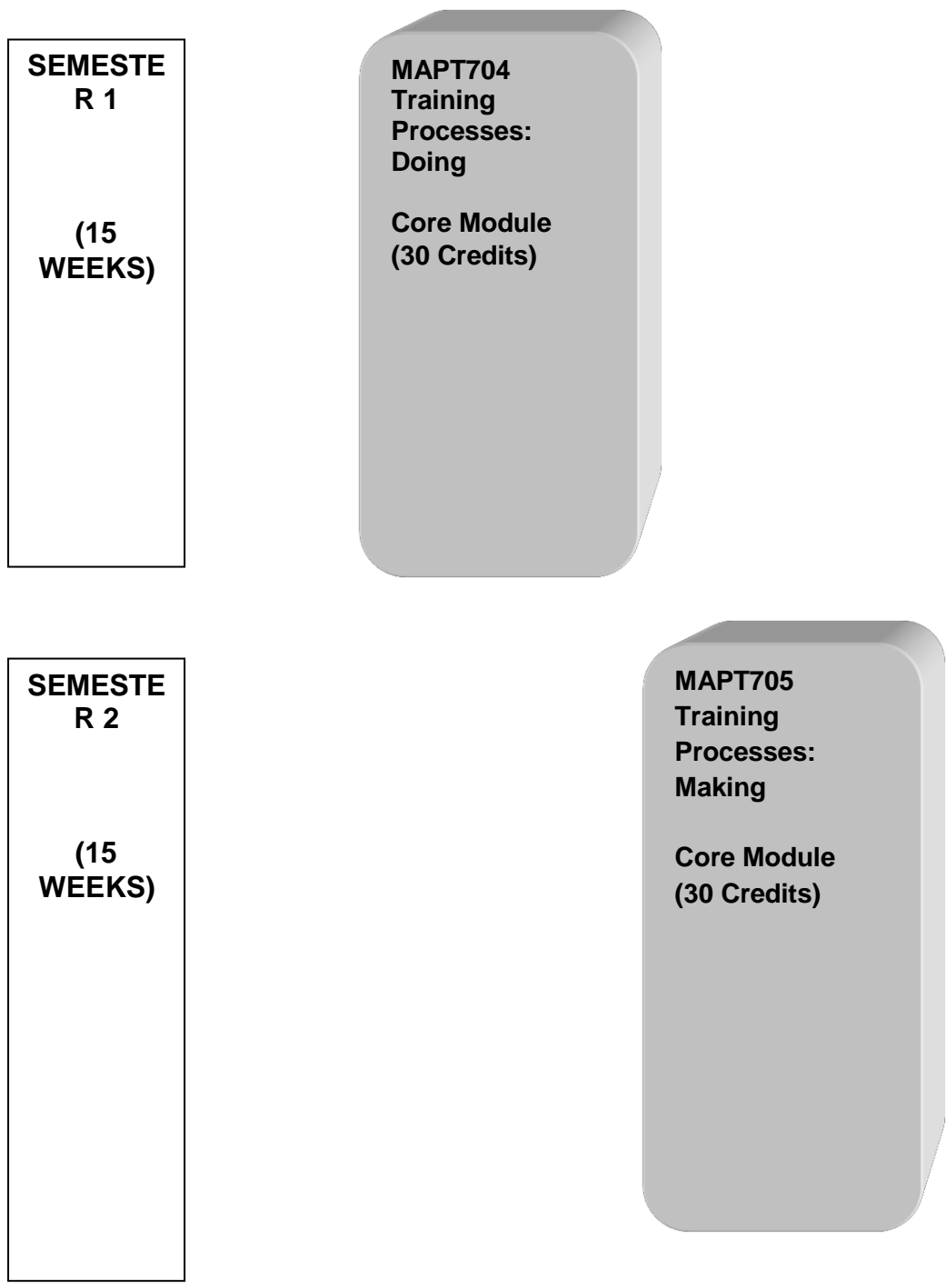
MACH703
Choreogra
phy Lab 2

Optional
Module
(30
Credits)

MAPR702
Final
Project

Core
Module
(60
Credits)

MA PERFORMANCE TRAINING (PART TIME – YEAR ONE) - Course Diagram



MA PERFORMANCE TRAINING (PART TIME – YEAR TWO) - Course Diagram

SEMESTER 1
(15 WEEKS)

MAPR700
Researching Performance

Core Module
(30 Credits)

SEMESTER 2
(12 AND 6 WEEKS)

MAPT703
Philosophies of Training

Optional Module
30 credits

MACH703
Choreography Lab 2

Optional Module
30 credits

MAPR702
Final Project
(60 Credits)

MFA (FULL TIME: YEAR ONE) - Course Diagram

**SEMESTE
R 1**

**(15
WEEKS)**

**MAPT704
Training
Processes:
Doing**

**Core Module
(30 Credits)**

**MAPR700
Researching
Performance**

**Core Module
(30 Credits)**

**SEMESTE
R 2**

**(15
WEEKS)**

**MAPT705
Training
Processes:
Making**

**Core Module
(30 Credits)**

**MAPT703
Philosophies of
Training**

**Optional
Module
(30 Credits)**

**MACH703
Choreography
Lab 2**

**Optional
Module
(30 Credits)**

MFA (FULL TIME: YEAR TWO) - Course Diagram

**SEMESTE
R 1**

**(15
WEEKS)**

**MAPR701
Placement
Module**

**Option
Module (60
Credits)**

**MAPR703
R&D:
Engagement
with the
Cultural
Industries**

**Option
Module (30
Credits)**

**MAPR704
Documentati
on,
Disseminati
on, and
Critical
Reception**

**Option
Module (30
Credits)**

**SEMESTE
R 2**

**(15
WEEKS)**

**MAPR702
Final Project**

**Core Module
(60 Credits)**

7. Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- a. Enable students to understand in a critically and informed manner the centrality of Training in Performance both as a theoretical and as a practical field.
- b. Provide students with an environment that is both supportive and challenging thus fostering their ability to engage with experimental material and encouraging them to tackle problems in a coherent and creative manner.
- c. Enable students to design and implement Performance Training projects using a range of appropriate methods, methodologies and skills which can ultimately allow them to extend, develop, and focus their own creative, practical and scholar work.
- d. Foster a critical and systemic understanding of the relationships between training, creative process and product in performance.
- e. Emphasize the design, delivery and critique of all Training Processes as context specific and enacted by discrete communities.

MFA (project aims) in addition to the above aims, to enable the student to:

- f. Achieve a deeper understanding of their proposed field of enquiry as a result of an increased knowledge of methodologies, techniques, skills and current/advanced scholarship.
- g. Develop the students' ability to apply research skills and methods in specific professional contexts and the ability to generate critical and analytical knowledge obtained through their engagement in work- based/placement settings.

8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

8.1. Knowledge and understanding

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

- 1) Acquire a systematic understanding of the centrality of both conceptual and pragmatic aspects of Training Processes in the development of contemporary Performance Practice
- 2) Recognise the historical processes that have affected the development of Training in Performance
- 3) Drawn on a wide range of research and training methods and methodologies
- 4) Synthetize the understanding and knowledge gained in independently navigated, imaginative, innovative and coherent projects.

MFA only:

5) Acquire an increased knowledge of training methodologies, techniques, skills and current/advanced scholarship in the field.

8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

1) Analyse training regimes in relation to their historical, ideological, political and ethical inscriptions.

2) Critically reflect upon both current problems and advantages inherent in the development of Training Processes.

3) Demonstrate a critical awareness of contemporary issues, debates and practices surrounding Training in Performance.

4) Comprehend and draw distinctions between a significant number of research and training methods and methodologies.

5) Engage with experimental and challenging material and to design strategies which forefront the use of risk and failure as valid pedagogic strategies.

MFA only:

6) Devise and apply training methodologies, techniques, and skills in a sophisticated and critical way.

8.3. Key and transferable skills

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

1) Generate sound, coherent projects supported by a firm grasp of critically informed contextual information and using adequate methodologies and methods.

2) Act as an independent learner who can offer creative solutions to complex problems.

3) Work effectively as a member of a group and/or in collaborative projects.

4) Present complex information in clear ways through a variety of media.

8.4. Employment related skills

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

1) Recognise a wide range of professional contexts and settings where Training Processes are commonly employed.

2) Develop an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

3) Communicate clearly with different communities/groups of people and the necessary skills to operate effectively when working with them.

4) Collaborate creatively with others by negotiating and pursuing goals, taking responsibility and initiative, contributing effectively to a group dynamic, and applying a sensitive understanding of appropriate vocabularies, techniques, structures and working methods.

MFA only:

5) Generate artistic and scholar knowledge from work-based/placement experiences

8.5. Practical skills

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

1) Generate a practical understanding of wide range of appropriate training techniques

2) Craft performance materials aided by the establishment of training processes

3) Acquire an increased proficiency of their presentational and writing skills.

4) Develop an increased understanding of appropriate technological aids.

9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements

NB The following table is a draft exemplar for an undergraduate programme

Entry Requirements for MA/MFA Performance Training
<p>Normally a 2:1 degree from a UK University or equivalent experience (candidates without a first degree will have to demonstrate evidence of a sustained engagement in Theatre & Performance practices). IELTS score of 7 or equivalent required for overseas students.</p> <p>Students enrolling in the MFA degree will normally be expected to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (the applicability of this requirement for overseas students will be reviewed in a case-by-case basis).</p> <p>Applicants will be required to submit an example of their practice on DVD or through appropriate web link and write a 500-word contextualisation statement. All applicants will be invited to attend an interview.</p> <p>The principles of inclusivity, accessibility, equality and diversity are cornerstones of the ethos that is followed by all programmes delivered by the Theatre & Performance Subject. The Subject has worked extensively to make</p>

its programmes open to students from different ethnic, national and economical backgrounds, and to students with different abilities.

Accredited Experience Prior Learning (APEL) and Accredited Certified Prior Learning (APCL) up to 60 credits /equivalency will be considered on a case by case basis, submission of an example of practice and 500 word contextualising statement would be required.

Disability Assist (DAS) offer advice and guidance to current and prospective Plymouth University students and staff. This includes arranging the appropriate provision for students with disabilities. Students who declare they have a disability are invited with to meet with a staff member from Disability Assist and the Programme Manager to discuss their learning needs and support at the start of their studies.

10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards

Students who achieve 240 Credits will be awarded an MFA degree. Students who achieve 180 credits will be awarded an MA degree. 120 Achieved credits will entitle the student to a PGDip and 60 Credits to a PGCert.

11. Exceptions to Regulations

No exceptions to regulations are requested.

12. Transitional Arrangements

As noted before, this new MFA/MA programme will substitute the MA Performance Practice. However, as MAPR700 (previously known as MAPP500) have wider implications in the running of other programmes (MRes Theatre and ResM Theatre) it has been decided to keep this module. Any part time student who may have finish the first year of the MAPP programme and is currently aiming to conclude it will enrol in that module (MAPR700) and will develop their final project in the Final Project Module (MAPR702).

13. Mapping and Appendices:

13.1. ILO's against Modules Mapping

13.2. Assessment against Modules Mapping

13.3. Skills against Modules Mapping

13.4. Appendices

NOTE:

Rationale and argument for continued use of 100% coursework against all modules on these awards.

The Subject of Theatre and Performance has given serious consideration to the use of P1 as part of the assessment strategy and maintains that in order for our students to understand and apply the notion of praxis to their study it is imperative to the ethos of these awards and specified learning outcomes that we retain the C1 element at 100% against all of the modules. The 100% coursework enables the subject to accurately reflect the positioning of practice and theory as being interdependent and it promotes the students understanding of praxis and of the ability to evidence the embodied knowledge embedded in both practical and theoretical outcomes. In our disciplines the doing is not separate from the critical thinking and 'pure' theoretical and conceptual work usually contains a possibility of a practical application of theory. Ideas and theories inform students' mindful practice and their practice provokes critical reflection on experiential insights. This ensures that we do not prioritise between theory and practice, instead we enable different learners to evidence their understanding in differentiated (and yet interrelated) manners. As such, we ensure that assessments remains inclusive and a hierarchy is not created or allowed to operate between the doing and the thinking. Students move fluidly between practice and theory in their assessments regardless of the exact nature of the outcome. An assessment strategy which separates practical and written tasks would seriously undermine the teaching pedagogy, assessment strategies and learning environment we have fostered and developed over the past ten years. Our external examiners have praised the subject for its fair and innovative assessment and its success in developing critically reflective practitioners.

On our BA and postgraduate programmes we do not assess a set of practical skills or the performance of a presentation. We assess content and students' ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding through outcomes, which have been realised through praxis, thus meeting an interdependency between theory and practice through all of our assessment modes.

Ruth Way
Associate Professor
Head of Subject & Associate Head of School Performing Arts
21/1/14

Appendix A

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes Matrix		
Core Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (as worded in the Programme Specification) <i>The FHEQ requirements are already given here in italics.</i>	Aims	Relevant Core Modules
Masters degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:		
<p>Knowledge/Understanding</p> <p>i) <i>A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice</i></p> <p>ii) <i>A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship</i></p> <p>iii) <i>Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.</i></p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <p>1) A systematic understanding of the centrality of both conceptual and pragmatic aspects of Training Processes in the development of contemporary Performance Practice</p> <p>2) An understanding of the historical processes that have affected the development of Training in Performance</p> <p>3) An understanding of a wide range of research and training methods and methodologies</p> <p>4) The ability to synthesize the understanding and knowledge gained in independently navigated, imaginative, innovative and coherent projects.</p> <p>MFA only:</p> <p>5) An increased knowledge of training methodologies, techniques, skills and current/advanced scholarship in the field.</p>	<p>1, 3</p> <p>1, 3, 5</p> <p>3, 4</p> <p>1, 3</p> <p>3, 4, 5</p>	<p>MAPT704, 703, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 703, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, 703, MACH703, MAPR700</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, 703, MACH703, MAPR701, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPR701, MACH703, MAPR702</p>

<p>Intellectual Skills (Generic)</p> <p>i) Conceptual understanding that enables the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to evaluate <i>critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline</i> - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <p>1) An ability to analyse training regimes in relation to their historical, ideological, political and ethical inscriptions.</p> <p>2) A systematic understanding of both current problems and advantages inherent in the development of Training Processes.</p> <p>3) The ability to demonstrate a critical awareness of contemporary issues, debates and practices surrounding Training in Performance.</p> <p>4) A solid knowledge of research and training methods and methodologies.</p> <p>5) The ability to engage with experimental and challenging material and to design strategies which forefront the use of risk and failure as valid pedagogic strategies.</p> <p>MFA only:</p> <p>6) An increased ability to devise and apply training methodologies, techniques, and skills.</p>	<p>1, 3</p> <p>1, 3, 4</p> <p>1, 4</p> <p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>6, 7</p>	<p>MAPT704, 703, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 702</p> <p>MAPT703, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, MAPR700, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, 703, MACH703, MAPR700, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT 704, 705, MAPR700, MAPR702</p>
<p>Transferable and employment-related skills</p> <p>Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences - Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level <p>On successful completion graduates should have</p>		

<p>developed the ability to:</p> <p>1) Generate sound, coherent projects supported by a firm grasp of critically informed contextual information and using adequate methodologies and methods.</p> <p>2) The ability to act as an independent learner who can offer creative solutions to complex problems.</p> <p>3) The ability to work effectively as a member of a group and/or in collaborative projects.</p> <p>4) The ability to present complex information in clear ways through a variety of media.</p> <p><i>ii) Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility</i> - <i>decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and</i> - <i>the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development</i> 	<p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>2, 3, 4, 5</p> <p>2, 3, 5</p> <p>3</p>	<p>MAPT704, 705, MAPR700, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, 703, MACH703, MAPR700, MAPR701, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, MAPR701</p> <p>MAPT704, 703, MACH703, MAPR700, 701, 702</p>
<p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <p>1) A generic knowledge of a wide range of professional contexts and settings where Training Processes are commonly employed.</p> <p>2) An independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.</p> <p>3) The ability to communicate clearly with different communities/groups of people and the necessary skills to operate effectively when working with them.</p> <p>4) The necessary abilities to collaborate creatively with others by negotiating and pursuing goals, taking responsibility and initiative, contributing effectively to a group dynamic, and applying a sensitive understanding of appropriate vocabularies, techniques, structures and working methods.</p>	<p>3, 4, 5</p> <p>2, 3, 4, 5</p> <p>1, 5</p> <p>2, 3, 5</p>	<p>MATP704, 705, 703, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, 703, MACH703, MAPR700, MAPR701, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPR700 MAPR704, 705,</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, MAPR701, MAPR702</p>
<p>MFA only:</p> <p>5) The ability to generate artistic and scholar knowledge from work-based/placement experiences</p>		<p>MAPR 704, MAPR705</p>

	6, 7	
<p>Subject specific/practical skills</p> <p>On successful completion graduates should have developed:</p> <p>1) A practical understanding of wide range of appropriate training techniques</p> <p>2) The ability to craft performance materials aided by the establishment of training processes</p> <p>3) An increased proficiency of their presentational and writing skills.</p> <p>4) An increased understanding of appropriate technological aids.</p>	<p>3, 4, 5</p> <p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>5</p> <p>3</p>	<p>MAPT704, 705, MACH703</p> <p>MAPT704, 705, MACH703, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT704, 705 MAPR 700, MAPR702</p> <p>MAPT705, MAPR700 MAPR701, MAPR702</p>